



# New Hampshire Department of Corrections

**Public | Business | Government | Search This Site**

- ❖ Home
- ❖ About Us
- ❖ News
  - ❖ Archival News Releases
  - ❖ What's New
- ❖ Divisions/Units
- ❖ State Prisons
- ❖ Inmate Locator
- ❖ Doing Business
- ❖ Career Opportunities
- ❖ Victim Services
- ❖ FAQs
- ❖ Contact Us
- ❖ Site Map

## News News Releases

### **NEW HAMPSHIRE DEPT. OF CORRECTIONS MEDIA POLICY OVERVIEW**

Dear Media Representative:

The New Hampshire Department of Corrections (NH-DOC) makes every effort to cooperate when facilitating media requests for inmate interviews. There are policies and procedures that we follow and I would like to make you aware of them here.

1. The New Hampshire Department of Corrections, Office of Public Information facilitates all requests for interviews with inmates in the New Hampshire State Prison, New Hampshire State Prison for Women, Northern NH Correctional Facility, and the four transitional housing units. Requests must be placed in writing, preferably at least 48 hours in advance and sent to this office. While the 48 hours is preferable, on rare occasions interviews can happen more quickly depending on the inmate's response time and staff escort availability. That is the exception, not the rule. Note: We understand the nature of deadlines, but it is not department policy to compel an inmate into making a quick response.
2. The letter should include the name of the requestor, the name of the media outlet, the name of the inmate, and any equipment that you may need to use (i.e. audio recorders, cameras, etc.). The letter should include the names of all media representatives that would participate in the interview. These letters should be mailed to the New Hampshire Department of Corrections, Office of Public Information.
3. The inmate receives a copy of the written request and a NH-DOC interview consent form. The inmate agrees or disagrees and the signed form is returned to the Office of Public Information. If the inmate agrees, the Public Information Officer will work with the media representative to establish a mutually agreeable time during regular business hours (Mon-Fri 8:00 am - 4:00 pm) within the inmate's regular visitation schedule.
4. Inmates are under no obligation to accept interviews. It is their choice. If an inmate declines to be interviewed further requests to the same individual from the same media outlet or representative will not be forwarded to that inmate for at least three months.
5. If the media crew intends to enter a secure area of the prison to conduct the interview, all media representatives will be asked to furnish their legal name, date of birth, gender, and driver's license number (if available) so that criminal background checks can be conducted. The NH-DOC will deny entry for any individuals with a felony in their history. Any other members of the media crew who do not have a felony will be permitted to enter the facility.
6. Inmates may request that members of the media be placed on their visiting list. Media representatives should not request to be placed on an inmate's visiting list without the inmate's consent. Note: Addition to an inmate's visitation list also requires a complete criminal background check. The inmate has full access to

his/her visiting list and all of the information therein including the visitor's driver's license number and Social Security number.

7. Media may write to inmates in prison and inmates may choose to respond or disregard that correspondence. Letters should be addressed to the inmate, his/her identification number, and the facility where the offender is located (For a list of facility addresses please refer to [the FAQ page](#)). Department staff will not "pass on messages" to inmates to find out if they received the letter. Media representatives may not send stamped self-addressed envelopes to inmates. Inmates who choose to respond must purchase stamps and envelopes from the prison canteen. Note: It is department policy to screen all letters coming from and going to the prison to check for contraband. Inmates open legal correspondences from counsel in the presence of staff.
8. Media may not telephone an inmate in prison. An inmate has a telephone list similar to a visiting list. The inmate may request that members of the media be added to or removed from that list with at least 24 hours notice. All inmate calls to media (and all members of the public) will be "collect." A recorded message will indicate that the call is from the New Hampshire State Prison.
9. Inmates have limited contact with the public during the first 30 days of their incarceration while they are in quarantine. One-on-one interviews are prohibited during this time.
10. Under DOC policy, inmates that are housed in the Special Housing Unit (maximum security) have limited contact with the public. One-on-one interviews with inmates in SHU are prohibited.
11. Interviews with residents of the Secure Psychiatric Unit are permitted as long as the media contact is not contraindicated by his/her mental health treatment protocol. These requests require an assessment and diagnosis from the resident's treatment provider. In some cases it may also require the approval of the resident's outside legal guardian. Such requests are handled on a case by case basis between the Public Information Officer and the media representative.
12. Inmates who are under administrative review often lose visiting and/or telephone privileges. During that period of time, inmate interviews with the media will be prohibited. Note: Letters may be exchanged in any of the last four instances.
13. The department makes every effort to allow reasonable free expression and discussion between media and inmate. Generally, staff will not intrude on the interview. However, media should be aware that equipment searches and staff observation might occur at any time. Media could also be removed from the facility if any rules violations occur or someone's personal safety is at risk.
14. Media interviews will occur in the visiting room of the facility or in an area designated by the Warden or Commissioner's office that will not disrupt the orderly operation of the prison. Interviews are prohibited in the inmate's cell, housing unit, prison yard, or any other location that we deem to be a security risk for the facility. Cameras and/or other recording devices are permitted in designated areas of each facility as long as it is coordinated in advance.
15. Members of the media cannot give items to inmates during an interview. This is a violation of RSA 622:24, which prohibits the "Delivery of Articles to Prisoners." This is a Class-B felony. Likewise, inmates cannot give items to a media representative during the interview.

While we agree on the importance of keeping the public and your audience informed about what we do, we have developed these policies to allow as much public access as possible while maintaining a high level of security. We appreciate your cooperation on this.

Any interview requests should be sent to NH Dept. of Corrections, Jeff Lyons, Public Information Officer, PO Box 1806, Concord, NH 03302-1806. Phone: (603) 271-5602. To speed up the process we welcome these requests by fax at (603) 271-5643 or [by e-mail](#).

