RHODE ISLAND
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

PUBLIC COMMENT RESPONSES

Regulation(s): Access to Institutional Facilities by Attorneys and Their Agents

(240-RICR-20-00-3)

Summary of Rulemaking Action: The Department seeks to establish an amendment to 240-RICR-20-00-3 Access to Institutional Facilities by Attorneys and Their Agents to enhance safety, security, and operational efficiency within its facilities. RIDOC is experiencing an unprecedented need for more efficient and effective measures to detect and address potential threats related to contraband. Historically, this contraband has included liquids, powders, and other substances on or in incoming mail and documents. More recently, there has been a sizeable uptick in the conveyance of contraband via mail and other documents by chemically treated paper. These materials pose significant risks to facility security and the health of both staff and incarcerated individuals.

Public Comment Period: 4/25/2025 through 5/27/2025

Public Hearing: A public hearing in accordance with R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-35-2.5, to consider the proposed amendments was held on Friday, May 9th at 11:00 a.m. in Conference Room “A” of the Powers Building located at 1 Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908.

Summary of Received Public Comments: RIDOC received oral and written testimony from the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Rhode Island.

Permit incarcerated individuals to retain flash drives or other storage devices for legal discovery materials

- While the Department appreciates the concerns raised regarding incarcerated individuals’ access to electronic storage media (such as flash drives) for reviewing legal discovery materials, it is important to note that this was not noticed for change and is outside the scope of the proposed changes.

RIDOC appreciates the publics’ continued engagement and recognizes the importance of balancing institutional security with the rights of incarcerated individuals. We will continue to assess and refine our procedures as technology and resources evolve, and we welcome ongoing dialogue as we explore future options.