DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Policy Number:	**303.110**
Title:	**Offender Access to the Public News Media**
Effective date:	**7/1/19**

PURPOSE: To provide guidelines for offender access to the public news media.

APPLICABILITY: All facilities and the communications office.

DEFINITIONS:
Communications unit – communications staff at central office.

Representative of the public news media – a person employed by and authorized to represent any television or radio station licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), national wire services, or any newspaper or periodical having a monthly statewide circulation of at least 1,000 copies, and others as approved by the commissioner or the communications unit.

PROCEDURES:

A. Offender Access to News Media
Offenders may communicate with media representatives in the same way as they communicate with others in accordance with DOC policies 302.020, "Mail," 302.022, "Offender/Resident Kiosk Services," and 302.210, "Offender Telephone Use."

B. News Media Requests for Interviews with Offenders
1. Media representatives must initially contact the offender to determine the offender's willingness to participate in an interview, and then direct the request for the interview with the offender to the communications unit.

2. Requests must be made in writing and are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

3. If the request is approved, the DOC facility media liaison asks the offender if the offender would like to participate, and provides the offender with a copy of the Offender Media Agreement form (link attached). The facility media liaison must advise the offender that the offender may contact an attorney before agreeing to an interview and may have the attorney present at the interview.

4. If the offender declines the interview, communications office staff notify the media representative and provide the media representative with a copy of the denial.

5. If the offender agrees to the interview, the offender and the media representative must both sign the Offender Media Agreement. The facility media liaison retains Offender Media Agreements electronically and distributes hard copies as noted on the form.

C. Interview Parameters
1. Offender interviews normally occur Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 4:00 P.M. and are limited to one hour in length.

2. A media representative conducting an in-person interview at a facility may bring a recording device, paper, and a writing utensil.

3. Interviews must not interfere with the offender's program assignments.

4. Interviews are scheduled subject to the communications office's and the facility's ability to accommodate them.

D. Representatives of the media must follow the provisions of Division Directive 300.032, "Admittance Authorization to Adult Facilities," and Policy 301.030, "Contraband," and must comply with security procedures and department policies. If any representative of the public news media is denied access to a correctional facility, communications staff must provide the reasons in writing, if requested. The representative may appeal the denial to the commissioner of corrections.

INTERNAL CONTROLS:

A. All signed media agreements are retained electronically by facility media staff.

B. Media visits are tracked in the daily media contacts list retained by communications support staff.

ACA STANDARDS: 4-4022, 4-4279, 4-JCF-3A-15, 4-JCF-6G-03, 1-ABC-1A-19, and 1-ABC-3D-05

REFERENCES:
Minn. Stat. § 241.251
Division Directive 300.032, "Admittance Authorization to Adult Facilities"
Policy 302.020, "Mail"
Policy 302.022, "Offender/Resident Kiosk Services"
Policy 302.210, "Offender Telephone Use"
Policy 301.030, "Contraband"

REPLACES: Policy 303.110, "Offender Access to the Public News Media," 6/5/18.
All facility policies, memos, or other communications whether verbal, written, or transmitted by electronic means regarding this topic.

ATTACHMENTS: Offender Media Agreement (on iShare)

APPROVALS:
Deputy Commissioner, Community Services
Deputy Commissioner, Facility Services
Assistant Commissioner, Operations Support
Assistant Commissioner, Facility Services