

State of Iowa Department of Corrections

Policy and Procedures

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Applicability: IDOC

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Chapter 3: INSTITUTIONAL OPERATIONS

Sub Chapter: SECURITY & CONTROL

Related DOC Policies: IO-SC-29, IS-RL-04

Administrative Code Reference: N/A

Subject: FUNERAL OR DEATHBED VISITS

PREA Standards: N/A

Responsibility: Randy Gibbs

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Authority:

1. PURPOSE

To describe the method that Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC) institutions shall use to determine which incarcerated individuals may be granted funeral or deathbed visits and what the procedures shall be once this privilege is granted.

2. POLICY

It is the policy of the IDOC to permit deathbed visits or funeral trips for incarcerated individuals in minimum custody via a furlough only, provided the requirements of furlough policy are met. Unless specifically approved by the Director, those incarcerated individuals serving a life sentence regardless of custody level will not be permitted to attend deathbed visits or funerals.

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3. DEFINITIONS – As used in this document:

- A. Immediate Family – An incarcerated individual's spouse, mother, father, sister, brother, child, grandparent, grandchildren, established legal guardian, or other who acted in the place of parents and step or half-relation if the step or half-relation and the incarcerated individual cohabitated.
- B. See IDOC Policy **AD-GA-16** for additional Definitions.

4. PROCEDURES

This policy applies only to deathbed visits or funeral trips of immediate family members. The following process shall determine if incarcerated individuals shall make deathbed visits or attend the funeral of immediate family members.

A. Notification

1. Upon notification of serious illness or death of a family member, the incarcerated individual should immediately advise his/her counselor and security staff.
2. A meeting with the counselor shall be arranged as soon as possible to discuss a visit or attendance eligibility.
3. Likewise, when staff is notified of a death or deathbed situation, they shall notify the incarcerated individual in a timely and sensitive manner.

B. Required Information

The Counselor shall verify required pertinent information with the medical practitioner or funeral home supporting the requested visit.

1. Specific information from the attending physician, hospital, hospice or funeral home supporting the requested visit.
2. Incarcerated individual personal information: name/number, offense, admission date, institutional adjustment/behavior, gang affiliation, if any, known relatives incarcerated, criminal history of family, if known, escape history and any other unusual incidents.
3. Specific information of incarcerated individual behavior and potential adjustment in a community setting shall be considered. Specific attention shall be given to the incarcerated individual's actual family relationship and prior participation in a security threat group.
4. If victims or family of victims will be attendance, the situation will be discussed with the Deputy Director.
5. Furlough eligible information shall include a detailed furlough plan. (See IDOC Policy **IS-RL-04**, *Furlough Procedures*.)
6. A detailed travel plan with specific dates, times and places of events shall be included.

C. Costs

1. The incarcerated individual and/or family shall reimburse the institution for the costs of an escorted trip prior to trip departure. Arrangements shall be made prior to the trip.
2. If the incarcerated individual and/or family cannot afford to pay these costs, special approval in consultation with the Deputy Director is required.

D. Additional Guidelines

1. Non-furlough-eligible incarcerated individuals may participate virtually or later by recording.
2. Furlough-eligible incarcerated individuals may be authorized to travel beyond state borders with the approval of the Deputy Director and notification to interstate compact offices, the Department of Corrections in the receiving state and the Iowa Governor's office.

3. For furlough eligible incarcerated individuals, all department furlough regulations (see IDOC Policy **IS-RL-04**, *Furlough Program*) shall apply as well as any special conditions set forth by the institution or Deputy Director.
4. The Warden or designee shall determine that the incarcerated individual can be transported without adversely impacting the safety of staff or the incarcerated individual as there may be times when incarcerated individual's safety may be placed in jeopardy due to the crime or threats made by the incarcerated individual or victims.

E. Authorization

1. The Warden may recommend a furlough deathbed visit or funeral attendance, but not both.
2. A deathbed visit or funeral attendance may be denied or canceled by the Warden/designee for cause at any time.
3. Where an emergency furlough is authorized, in accordance with **IS-RL-04**, the Warden may, at his or her discretion request approval for both deathbed visit furlough and funeral furlough.
4. For all trip recommendations, the Warden/designee will coordinate final approval with the Deputy Director.

F. Clothing

The Warden/designee may authorize incarcerated individuals to dress in civilian clothes.

G. Trip Guidelines

1. Prior to the visit, the Warden/ designee shall review the trip plan with local law enforcement officials and notify registered victims, if any.
2. Upon conclusion of the bedside visit or funeral service there shall be immediate return to the institution unless other arrangements have been specifically approved by the Warden and Deputy Director.

H. Additional Visit/Viewing Considerations

1. The Warden/designee may approve the supervised review of a video tape, DVD or audio tape of the funeral of a member of the immediate family in circumstances when funeral visitation is not approved. No costs shall be assessed.
2. The Warden may approve a live video deathbed visit or funeral (Skype or similar). (See **IO-SC-29 F-1**, *Release for Usage of Electronic Communication Device*) The length of such visits shall be limited to one hour.
3. The incarcerated individual and/or family shall reimburse the institution for the costs associated a live video deathbed visit. Arrangements of the reimbursement shall be made prior to the viewing. If the incarcerated individual and/or family cannot afford to pay these costs, special approval in consultation with the Deputy Director is required.