

Comments Submitted 2/27/2023

The Office of the Corrections Ombuds urges the Department of Corrections to halt its policy revision process until the integrity of its stakeholding efforts can be demonstrated to incarcerated individuals, the public, and this office.

**DIRECTIVE:**

**General Requirements**

**I. A. 1.**

The OCO encourages adding a timeframe for the length of time afforded to the Statewide Security Advisory Committee to approve new personal property items before they are admitted on the person's matrix.

1. New property items will be reviewed and approved by the Statewide Security Advisory Committee before being added to the matrix.

**Property Inventory**

**III. F.**

The OCO suggests implementing an additional mandatory inventory when a person is moved for medical purposes or when assigned a new custody level. This will prevent loss of property for individuals and reduce the number of tort claims filed against the department.

The OCO suggests having a standardized method of written procedures for all facilities. A standardized procedure will promote clarity across staff and the incarcerated population department-wide.

- F. Each facility will establish written procedures to ensure each individual's property is inventoried at least annually and before an individual is transferred to another facility.

## General Housing Units

### IV. C. 1. and IV. C. 1. a.

The OCO encourages the DOC to ensure that religious groups that may produce hobby crafts referenced in this section have been thoroughly consulted in the revision of this policy, and specifically regarding how “completeness” may be interpreted differently by an incarcerated craftsman and a CUS. Failure to fully address this issue could result in inequitable, unfair practices related to religious hobby crafts.

The OCO suggests adding clarifying language and additional details to sub-section a. to ensure that individuals know how and to whom to address their written appeal of a CUS's decision regarding completeness.

- C. Completed hobby craft items may be retained by the individual who completed it when it is an authorized religious item per DOC 560.200 Religious Programs and added to the electronic property record.
1. A hobby craft item is considered complete as determined by the individual or the Correctional Unit Supervisor (CUS) and must be mailed out of the facility at the individual's expense.
    - a. Individuals may appeal the CUS's decision that an item has been completed by writing to the designated employee.

## Major Non-Consumable Items

### V. A. 1. b.

The OCO suggests adding language that clarifies that an individual will be refunded if the actual shipping cost does not exceed \$15.00.

- b. If the actual shipping cost exceeds \$15.00, the individual must pay the difference.

## Disposition

### VII. B.

The OCO suggests allowing more time – such as 10 working days – for individuals to appeal property decisions.

- B. An individual may appeal a property decision by submitting DOC 21-141 Property Appeal to the Superintendent/designee within 5 working days of receiving DOC 21-139 Property Disposition.