

§ 540.16

has the option to respond orally or to submit written information or both; and

(iii) Shall notify the inmate of the decision and the reasons, and shall advise the inmate that the inmate may appeal the decision under the Administrative Remedy Procedure.

(d) When an inmate is placed on restricted general correspondence, the inmate may, except as provided in §§ 540.16 and 540.17:

(1) Correspond with the inmate's spouse, mother, father, children, and siblings, unless the correspondent is involved in an violation of correspondence regulations, or would be a threat to the security or good order of the institution;

(2) Request other persons also to be placed on the approved correspondence list, subject to investigation, evaluation, and approval by the Warden; with prior approval, the inmate may write to a proposed correspondence to obtain a release authorizing an investigation; and

(3) Correspond with former business associates, unless it appears to the Warden that the proposed correspondent would be a threat to the security or good order of the institution, or that the resulting correspondence could reasonably be expected to result in criminal activity. Correspondence with former business associates is limited to social matters.

(e) The Warden may allow an inmate additional correspondence with persons other than those on the inmate's approved mailing list when the correspondence is shown to be necessary and does not require an addition to the mailing list because it is not of an ongoing nature.

§ 540.16 Inmate correspondence while in segregation and holdover status.

(a) The Warden shall permit an inmate in holdover status (i.e., enroute to a designated institution) to have correspondence privileges similar to those of other inmates insofar as practical.

(b) The Warden shall permit an inmate in segregation to have full correspondence privileges unless placed on restricted general correspondence under § 540.15.

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§ 540.17 Correspondence between confined inmates.

An inmate may be permitted to correspond with an inmate confined in any other penal or correctional institution if the other inmate is either a member of the immediate family, or is a party or witness in a legal action in which both inmates are involved. Such correspondence may be approved in other exceptional circumstances, with particular regard to the security level of the institution, the nature of the relationship between the two inmates, and whether the inmate has other regular correspondence. The following additional limitations apply:

(a) Such correspondence at institutions of all security levels may always be inspected and read by staff at the sending and receiving institutions (it may not be sealed by the inmate); and

(b)(1) The appropriate unit manager at each institution must approve of the correspondence if both inmates are housed in Federal institutions and both inmates are members of the same immediate family or are a party or witness in a legal action in which both inmates are involved.

(2) The Wardens of both institutions must approve of the correspondence if one of the inmates is housed at a non-Federal institution or if approval is being granted on the basis of exceptional circumstances.

[50 FR 40109, Oct. 1, 1985, as amended at 61 FR 65204, Dec. 18, 1995]

§ 540.18 Special mail.

(a) The Warden shall open incoming special mail only in the presence of the inmate for inspection for physical contraband and the qualification of any enclosures as special mail. The correspondence may not be read or copied if the sender is adequately identified on the envelope, and the front of the envelope is marked "Special Mail—Open only in the presence of the inmate".

(b) In the absence of either adequate identification or the "special mail" marking indicated in paragraph (a) of this section appearing on the envelope, staff may treat the mail as general correspondence and may open, inspect, and read the mail.

(c)(1) Except as provided for in paragraph (c)(2) of this section, outgoing special mail may be sealed by the inmate and is not subject to inspection.

(2) Special mail shall be screened in accordance with the provisions of paragraph (c)(2)(iii) of this section when the special mail is being sent by an inmate who has been placed on restricted special mail status.

(i) An inmate may be placed on restricted special mail status if the Warden, with the concurrence of the Regional Counsel, documents in writing that the special mail either has posed a threat or may pose a threat of physical harm to the recipient (e.g., the inmate has previously used special mail to threaten physical harm to a recipient).

(ii) The Warden shall notify the inmate in writing of the reason the inmate is being placed on restricted special mail status.

(iii) An inmate on restricted special mail status must present all materials and packaging intended to be sent as special mail to staff for inspection. Staff shall inspect the special mail material and packaging, in the presence of the inmate, for contraband. If the intended recipient of the special mail has so requested, staff may read the special mail for the purpose of verifying that the special mail does not contain a threat of physical harm. Upon completion of the inspection, staff shall return the special mail material to the inmate if the material does not contain contraband, or contain a threat of physical harm to the intended recipient. The inmate must then seal the special mail material in the presence of staff and immediately give the sealed special mail material to the observing staff for delivery. Special mail determined to pose a threat to the intended recipient shall be forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement entity. Staff shall send a copy of the material, minus the contraband, to the intended recipient along with notification that the original of the material was forwarded to the appropriate law enforcement entity.

(iv) The Warden shall review an inmate's restricted special mail status at least once every 180 days. The inmate is to be notified of the results of this review. An inmate may be removed

from restricted special mail status if the Warden determines, with the concurrence of the Regional Counsel, that the special mail does not threaten or pose a threat of physical harm to the intended recipient.

(v) An inmate on restricted mail status may seek review of the restriction through the Administrative Remedy Program.

(d) Except for special mail processed in accordance with paragraph (c)(2) of this section, staff shall stamp the following statement directly on the back side of the inmate's outgoing special mail: "The enclosed letter was processed through special mailing procedures for forwarding to you. The letter has neither been opened nor inspected. If the writer raises a question or problem over which this facility has jurisdiction, you may wish to return the material for further information or clarification. If the writer encloses correspondence for forwarding to another addressee, please return the enclosure to the above address."

[50 FR 40108, Oct. 1, 1985, as amended at 62 FR 65185, Dec. 10, 1997]

§ 540.19 Legal correspondence.

(a) Staff shall mark each envelope of incoming legal mail (mail from courts or attorneys) to show the date and time of receipt, the date and time the letter is delivered to an inmate and opened in the inmate's presence, and the name of the staff member who delivered the letter. The inmate may be asked to sign as receiving the incoming legal mail. This paragraph applies only if the sender has marked the envelope as specified in § 540.18.

(b) The inmate is responsible for advising any attorney that correspondence will be handled as special mail only if the envelope is marked with the attorney's name and an indication that the person is an attorney, and the front of the envelope is marked "Special Mail—Open only in the presence of the inmate". Legal mail shall be opened in accordance with special mail procedures (see § 540.18).

(c) Grounds for the limitation or denial of an attorney's correspondence rights or privileges are stated in part 543, subpart B. If such action is taken,