


**HOWARD COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
POLICY & PROCEDURE**

	SUBJECT:	Inmate Rights, Discipline and Services
	P & P #:	H-720
	TITLE:	Commissary Services
	EFFECTIVE DATE:	August 19, 2019
	REVIEWED BY:	<i>Diana J. Pettit</i> Diana Pettit, Fiscal Specialist
	REVIEWED BY:	<i>Prince Asempa</i> Prince Asempa, Administrative Captain
	REVIEWED BY:	<i>Andrea King-Wessels</i> Andrea King-Wessels, Deputy Director
	AUTHORITY:	<i>Jack Kavanagh</i> Jack Kavanagh, Director

POLICY: It is the policy of the Howard County Department of Corrections that commissary services are available to inmates/detainees at the Detention Center for the purchase of items not provided by the Detention Center. Commissary is a privilege which serves to lessen the negative effects of institutionalization. Indigent inmates/detainees may receive hygiene items through the Detention Center.

REFERENCE: Maryland Commission on Correctional Standards Adult Detention Center Standards .04 E.

DEFINITIONS: None

PROCEDURE:

I. Commissary - General

- A. Commissary services at the Howard County Department of Corrections are provided by a private vendor through contractual agreement with Howard County.
- B. The Administrative Captain shall ensure that commissary services are provided to the inmates/detainees on a weekly basis.
 - 1. A list of approved commissary items shall be made available to the inmate/detainee population.
 - 2. The list of approved commissary items shall be revised as needed with approval of the Director or designee.

II. Ordering Items Through Commissary

- A. Commissary orders shall not exceed eighty-five dollars (\$85.00), except when athletic shoes (work release inmates only) and radios are ordered.

- B. During incarceration, work release inmates may purchase one (1) pair of athletic shoes every three (3) months, but may only have one (1) pair in their possession at any given time, unless otherwise approved.

III. Receiving Commissary Orders from the Contractor

- A. Commissary orders will be delivered to HCDC by the vendor on a designated date agreed upon by HCDC and the vendor.
- B. Assigned staff shall accept the commissary and place it in the designated storage area.
 - 1. All large bags, containing multiple orders, shall be opened and inspected.
 - 2. No individual commissary bags shall be opened.
- C. Prior to distributing the commissary to the inmates/detainees, the assigned staff shall organize the orders by housing unit and ensure that all orders listed on the master listing are present prior to departure from the storage area.
- D. The Administrative Captain/shift leader shall be notified immediately of any significant discrepancies which may affect institutional operation and shall take appropriate action to record and/or remedy the situation as efficiently as possible.

IV. Distribution of Commissary

- A. The handling and distribution of commissary items purchased by the inmate/detainee population is very important and strict control and accountability must be maintained. During the process of commissary distribution, the following guidelines shall be followed:
 - 1. On the day of commissary distribution, the commissary officer shall be assigned to that task.
 - 2. The officer assigned shall obtain from the **key box a spare set of** security keys necessary to gain access to the housing units.
- B. Prior to commissary being surrendered to the inmate, he/she will be required to sign the receipt form provided.
 - 1. The inmate/detainee shall be given a copy.
 - 2. A copy is to be retained by the officer distributing the commissary orders.
 - 3. After distribution is complete, all receipt forms must be accounted for by the assigned commissary officer.
 - 4. All receipts and/or paperwork shall be retained for future reference according to the detention center's record retention schedule.
- C. It is imperative that ALL personnel working with or around the commissary process pay close attention to the commissary orders (bags) whether they are on the cart or being stored pending delayed distribution as a result of court, visits, etc. It is each staff's responsibility to provide safekeeping and accountability of all

orders until such time that they are surrendered to the inmate/detainee that purchased it. The cooperation and coordination of ALL personnel is essential to an efficient and successful commissary program for this facility.

V. Credits

- A. Inmates/detainees will be given credit for bona fide reasons only.
- B. All inmates/detainees who are released prior to receiving their commissary shall be informed of the process necessary to receive credit for their commissary.
 - 1. Returns and/or adjustments (credits) shall be prepared as soon as reasonably possible, but no more than five (5) business days.
 - 2. After the credit has been processed and a check written, the assigned commissary officer shall mail the check to the address provided by the inmate/detainee.
 - 3. After completion, the following paperwork shall be maintained by the Commissary Officer:
 - a. Inmate/Detainee's Commissary Order Form;
 - b. Copy of any Request for Checks to be Written HCDC Form H-725c; and
 - c. Copy of Commissary Credit Adjustment form(s), as applicable.

VI. Payment to the Contractor

- A. Administrative staff shall complete a Request for Check to be Written HCDC Form H-725c and forward it, along with the Commissary Invoice, to the Shift Leader.
- B. The Shift Leader shall issue a check payable to the vender, along with any associated paperwork.
- C. The following paperwork shall be maintained in accordance with the detention center's record retention schedule:
 - 1. Completed yellow copy of the Request for Check to be Written, HCDC Form H-725c; and
 - 2. Any applicable sales report or other applicable reports/documents.

ATTACHMENTS: None

RESCISSIONS: HCDC Policy H-720 Commissary Services, effective **September 9, 2018**.