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Property Claims

Revised: 02/28/00
Revised: 10/2004
Reviewed: 08/02/06
Revised: 08/10

LOST OR MISSING PROPERTY CLAIMS

I. POLICY

- A. All claims for lost or missing inmate property will be investigated and documented to ensure the property is located and returned; or, in the event property is not located, the claim will be settled quickly and fairly.

II. DEFINITION

- A. CLAIMS PACKAGE - A copy of the Incident Report, inmate property receipt or release forms, inmate booking form, other relevant information from booking and supplemental report from the Corrections Division Commander stating action taken and recommendations.

III. PROCEDURES

A. INITIAL LOST OR MISSING INMATE PROPERTY INQUIRES

- 1. Lost or missing inmate property inquiries will be handled by the Facility Supervisor or designee whenever possible, prior to forwarding the Incident Report to a Corrections Lieutenant.
 - a. Inmate will sign only for those items returned, that is: should all the inmate's personal property be found to be missing, the inmate will not sign for receiving same.
- 2. The Facility Supervisor or designee will ensure in every case when an inmate claims clothing, property, or valuables are not returned upon discharge, and the property form indicates such property was checked in at booking, that:
 - a. Corrections staff shall provide the inmate with the Mendocino County "Claim Against The County of Mendocino" form with instructions for the individual to fill out and mail to the address on the form.

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- b. Corrections staff shall not assist in the completion of this form nor shall Corrections staff take receipt of the completed form.
 - c. As previously incarcerated individuals make a claim of missing personal property, Corrections staff shall provide them with the blank form as well.
 3. The Facility Supervisor or designee will ensure an Incident Report is written for lost or missing inmate property claims which cannot be resolved or the property cannot be located.
 - a. All property claimed to be missing must be itemized in the Incident Report.
 - b. The Incident Report is to include telephone numbers and mailing address where the inmate can be located after release from custody.
 - (1) NOTE: The telephone number and mailing address may be different from the booking form.

B. SEARCH AND INVESTIGATION FOR LOST OR MISSING INMATE PROPERTY

1. The Facility Supervisor or designee, upon receiving notice of lost or missing inmate property, will conduct a search to locate the missing property.
2. The Corrections Lieutenant will investigate all the facts surrounding the disappearance of the property in an attempt to locate the property.
3. Should the property eventually be located, it will be turned over to the Facility Supervisor for disposition.
 - a. The Facility Supervisor or designee will then notify the claimant and arrange for return of the property.
 - b. The Corrections Lieutenant will:
 - (1) Notify Risk Management regarding all found property; and

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- (2) Retain the entire claims package, as well as forward a copy to the inmate's master file.
4. If the property cannot be located, the Corrections Lieutenant will advise the Corrections Division Commander who will make a final recommendation for settlement of the claim.
5. If the claim proves to be invalid or in error, the Facility Supervisor will notify the claimant of the results and if necessary direct the claimant to the agency that has custody of the property.

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