

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION

**WEST VIRGINIA
DIVISION OF CORRECTIONS
& REHABILITATION**

NUMBER: 305.00

EFFECTIVE DATE: 15 October 2025

SUBJECT: INMATE/RESIDENT COUNT

POLICY DIRECTIVE

PURPOSE:

To provide policy requiring guidelines be maintained that ensure all adult inmates and juvenile residents are accounted for at all times.

REFERENCE:

ACA Expected Practices 5-ACI-3A-13, 5-ALDF-2A-16, 5-JCF-2A-04, 3-JDF-3A-13, and 2-CO-3A-01.

RESPONSIBILITY:

Superintendents are responsible for enacting Operational Procedures to ensure compliance with this Policy Directive.

CANCELLATION:

Any previous written instruction on the subject, including DCR Policy Directive 305.00, dated 17 August 2020.

APPLICABILITY:

All facilities within the Division of Corrections and Rehabilitation. This Policy is to be reviewed in all employee orientation, on-the-job, basic, and in-service training. This Policy is available for general distribution and is to be made available for inmate/resident review upon the effective date.

DEFINITIONS:

Emergency Count: An unscheduled **mandatory standing count** conducted due to any incident of such nature and gravity which would reasonably lead an employee to believe a possible escape occurred or was occurring.

Flex Count: A formal count taken at a modified, irregular time at the direction of the Shift Commander or higher authority.

Formal Count: Regularly scheduled count in which each inmate/resident is counted at a specific time and location in an organized manner.

Informal Count: An unscheduled count conducted to ensure that all inmates/residents in an employee's charge are accounted for.

Mandatory Standing Count: A formal count in which inmates/residents are required to stand (if physically able). The counting employee will compare the inmate/resident being counted against the inmate's/resident's identification photo (mug shot) maintained in the Unit Book or Roster.

Out-Count: Counts of inmates/residents that are not conducted at their housing assignment location (e.g., on-grounds work assignment, classroom, etc.). This also includes approved temporary absences from the facility such as outside work crews/work assignment, off-site medical appointments, furloughs, etc.

Unit Book or Roster: An inmate/resident accountability document established and maintained by each Unit Manager or other designated employee that lists the current roster of inmates/residents housed on the unit by full name, OID number and current full-face identification photo (mug shot).

POLICY:

- I. **Regardless of the type of count, reason for the count, or the time of day at which count is taken, employees are required to count only living, breathing flesh. If obvious signs of life are not readily detected (such as rise/fall of chest), the employee shall attempt to awaken the inmate/resident. Employees counting inmates/residents will resolve all doubts in favor of facility security and public safety.**
- II. Each facility shall conduct **at least** five (5) formal counts in a twenty-four (24) hour period. Superintendents shall ensure formal count times are listed in the facility daily operational schedule available to all employees and inmates/residents.
 - A. At least one (1) formal count shall be conducted on each correctional officer shift.
 - B. At least one (1) formal count daily shall be a mandatory standing count. All inmates/residents are required to stand, if physically able, at their bedside. In order to positively identify the inmate/resident, the counting employee will compare each inmate/resident counted with the identification photos (mug shots) in the unit book or roster.
 - C. There shall be at least one (1) formal count conducted before inmates/residents begin checking out of housing areas for assigned activities.

