



**STATE OF MONTANA  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS  
POLICY DIRECTIVE**

Policy No. DOC 3.1.21	Subject: <b>INMATE COUNT AND SUPERVISION</b>
Chapter 3: FACILITY/PROGRAM OPERATIONS	Page 1 of 5
Section 1: Security Operations	Effective Date: 3/01/1997
Signature: /s/ Loraine Wodnik, Deputy Director	Revision Date: 12/16/2016

**I. POLICY**

The Department of Corrections will maintain safe and secure facility operations through a comprehensive inmate accountability system that includes scheduled and unscheduled physical counts, accurate record-keeping, and effective staff supervision.

**II. APPLICABILITY**

All secure facilities Department-owned and contracted, as specified in the contract.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

Administrator – The official, regardless of local title (division or facility administrator, bureau chief, warden, superintendent), ultimately responsible for the division, facility or program operation and management.

Census Check – A count taken in housing units or other locations during periods between official counts to determine if inmates are in their assigned areas.

Control Center – The facility area, or non-centralized functional equivalent, that monitors and coordinates facility safety and security systems and supervises staff and inmate movement.

Cross Count – Two consecutive visual counts of each inmate by two officers to ensure count accuracy, typically conducted during the official count.

Disability – A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of a person’s major life activities, a person who has a history of such an impairment, or a person who is perceived by others as having such an impairment. See *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 USC § 12101, et seq.*, as amended.

Emergency Count – An official, unscheduled count taken in an emergency situation, e.g., a disturbance or a suspected escape, to immediately account for each inmate.

Official Count – A periodic, scheduled daily count taken to account for each inmate in the facility.

Outcount – A count taken on inmates who are out of their housing units during an official count with the results tabulated into the official total.

Picture Count – A count that verifies inmate identities through direct comparison with their picture identification cards.

Stand-up Count – A count that requires inmates to stand at their cell doors or end of beds to demonstrate they are physically present and not deceiving the observer through the use of dummies or other simulations.

#### **IV. DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVES**

##### **A. General Requirements**

1. Facility administrators will establish procedures for physically counting inmates in accordance with this policy. Facility procedures will:
  - a. require five counts per 24 hour period, with a minimum of two official counts per 24 hour period;
  - b. account for all inmates in legal custody on a master count record compiled by the control center officer that includes written documentation of inmates on temporary absence from the facility;
  - c. require staff counting inmates to see a “living, breathing body;”
  - d. specify under what circumstances picture and stand-up counts may be used;
  - e. require staff to report the area and unit counts and outcounts to the control center on official count slips in ink without any changes or erasures;
  - f. require a recount when the accuracy of a count cannot be verified and specify how many recounts are necessary after staff reports an inaccurate number;
  - g. prohibit clearing count activity until all inmates are accounted for and all area and unit count slips and outcount totals are reconciled with the master count sheet;
  - h. prohibit inmate movement from areas and units until the count is officially cleared by the control center unless an emergent situation arises;
  - i. prohibit inmates from participating in the preparation, documentation, or operation of the count process, including preparation of picture cards or any other identification and accountability records; and
  - j. require that inmates with disabilities be provided reasonable disability related accommodations during count.

##### **B. Count Records**

1. The facility control center will be the central repository of all master count records for up to 30 days from the time the count was taken.
2. Respective staff is responsible to know and document the whereabouts of all inmates at all times.
3. Staff will provide the control center officer with an up-to-the-minute accounting of any changes that affect inmate accountability including, but not limited to, housing unit moves, work assignments changes, off-site appointments, admissions, and releases.

##### **C. Official Count**

1. Staff will notify inmates of official count times and require inmates be counted at specific locations, typically in housing units and in assigned cells.

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2. Two officers will conduct count; however, procedures will allow for cross counts to double check the accuracy of the initial count.
3. Inmates who do not immediately cease activity during an official count, or who delay or disrupt count, will face disciplinary action.
4. Staff will cease unnecessary activity during the count process.

**D. Cross Count**

1. Facility procedures will require a minimum of one cross count per 24-hour period.
2. Two staff members will conduct a separate visual count of each inmate, compare findings to verify the accuracy of the count, and both sign the count slip.

