



**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
MONTANA STATE PRISON
OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE**

Procedure:	MSP 5.5.104 INMATE HOUSING UNIT REPRESENTATIVES
Effective Date:	July 1, 2006 Page 1 of 4 and 1 Attachments
Revision Date(s):	October 30, 2020, November 30, 2021
Reference(s):	DOC 4.2.3
Signature:	/s/ Jim Salmonsens / Warden

I. PURPOSE:

To establish procedures for the election of inmate housing unit representatives as a means of facilitating communication between inmates, the Unit Management Team (UMT) and Montana State Prison (MSP) administration.

II. DEFINITIONS:

Inmate Unit Representative - An inmate elected in a housing unit to bring forward concerns of other unit inmates to the Unit Management Team and MSP Administration. All housing units at MSP, with the exception of the MDIU, will have a designated inmate unit representative.

Unit Management Team – The housing unit staff consisting of the Unit Manager, Case Manager(s), Sergeant(s), Security Technicians, and Correctional Officers.

III. PROCEDURES:

Inmate Unit Representatives will represent the inmate population in interaction with the Unit Management Team and MSP Administration as outlined in this procedure.

A. The purpose and scope of an Inmate Unit Representative is to:

1. Represent the general needs and views of the inmates from his housing unit by presenting these issues to the UMT and MSP Administration.
2. Provide suggestions for improving living conditions and/or facility operations that effect inmates in the respective housing unit.
3. Encourage other unit inmates to adhere to rules, maintain clear conduct, cooperate with staff, and prepare for their transition within the facility and back into society.
4. Direct inmates with individual concerns to address them by contacting the appropriate staff member or going through the inmate grievance process.

B. Inmate Unit Representative Duties and Expectations:

1. Listens to concerns of inmates housed in the unit he is representing.
2. Presents the general concerns of inmates, and suggested solutions, to a member of the UMT as meeting agenda items (see section F.2. below).
3. Disseminates correct and accurate information to the other inmates in the housing unit

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from his meetings/interactions with members of the UMT and MSP Administration.

4. Assists unit staff in communicating information to and from inmates on an “as needed” basis.
5. Interacts with all staff and inmates in a respectful and considerate manner.

C. Inmate Unit Representative Qualifications/Criteria

1. Each housing unit will select a representative from the housing unit population. To be eligible the inmate selected must have a minimum of six months clear conduct immediately preceding the election, this includes any minor or major write-ups.
2. Inmates must have a minimum of 90 days within the unit to be eligible to apply for unit representative.

CI. Elections

1. The UMT will ensure that notices of an upcoming inmate unit representative election are posted not less than five days prior to the election.
2. Inmates from each unit will elect one representative according to the following process:
 - a. Once an election notice is posted, the inmates from the unit may submit written Nominations for the Inmate Unit Representative to the Unit Manager.
 - b. The UMT will select up to three qualified candidates from those nominated. If no qualified inmates are nominated for the position, the Unit Manager will ask for qualified volunteers. If more than one qualified inmate volunteers an election will be held; staff will post the names of the candidates who accept the nomination along with the date the election is to be held (this will be posted a minimum of three days prior to the date of the election)
 - 1) If only one qualified inmate volunteers, the UMT may appoint that inmate as the inmate unit representative.
 - c. On the scheduled election day staff will supervise a secret ballot election.
 - d. At least two members of the UMT will tally the ballots and post the results of the election in the unit.
 - e. The inmate with the highest vote total will be the inmate unit representative for the designated term.

CII. Terms

1. Inmate unit representatives will serve a one-year term and may not reapply for minimum of 2 years to give other inmates equal opportunity to serve.
2. If an inmate unit representative resigns, transfers to another unit or institution, or is removed from the position for any reason, an election for a new Inmate Unit Representative will be held as soon as possible.
3. Inmate unit representatives may be removed from the position or have their term cancelled if any of the following occur:
 - a. The inmate unit representative fails to maintain a good disciplinary record by receiving a minor or major write-up.
 - b. The inmate unit representative misuses or abuses the position by engaging in

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conduct that jeopardizes the safety, security or good order of the facility.

