

UTAH DIVISION OF JUVENILE JUSTICE AND YOUTH SERVICES POLICY AND PROCEDURES		
Policy: 04-03		Page 1 of 4
RESIDENT MAIL		
<p>RATIONALE: To provide an opportunity for minors to maintain relationships with family members and other supportive persons and organizations, and to allow for legally required communication.</p> <p><i>Related Policies, Applicable Standards, Statutes: JJYS policies 04-02 Religious Programs; 04-08 Youth Grievance Process; 05-10 Contraband</i></p>		
Original Effective: August 11, 2004	Revision: February 28, 2025	Next Review Due: March 1, 2028

I. DESCRIPTION

Minors residing in Division facilities or programs have the right to communicate through written correspondence with members of their family, legal counsel, and other persons and organizations, subject to the limitations necessary to maintain order and security of the facility or program.

II. DEFINITIONS

The following terms are defined for this policy as:

- A. **Contraband Items:** Items which may not be legally possessed by a minor, prohibited by Division policy 05-10 Contraband, or a Division facility or program operation manual.
- B. **Correspondence:** Mail or written communication to or from minors, including letters, postcards, and greeting cards.
- C. **Parcel:** A package containing more than written correspondence.
- D. **Privileged mail:** Correspondence that is legally protected from disclosure. It is between the minor and their attorney, judge, rape crisis counselor or clergy (as defined in Policy 04-02 Religious Programs).

III. POLICY

- A. Minors shall be permitted to send letters subject to the limitations necessary to maintain order and security of the facility or program.
- B. Mail shall be opened and read by JJYS staff to ensure the safety and security of JJYS facilities, programs, and people.
- C. During the minor's stay at a Division facility or program, minors are not allowed subscriptions by mail.

IV. PROCEDURE

- A. Outgoing Mail
 - 1. There is no limit to the volume of mail a minor may send, as long as it does not interfere with facility security, programming, or treatment needs of minors. The Assistant Program Director (APD) shall document a need to limit outgoing mail.
 - 2. Outgoing correspondence shall be clearly addressed. The outside of the envelope must not contain any drawings, symbols, or words that interfere with the facility's security, programming, or treatment needs of minors.
- B. Incoming Mail
 - 1. Incoming correspondence shall be clearly addressed. Incoming correspondence with drawings, symbols, or words on the outside of the envelope that interfere with facility security, programming, or treatment needs of minors shall be returned to the post office. The exterior of the envelope shall not contain any ink stamps, stickers, or be discolored.
 - 2. Incoming correspondence that interferes with facility security, programming or treatment needs may be restricted by the APD after consultation with the Program Director.
 - 3. Mail without a return address shall be returned to the post office.
 - 4. The number of letters a minor may have in their individual room may be restricted for safety and security reasons. Minors shall be advised of these restrictions upon admittance to the program or facility.
 - 5. Staff shall distribute mail daily, except on Sundays and holidays.
 - 6. Correspondence not allowed in a minor's room shall be held with other personal items for safekeeping and returned upon release from the facility or given to the parent or legal guardian.
 - 7. Incoming mail shall be opened by two JJYS staff and shaken out to check for contraband.
 - a. Staff, upon direction by the facility APD or supervisor and except for privileged mail, shall read mail for inappropriate text or

drawings, hate, gang or drug speech, threats to the facility, an unknown person, or ongoing criminal activity.

- b. If any of these elements are discovered, the letter and its contents shall be given to the appropriate supervisor for further action that shall be documented in an incident report.

- 8. If mail is determined to be inappropriate, it shall not be delivered to the minor. The minor shall be verbally notified and the mail held by the APD or designee for five business days pending a grievance filed by the minor (04-08 Youth Grievance Process).
- 9. Parcels shall be opened in the presence of two staff. The contents shall be inventoried and documented according to the facility or program operations manual. Items not allowed in a minor's room shall be held with other personal items for safekeeping, and returned upon release or given to the parent or legal guardian.
- 10. Parcels that cannot be held in the minor's designated locker or storage area due to size or quantity shall be returned to the sender and the minor shall be notified.

C. Reading Incoming and Outgoing Mail

- 1. Incoming mail (except for privileged mail) shall be photo copied and the original mail stored with the minor's property. The photo copy shall be delivered to the youth to keep in the facility.
- 2. Mail shall be read by the program supervisor or APD, except for privileged mail. An incident report shall be filed if contraband, overtly inappropriate text or drawings, hate, gang or drug speech, or threats to the facility, an unknown person, or ongoing criminal activity are discovered.
- 3. Mail found to be inappropriate shall be scanned and both the electronic and original copies sent to Internal Review (IR). IR shall maintain these copies for GRAMA purposes, and potential legal action.
- 4. Staff, with the exception of the program supervisor or APD, shall not read a minor's incoming or outgoing mail at the time it is received, or at any time thereafter, unless directed by the facility APD or supervisor.
- 5. Minors shall be notified at the time of admission to the facility, as a routine part of the orientation process that the facility or program supervisor or APD may read their mail, excluding privileged mail as defined above.

- D. Minors may not send or receive mail from residents or inmates in prisons or other correctional settings, except for parent(s), legal guardian(s), sibling(s) or others as approved by court order, the APD or designee. Correspondence arriving from other minors in Division custody, or other correctional facilities, shall be returned unopened to the post office and the minor notified.

V. Continuous Renewal

This policy shall be reviewed every three years to determine its effectiveness and appropriateness. This policy may be reviewed before that time to reflect substantive change.

This policy has been reviewed by the Division of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services Executive Management Team and is approved upon the signature of the director.



Brett Petersen, Director
Division of Juvenile Justice & Youth Services

02/28/2025

Signature Date