**E. Outcount**

1. When inmates are out of their housing units during official counts for work assignments or other approved activities, supervisory staff will verify inmate presence at these locations and approve the outcount prior to the official count.
2. Staff must limit outcounts to the number necessary and submit the count numbers to the control center officer on a signed count slip.

**F. Census Check**

1. Periodic daily census checks, taken between official counts help determine whether inmates are in their assigned locations and help staff learn if inmates may be hiding, perfecting escape routes, engaging in sexual misconduct, or fabricating contraband.
2. To keep staff and inmates aware of the facilities accountability requirements staff may randomly conduct census checks over the entire facility by stopping inmate movement and counting inmates where they are located at that time.
3. Staff must document census numbers in the unit log; documentation to the control center is not required unless the census check reveals missing inmate(s), inmate(s) out of bounds, or other improper activity and may require immediate investigation.

**G. Picture Count**

1. Picture counts are necessary in the event of a missing inmate or suspected escape, or in other circumstances specified by facility procedures.
2. Staff will directly compare every inmate with his or her picture identification card and identification card information to verify identities.
3. Identification cards will be periodically reviewed to ensure inmate photos accurately portray the inmate's appearance.

**H. Stand-up Count**

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1. Staff may use stand-up counts as an option in circumstances where achieving accurate numbers and identification requires a regimented approach.
2. Facility procedures will require a minimum of one stand-up count per 24-hour period.

**I. Emergency Count**

1. Staff will conduct emergency counts in response to an immediate need to account for all inmates present at the facility. Inmates will return to their housing units at once, provided the emergency does not prohibit such movement and that the facility shift supervisor has cleared the movement.
2. Staff will conduct emergency counts in circumstances such as: a missing inmate, after a lengthy power failure, or when indicated by a facility disturbance.
3. Control center staff will organize records so that an emergency count may be completed quickly and accurately, i.e., the master count sheet prepared immediately, with verbal or telephone outcounts approved by the designated supervisor.

**J. Direct Supervision**

1. While the count process is integral to inmate accountability, direct staff supervision is equally integral and especially critical to facility and inmate security. Staff will:
  - a. assume duty in housing areas and other critical posts 24 hours-a-day to supervise, observe, and interact with inmates;
  - b. actively patrol housing units and be alert to unusual incidents, changes in inmate behavior, or any signs of unusual activity or behavior in the facility;
  - c. stay out of office areas to the extent duties will allow to maintain personal contact with inmates in their units and surrounding areas;
  - d. frequently observe key, possibly problematic, facility areas as part of an effective internal surveillance program;
  - e. conduct irregularly scheduled rounds in locked or special management housing units to provide adequate checks on inmates with mental health, suicide, or behavioral management issues;
  - f. use electronic supervision to augment, but not replace, direct staff supervision;
  - g. maintain voice communication capability with inmates at all times;
  - h. devise systems to provide additional staff supervision when necessary or recommended, e.g., at shakedown points outside activity, kitchen, or dining hall areas;
  - i. provide supplemental levels of supervision when required for random, comprehensive census checks for the entire facility; and
  - j. ensure post orders and supervisory training describe actions to take in the event of planned movements or drills, emergencies, or unauthorized mass movements in any part of the facility.
2. Facility procedures will ensure that inmates are able to shower, perform bodily functions, and change clothing without nonmedical staff of the opposite gender

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viewing their breasts, buttocks, or genitalia, except in exigent circumstances or when viewing is incidental to routine cell checks.

3. Procedures will require staff of the opposite gender to announce their presence when entering an inmate housing unit.

**V. CLOSING**

Questions concerning this policy should be directed to the facility administrator.

**VI. REFERENCES**

- A. 4-4187; *ACA Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*
- B. *ACA Guidelines for the Development of a Security Program, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition*
- C. 3-JTS-3A-13; *ACA Standards for Juvenile Correctional Facilities, 2003*
- D. *DOC Policy 3.1.11, Offender Movement Control*

**VII. ATTACHMENTS**

None