



# RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS POLICY AND PROCEDURE

**DIRECTOR:**

*Wayne P. Sabat Jr.*

**POLICY  
NUMBER:  
9.18-7 DOC**

**EFFECTIVE  
DATE:  
01/24/2024**

**SUBJECT:  
INTRODUCTION OF UNAUTHORIZED  
ITEMS INTO THE RIDOC**

**LAST REVIEWED:  
01/2024**

**SECTION:  
SECURITY AND CONTROL**

**SUPERSEDES:  
9.18-6**

**AUTHORITY: Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) § 42-56-10 (22), Powers of the director**

**REFERENCES: Rhode Island General Laws (RIGL) § 11-25-8, Conveyance to prisoner instruments for escape; § 11-25-14, Conveyance of unauthorized articles to or from institutions; § 11-25-10, Conveyance of intoxicants to prisoner; The most recent versions of RIDOC policies 3.10 DOC, [Drug Free Workplace: Substance Abuse](#); 3.14 DOC, [Staff Code of Ethics and Conduct](#); 7.01 DOC, [Accountability And Procedures for the Utilization of Community Agencies, Volunteers, Interns, and/or Employees of Outside Public or Private Organizations](#); 13.02 DOC, [Access to Institutional Facilities by Attorneys and Their Agents](#)**

**INMATE/PUBLIC ACCESS: YES**

**AVAILABLE IN SPANISH: YES**

**I. PURPOSE:**

To provide guidance for all administrators, supervisors, and staff of the Rhode Island Department of Corrections (RIDOC) concerning the introduction of unauthorized items into secure facilities by employees, volunteers, visitors and/or vendors, contractors, contract employees, program providers and/or any other individual/entity. Individuals found bringing unauthorized and/or illegal items into a secure facility are subject to disciplinary action and/or prosecution under applicable laws.

**II. POLICY:**

Unauthorized items shall not be brought beyond the Main Control Center or secure perimeter of any facility.

III. **DEFINITIONS:**

**Unauthorized Item(s)** - unauthorized items are generally defined as those items that are determined to present a risk to the security of a facility, or to the safety of staff or inmates, and therefore are not approved by the manager of each facility for introduction into that facility. Items listed in Section [IV.A.](#) below are not allowed beyond the Main Control Center without the express consent of the Warden or Deputy Warden.

IV. **PROCEDURES:**

A. Unauthorized items are generally defined as those items that are determined to present a risk to the security of a facility, or to the safety of staff or inmates, and therefore are not approved by the manager of each facility for introduction into that facility. Items listed below are not allowed beyond the Main Control Center without the express consent of the Warden or Deputy Warden.

The following are examples of unauthorized items. **However, this list may not be all inclusive:**

1. Radios;
2. Television sets
3. Cellular telephones, smartphones (, watch phones with wireless capabilities and any other device that facilitates wireless communication (i.e., Bluetooth headsets);
  - a. RIDOC Inspectors, Investigators (SIU) and/or members of the Rhode Island State Police (RISP) who enter a facility with a state-issued cellular telephone are exempt from this prohibition.
  - b. During a Level II or Level III incident RIDOC responders may obtain permission to bring cellular telephones and wireless devices into an affected facility. This permission can only be granted by the Warden of the affected facility or on-site Incident Commander.
  - c. If a cellular telephone/wireless device is brought into a facility or if permission is granted, a Main Control Center Officer must visually inspect the telephone/device, record the identity of the person with the telephone/device, the telephone number, and the time in and out. In the event that a telephone/device is reported missing within a

facility, the Logistics Chief or the Shift Commander is to be contacted immediately (actual contact, not a voice message) so the telecommunications carrier can be contacted and the telephone/device service can be remotely shut down.