- c. The unit representative engages in any conduct or behavior that is determined to be inappropriate.
- d. The inmate unit representative exhibits an inability to interact or work appropriately with inmates or staff.
accusatory, inappropriate, or have the potential to affect the security or orderly operation of the facility.

F. Meetings

1. The UMT will meet monthly with the unit's inmate representative.
2. The UMT will schedule the day, time, and location of the meeting, and notify the unit representative.
3. The inmate unit representative must submit proposed agenda topics in writing to the UMT at least one week in advance of this meeting. Topics must relate to issues that affect the majority, or large groups, of inmates within the unit. The problems/concerns of individual inmates will be addressed through the inmate grievance procedure.
4. The UMT will fill out an *MSP Housing Unit Representative Monthly Meeting Form (attachment A)*, leaving the response/resolution sections blank. A copy of the form will be given to the representative prior to the meeting.
5. Discussion at the meeting will be restricted to the agenda topics on the form.
6. The UMT may invite additional staff or unit inmates to attend the meeting.
7. The UMT will fill in response/resolution sections on the form during or after the monthly meeting. Within ten working days of the meeting, the UMT will ensure copies of the completed form are forwarded to the unit representative, Warden, Associate Wardens, Bureau Chiefs, Command Post, housing unit Sergeants, Case Managers, Security Technicians, unit Correctional Officers and CSRT, and are posted in the living unit blocks/cubes and appropriate bulletin boards.
8. If an agenda item isn't addressed at the meeting, or requires input from others, it will be put on the agenda for the next meeting.
9. In the event the UMT and the unit representative are unable to reach an agreement on an issue, the matter will be held in abeyance until the next unit managers meeting. The issue will be addressed with the Associate Wardens making the final decision. When resolved the issue and response will be added to the next unit meeting form.
10. Any items initially approved by the UMT requiring IWF funding will be processed in accordance with *DOC 1.2.12, Adult Inmate Welfare Accounts*.

G. Supplies

1. The respective UMT will provide the inmate unit representative with the office supplies necessary for his duties.

H. Records

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1. Each UMT will establish and maintain a filing system to archive the written discussion topics submitted by the representatives as documented on the *MSP Housing Unit Representative Monthly Meeting Forms*.

I. Inmate Welfare Fund Representatives

1. The MSP Administration will select two inmates (one from low-side, one from high-side) to serve as the representatives for the Inmate Welfare Fund. These representatives will not be current inmate unit representatives.

J. Stipends

1. The housing unit and IWF representatives will receive a monetary stipend from the IWF in accordance with *DOC Policies 5.1.1 Inmate Assignments* and *DOC 1.2.12 Inmate Welfare Accounts*.

IV. CLOSING:

Questions concerning this policy shall be referred to the Warden

V. REFERENCES

DOC 1.2.12 Inmate Welfare Account

DOC 5.1.1 Inmate Assignments

DOC 4.2.3 Unit Management

VI. ATTACHMENTS:

MSP Housing Unit Representative Monthly Meeting Form

attachment A

MSP HOUSING UNIT REPRESENTATIVE MONTHLY MEETING FORM

Date of Meeting: ____ / ____ / ____

Housing Unit: _____

Staff Present: _____

Unit Representative: _____ ID#: _____

1. Agenda Item/Issue: _____

Response/Resolution: _____

Resolution Date: ____ / ____ / ____

2. Agenda Item/Issue: _____

Response/Resolution: _____

Resolution Date: ____ / ____ / ____

3. Agenda Item/Issue: _____

Response/Resolution: _____

Resolution Date: ____ / ____ / ____

4. Agenda Item/Issue: _____

Response/Resolution: _____

Resolution Date: ____ / ____ / ____

5. Agenda Item/Issue: _____

Response/Resolution: _____

Resolution Date: ____ / ____ / ____

The above agenda items were discussed on the meeting date listed above and reflect the handling or resolution of the issues. My signature signifies that the Response/Resolutions noted are correct and accurate.

Staff Signatures: _____

Unit Representative Signature: _____

Copy to: Inmate Rep. Unit Bulletin Board(s) Unit Manager file Associate Wardens Bureau Chiefs Warden
Command Post Other: _____ Other: _____