- D. It is required that all inmate/resident movement cease from the time count is announced until the time count is cleared.
 - E. Only necessary vehicle and staff traffic, as approved by the Shift Commander, may be permitted within the secure perimeter during count.
 - F. Formal counts should be scheduled so that they do not conflict with approved program activities and normal operations.
 - G. In order to disrupt potential planning behaviors by inmates/residents and to encourage employees to follow proper count procedures, Shift Commanders and higher authorities are authorized and required to periodically conduct flex counts.
 - H. Upon entering a housing unit or any area where an inmate or resident may be showering, performing bodily functions, changing clothing, staff of the opposite gender shall announce their presence, except in exigent circumstances, or when such viewing is incidental to routine cell checks.
- III. All employees have responsibility for the completion of an accurate count, familiarity with possible systems of error and to ensure the integrity of the counting process. Supervisory personnel will ensure full compliance to all policies and procedures related to the conducting of inmate/resident counts by employees and inmates/residents.
- IV. Superintendents shall implement Operational Procedures at community corrections facilities to ensure appropriate accountability procedures for the authorized temporary release of inmates for work or furloughs and to ensure the inmate arrives at the approved destination.
- V. Inmate/resident assistance in any portion of count activity (e.g., preparation, processing, handling, or delivery of count-related documents; counting other inmates/residents; etc.) is prohibited.
- VI. While count procedures and housing design may vary from one facility to another, the way counts are conducted shall be the same. When a count is announced, inmates/residents will return to their assigned cell/room or living area where they are to remain quiet until the count is cleared, unless the inmate/resident has been approved by the Chief of Security/Chief Correctional Officer or designee to be on an Out-Count. No inmate/resident movement, other activity, or talking will be tolerated during the taking of count.
- VII. If an inmate/resident is tardy for count, misses or fails to report for count, leaves his/her assigned count location before count clears, or takes any deliberate action designed to cause confusion or error during counts, the inmate/resident may be charged with a rule violation. No person shall cause or contribute to an inmate/resident missing count, nor take any deliberate action designed to cause confusion or error during counts.

- VIII. Inmates/residents that are off facility grounds for approved reasons are on an approved Out-Count and are considered “present for count” as long as their established return to the facility time has not expired.
- IX. Employees shall conduct periodic informal counts of inmates/residents under their supervision in order to ensure inmate/resident custody accountability during the periods in between formal counts.
- X. The staff member responsible for maintaining the master count record (typically assigned to central control or count office) will be provided up-to-the-minute information regarding all housing moves, work assignments, hospital admissions, releases, intakes/admissions, and/or any other situation or change which could affect the count. This information will be verified against the Active Offender List in OIS as part of the formal count.
- A. Central Control/Count Office will maintain accurate Master Count Sheets and Master Count Boards with all inmates/residents accounted for. Temporary absences from the facility will be documented. All count forms, tabulations, Master Count Sheets, etc. will be maintained by Central Control/Count Office for a minimum of thirty (30) days.
- B. The staff member conducting count will notify the Shift Commander prior to clearing count. The Master Count Sheet shall be approved and signed by the Shift Commander before the “count is clear” announcement is made. If a unit/post has called in an incorrect count, a facility-wide recount will be directed by Central Control/Count Office. In the event that the recount is also incorrect, Emergency Count procedures will be implemented.
- XI. All Emergency Counts will be mandatory standing counts which require inmates/residents to stand, if physically able. The counting employee will then compare the inmate/resident being counted against the inmate’s/resident’s identification photo (mug shot) maintained in the Unit Book or Roster.
- XII. Every employee has the authority and responsibility to immediately implement emergency count procedures if:
- A. A formal count fails to clear after the initial count and one (1) recount.
- B. A possible unobserved escape could have occurred as evidenced by the discovery of the means or method for escape (e.g., tunnel, ladder, unsecured exterior fire escape door or lock on a gate, hole in fence, etc.).
- C. A vehicle leaves facility grounds without first stopping for security clearance at the Main Gate.
- D. When inmates/residents off facility grounds for approved reasons are one (1) hour late past their established return to the facility time.

- E. Any other incident of similar nature and gravity occurs which reasonably leads an employee to believe a possible escape may have occurred or may be occurring.
- XIII. Employees have the authority and responsibility to immediately implement escape procedures if:
- A. An employee has directly observed an escape or escape attempt.
 - B. Confirmation of an escape has been established.
 - C. When inmates/residents off facility grounds for approved reasons are two (2) hours late past their established return to facility time.
 - D. At the direction of the Shift Commander when an emergency count fails to clear.

ATTACHMENT(S):

None.

APPROVED SIGNATURE: _____


David L. Kelly, Commissioner

09/17/2025

Date