4. Portable multimedia devices capable of playing or recording any audio or video format, and capable of storing and playing digital media such as audio, video, images, documents, etc.;
  - a. This includes but is not limited to laptops and tablet devices such as iPads or other brands, music devices such as iPods or other brands, and e-Books readers such as Kindles or other brands and tape/video recorders.
  - b. There shall be an exception for any RIDOC staff member using a state-owned laptop, and program providers or contractors using their own laptops to perform authorized duties or work. Only the Assistant Director for Institutions and Operations (ADIO) or his/her designee may grant this exception.
  - c. If a non-state issued laptop is brought into a facility or if permission is granted, a Main Control Center Officer must visually inspect the device, record the identity of the person with the device, the telephone number, and the time in and out. In the event that a telephone/device is reported missing within a facility, the Logistics Chief or the Shift Commander is to be contacted immediately (actual contact, not a voice message).
  - c. There shall be an exception for any RIDOC staff member using a state-owned tape/video recorder, and program providers or contractors using their own tape/video recorder to perform authorized duties or work. The Warden may grant this exception.

**NOTE:** It shall be the responsibility of the unit manager, contract/program manager or RIDOC point of contact to obtain the exception and notify the facility manager in writing, i.e., e-mail detailing any granted exceptions.

- d. Some items listed above may be authorized items for attorneys and their agents and are covered in the most recent version of RIDOC Policy 13.02 DOC, [Access to Institutional Facilities by Attorneys and their Agents](#).

5. Cameras/camera phones;
6. Data storage devices that have not been authorized by the Division of Information Technology (DoIT) – this includes but is not limited to USB flash memory storage devices and external hard drives;  
  
NOTE: Authorized devices may be obtained or approved for purchase from DoIT.
7. Reading material which is not job-related and has not been approved by the Deputy Warden;
8. Weapons of any kind, including pen knives;
9. Drugs, prescription or non-prescription, unless they are for personal use by an individual covered by this policy;
10. Illegal drugs and paraphernalia associated with illegal drugs;
11. Alcoholic beverages;
12. Tobacco products, including E-cigarettes and their components,
13. Matches, butane or other gas operated lighters, torches and flammable aerosols (e.g., hair spray);
14. Tape, rope or string of any kind (including dental floss);
15. Playing cards and games (including computer games);
16. Tools (other than Maintenance or state-owned);
17. Personal security equipment (including, but not limited to, handcuffs and/or cuff keys and canisters which dispense Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) and/or chemical agents);
18. Civilian clothing in secure areas (limited to locker room);
19. Global Positioning System (GPS) devices – or any other device which provides information on an exact location or which tracks the movement of a vehicle or person (including, but not limited to, Garmin Nuvi or TomTom brand devices);

20. Any other battery operated or electronic devices.
- B. Prescription Medication
1. The presence or consumption of controlled substances is prohibited unless they are being taken pursuant to a valid medical prescription and the side effects of the medication will not prevent an individual from performing any job function.
  2. The Rhode Island Medical Marijuana Act at RIGL § 21-28.6-7 specifically prohibits:
    - (a) “any person to undertake any task under the influence of marijuana, when doing so would constitute negligence or professional malpractice.”
    - (b) the smoking of marijuana “in a correctional facility; or public place.”
  3. Employees, volunteers, and/or vendors, contractors, contract employees, and program providers and/or other staff members who work in a secure area or in proximity to the inmate population and has in his/her possession any prescription medication must take steps to assure that these substances are stored in such a way that they are not accessible to the inmate population. Officers working a weapons post may not be in the possession of a weapon while under the influence of any medication that impairs judgment.
  4. Staff members, who require prescription medication to be in their possession, are to store said medication in its original container and limit the quantity to a 2-day supply.
  5. In the event a staff member is held over in excess of two (2) days, s/he must inform the Shift Commander regarding the need to replenish the supply of prescription medication.
- C. All personnel should refrain from introducing large amounts of cash into any correctional facility.
- D. It is the Shift Commander’s/Supervisor’s responsibility to ensure all attorneys’ and their agents’ receptacles (briefcases, pocketbooks, handbags, purses, backpacks, etc.) going into visiting rooms of the facilities are inspected for unauthorized items (consistent with the most recent version of RIDOC policy 13.02 DOC, [Access to Institutional Facilities by Attorneys and their Agents](#)).

- E. Within sixty (60) days of the issuance of this policy, facility specific procedures shall be created to address any areas outside the secure perimeter to which inmates have access. Procedures shall be submitted to the ADIO.