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Inmate Telephone Privileges	ACA Standards: 2-CO-5D-01, 4-4271, 4-4272, 4-4275, 4-4497, 4-4497-1, 4-ACRS-5A-18-1, 4-ACRS-5A-19, 4-ACRS-5A-19-1, 4-ACRS-6A-01		
Joe M. Allbaugh, Director Oklahoma Department of Corrections	Signature on File		

Inmate Telephone Privileges

The use of telephones by inmates is a privilege, not a right. The Oklahoma Department of Corrections (ODOC) will ensure that inmates have access to reasonably priced telephone services. (4-4497, 4-ACRS-5A-19-1) Inmates may communicate with persons or organizations subject to the limitations necessary to maintain the facility’s order and security. Inmates will not use telephones without appropriate facility authorization. (2-CO-5D-01, 4-4497)

I. Procedures for Telephone Privileges

A. Responsibility for Charges

All telephone calls will be pre-paid or will be “collect” to the party legally responsible for the telephone charges incurred.

1. Credit card and “third number billing” calls are prohibited.
2. Inmates housed at community corrections or other programs which allow the inmates to possess currency, may permit the use of pay telephones.
3. Phone calls to an inmate’s attorney of record will be collect or made at the inmate’s expense.
4. With the exception of phone calls made to the attorney of record, collect phone calls will not be made to a business phone.

B. Facility Guidelines

The facility head will ensure the following:

1. Inmates have fair and equitable access to the telephone.
2. Information regarding the use of telephones will be specified in facility inmate orientation materials and through posting in one or more inmate accessible areas and will include:
 - a. Times and length of calls;
 - b. Access to and use of unmonitored phone lines;
 - c. Notification that calls made using the inmate telephone system are subject to being monitored; and/or
 - d. Other facility specific information regarding inmates' use of facility telephones.
3. Inmates with hearing and/or speech disabilities, and inmates who wish to communicate with parties who have such disabilities, are afforded access to a Telecommunications Device for the Deaf (TDD), or comparable equipment. Inmates with a hearing impairment are afforded access to telephones with volume control. (4-4497, 4-ACRS-5A-19)
4. Action is taken when complaints are received from the public about abusive, excessive, or unwanted telephone contact by an identified inmate. Telephone numbers that an inmate is not permitted to call are blocked and the length of phone calls is limited to control abuse, as technology permits. Abuse of phone privileges may also be grounds for disciplinary action.
5. Inmates are only permitted to receive phone calls, with staff assistance, regarding a verifiable death or life threatening illness of an immediate family member. Staff will not take personal messages for an inmate. (4-ACRS-5A-18-1)
6. Calls to a court clerk to speak with staff regarding the status of a case are not legal calls and are subject to monitoring.
7. Inmates are assisted with making calls to court personnel if required provided the following guidelines are satisfied:
 - a. The call is necessary and concerns a matter that cannot be resolved by mail.
 - b. The institution is reimbursed by the inmate for the cost of the call. An "Inmate's Request for Disbursement of Legal Costs" form ([DOC 030115A](#)) will be completed for all phone call requests to court personnel. Inmates who do not have sufficient funds to cover the cost of the call will be provided the requested service and the cost of the call will be

collected as soon as funds become available in the inmate's trust fund. The inmate will be charged for the call if court personnel refuse to speak to the inmate.

c. A staff member places the call and determines if the court personnel wish to take the call and speak with the inmate. The staff member remains present, and if the inmate becomes threatening or abusive with the court personnel, the call is terminated and disciplinary action is initiated.

8. Inmates are afforded the opportunity for phone calls for reentry purposes, such as between case manager/teacher/transition coordinator and inmate to the reentry/community service provider. Staff will assist the inmate with making the phone call and will remain present to ensure the call is for the intended purpose.

9. Inmates at contractual halfway houses have access to pay phones in order to contact family members, employers, or other outside agencies without restrictions. Inmates residing in halfway houses may possess and use telephone calling cards. Cards may be mailed to the inmate or brought in during approved visits. Cards may also be purchased by inmates during approved shopping trips.

C. Restricted Activities

1. The telephone will not be used for illegal activities or violations of facility regulations.

2. Inmates will be expected to conduct their telephone conversations in an acceptable manner. Loud, threatening, or profane language will not be tolerated.

3. Inmates are expressly prohibited from making or participating in conference calls, transferred calls, 3-way calling or call forwarding, except in cases where the facility administration has initiated such calls.

4. Inmates are not permitted to use cellular phones.

D. Non-routine Telephone Calls

Any call that is not a collect call through the inmate telephone system or authorized collect calls from facility telephones are considered non-routine calls. Non-routine calls shall be conducted in accordance with facility local procedures.

1. In the event an inmate requests to place a call that is not specified or in accordance with normal facility procedure, approval from the facility head will be obtained prior to the call being made. (4-4275, 4-ACRS-6A-01)

2. Any inmate, involved in litigation, pro se, may receive a call from the attorney general's office or the general counsel's office. (4-4275)
3. Inmates are permitted to answer the telephone and place calls when it is part of their assigned tasks such as customer service and telemarketing in correctional industry programs. The customer service and telemarketing functions will be set up with equipment for routine staff monitoring of phone calls.

E. Restrictive/Segregation Housing Units

The facility head will specify the use of telephones by inmates in restricted/segregated housing units in facility orientation materials, ensuring such use will be consistent with levels specified in [OP-060107](#) entitled "Systems of Incarceration." Telephone privileges will be provided unless a telephone restriction has been invoked due to an active disciplinary sanction.

1. Inmates in administrative segregation and protective custody will be allowed telephone privileges. (4-4271)
2. Inmates in disciplinary detention will be allowed limited telephone privileges. Restrictions will not apply to calls related specifically to the attorney of record. (4-4272)

II. Monitoring of Telephone Calls

A. General

1. Calls, other than those deemed legal, may be monitored by facility staff officials. (4-4275, 4-ACRS-6A-01)
2. Legal calls are those by inmates to their attorney(s) of record and those persons working for the attorney(s) of record. (4-ACRS-6A-01)
3. Inmates will have no expectation of privacy while placing general telephone calls.
4. Calls placed by inmates utilizing a TDD may be monitored by review of the printout tape or by direct observation by staff.

B. Monitoring

1. Apparatus will be used at all institutions to record the conversations on telephones used by inmates.

2. Equipment that records the phone numbers dialed by an inmate will be permitted.
3. Each institution will have the capability to shut off all inmate phones during emergencies, lockdowns, working hours, etc.
4. Inmates are prohibited from using inmate phones during their scheduled work periods.

III. References

Policy Statement No. P-030100 entitled "Provisions of Services/Inmate Rights and Responsibilities"

OP-060107 entitled "Systems of Incarceration"

13 O.S. § 176.4

17 O.S. § 139.1

IV. Action

The regional directors are responsible for compliance with this procedure.

The regional director, Region II, is responsible for the annual review and revisions.

Any exceptions to this procedure will require prior written approval from the agency director.

This procedure is effective as indicated.

Replaced: Operations Memorandum No. OP-030119 entitled "Inmate Telephone Privileges" dated February 28, 2017

Distribution: Policy and Operations Manual
Agency Website

Referenced Form

Title

Location

[DOC 030115A](#)

"Inmate's Request for Disbursement
of Legal Costs"

[OP-030115](#)