

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONS

Secretary Gary Westcott



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### **Department Issues Helpful Information on Correctional Facility Visitation**

*Warns that violations to visitation rules could result in arrest, fines and imprisonment*

Baton Rouge, LA - The Louisiana Department of Public Safety & Corrections is providing helpful guidance to the public who plan to visit an imprisoned person at any of its eight state-operated facilities, in effort to help avoid arrest.

"Visitation provides a significant benefit to incarcerated individuals, their families, communities and even for our staff because this exchange can often lead to an inmate displaying better behavior, improved mental health and help to reduce recidivism," said Gary Westcott, secretary, Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections. "Staying connected with family and friends while incarcerated serves as an extension to the outside world, however the Department must safeguard the process and have security measures in place for those visitors who attempt to introduce contraband into a correctional facility during these visits."

Items that are not allowed that are considered contraband include any type of weapon, firearm or any other item detrimental to the security of the facility. Cell phones or other communication devices, illegal drugs or controlled substances, tobacco, cigarettes, alcohol, pornographic images, tools that could aid in escape, and any explosive flammable materials or hazardous chemicals are all strictly prohibited.

Visitation is deemed a privilege and may be restricted, denied or suspended if an imprisoned person and/or a visitor does not follow the Department's visitation rules. Visitors must be on the inmate's approved visiting list. Persons in prison have been given information on how to add someone to their visiting list. If you are uncertain as to whether you are on a person in prison's approved visiting list, please contact the person you wish to visit. Please do not call the correctional facility for this information because it is not provided over the phone.

Visitors must register with staff prior to entering the visiting area. All visitors who are 18 years old or older are required to show a picture identification each time they visit. The forms of identification accepted by the Department include either a valid driver's license from the state of residence, valid state photo identification card from the state of residence, valid military photo identification card (active duty only) or a valid passport. Personal possessions such as a wallet, purse, cash, cellular device, etc. must be left in the visitor's locked vehicle for the duration of the visit.

All visitors, including minors, are subject to searches of their property, automobile and person. These searches are conducted by trained staff in a professional manner that minimizes indignity to the visitor while still accomplishing the objective of the search. Additionally, visitors are subject to searches using metal detectors, substance detection scanning equipment and by trained K-9 search dogs. Any visitor who refuses to participate in a search will not be permitted to enter the facility and the visit may be terminated, or if contraband or other prohibited property or items are found on the visitor or in the visitor's property. If a visitor does not wish to be searched they should not attempt to enter the correctional facility. Instead of an in person visit, incarcerated individuals and visitors may also choose to maintain contact with loved ones through writing letters and telephone calls, which are monitored.

Louisiana law expressly indicates that no person shall introduce or attempt to introduce or possess contraband on the grounds of any correctional facility in the state. The regulation also states that no person shall send, give or attempt to give contraband to an inmate. These actions may result in criminal charges, and the incarcerated person may also face disciplinary actions, lost visitation privileges or extended sentences.

This [link](#) contains information on visitation, how to locate a correctional facility, ways to communicate with people in prison, instructions on how to send money to inmates, frequently asked questions and a lot more.

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