
Inmate Access to Courts and Counsel

603.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to protect the constitutional rights of inmates to access the courts and legal counsel, while holding inmates accountable to the rules and regulations that govern conduct in Nevada County Sheriff's Office facilities. The staff at every level is reminded the fundamental constitutional right of access to courts does not end when a person is incarcerated.

603.2 POLICY

It is the policy of this office that all inmates will have access to the courts and the ability to consult with legal counsel (15 CCR 1068).

603.3 INMATE ACCESS

Staff should not unreasonably interfere with inmates' attempts to seek counsel and where appropriate should assist inmates with making confidential contact with attorneys and authorized representatives.

Access to courts and legal counsel may occur through court-appointed counsel, attorney or legal assistant visits, telephone conversations or written communication. To facilitate access, this Nevada County Sheriff's Office will minimally provide:

- Confidential attorney visiting areas that include the means by which the attorney and the inmate can share legal documents.
- Telephones that enable non-recorded attorney-client calls.
- Reasonable access to legal materials.
- A means of providing assistance through the court process by individuals trained in the law. This assistance will be available to illiterate inmates and those who cannot speak or read English or who have disabilities that would impair their ability to access.
- Writing materials, envelopes and postage for indigent inmates for legal communications and correspondence.

The Jail Commander shall be responsible for ensuring that information regarding access to courts and legal counsel and requesting legal materials or legal assistance is included in the inmate handbook, that is provided during inmate orientation.

603.4 CONFIDENTIALITY

All communication between inmates and their attorneys is confidential, including telephone conversations, written communication and video conferencing. The content of written attorney-client communication will not be reviewed or censored but the documents may be inspected for contraband.

Inmate Access to Courts and Counsel

Outgoing and incoming legal correspondence shall be routed through the staff, who have received special training in inspecting confidential documents and who are accountable for maintaining confidentiality. Incoming legal correspondence shall be opened and inspected for contraband in the presence of the recipient inmate.

Inmates may seek the assistance of other inmates in writing writs and other legal correspondence to the courts, when needed subject to the security and safety needs of the inmates, staff and the facilities.

603.5 INMATE REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE

Written materials addressing how an inmate can access local attorneys and key legal documents shall be available in each housing unit. Staff shall provide these materials to any inmate upon request. However, staff shall not provide legal advice or assist any inmate in the completion of any legal document.

Habeas corpus forms shall be made available to any inmate by the staff upon request.

See attachment: [Writ of Habeas Corpus.pdf](#)

A copy of this form can be found at this link <https://www.courts.ca.gov/formname.htm>

Legal forms filled out by the inmate shall be forwarded to court administration directly or via an appointed legal assistant.

603.6 VISITATION RELATED TO LEGAL DEFENSE

Visits with inmates that are related to legal defense, including attorneys, paralegals and investigators, will be permitted only in the areas designated for legal visitation or by way of video visitation to assure confidentiality (15 CCR 1068(b)).

- (a) Visits shall be of a reasonable length of time to discourage any allegation the defense of the inmate was hindered due to the length of time allowed for the legally authorized visit. These visits shall be of such a length of time that they do not interfere with the security, order and discipline of the facilities. The permissible time for visitation should be flexible but shall not substantially interfere with other facility schedules, such as medical examinations, meal service or other required activities.
- (b) Only materials brought to Nevada County Sheriff's Office facilities by an approved legal assistant shall be allowed.
- (c) All materials shall be subject to security inspections by the staff for logging and distribution.

603.7 MAIL

Legal mail shall be handled in accordance with the Inmate Mail Policy.

Inmate Access to Courts and Counsel

603.8 IN PROPRIA PERSONA (PRO PER) INMATES

Inmates may be granted pro per status by court order only. Any time a court order is received designating an inmate as having been granted pro per status, all relevant records systems at the facility shall be updated to reflect this information. A copy of the court order shall be maintained in the inmate's file in accordance with established records retention schedules.

The court may, but is not required to, appoint to an inmate who is designated pro per a back-up attorney, paralegal or other person to assist the inmate with legal research. All information related to appointed assistants should be recorded in the relevant facility records.

Any provision of legal materials shall be in accordance with court directives and in consultation with the County Counsel.

603.8.1 PRO PER STATUS MISUSE

Any inmate who is granted pro per status and is found to be misusing or abusing that status to the extent that it poses a demonstrable threat to the safety and security of the facility shall be immediately reported to the Jail Commander. The Jail Commander may recommend the suspension or a limitation of the inmate's pro per privileges if they adversely affect the safety and security of the jail.

Upon the concurrence with the findings and recommendation of the Jail Commander, Sheriff or the authorized designee shall consult with the Office's legal counsel prior to notifying the court of any intent to limit the described pro per privileges.

The inmate may petition the court if he/she is dissatisfied with the action taken.

603.8.2 PRO PER STATUS - MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES

A pro per inmate may possess the following materials and supplies. These items may be retained by the inmate but must be kept in the container supplied for such purpose. The items may include:

- Up to one-half of a ream of 8½-inch x 11-inch plain bond typing paper
- Up to three ruled legal notepads
- Standard legal size envelopes
- One dozen (maximum) black lead golf pencils
- Two erasers
- One legal size accordion file
- 9-inch x 12-inch manila envelopes and 10-inch x 14-inch manila envelopes
- Up to a maximum of four law books at one time (paperback only)

Unless otherwise ordered by the court, the Office shall have no obligation to supply the materials listed above. Supplies provided by a court legal liaison will be received and distributed by the jail lieutenant or the authorized designee. All supplies distributed to the inmate will be recorded in the

Nevada County Sheriff's Office

Custody Manual

Inmate Access to Courts and Counsel

inmate's pro per activities record. Supplies not listed in this policy are subject to approval by the Jail Commander or the authorized designee.

Copies of an inmate's final legal (criminal case) work product, upon the inmate's request, may be provided subject to arrangements with the court.

Inmates may purchase their own legal books and materials. However, such materials will be subject to safety inspection and rules pertaining to items permitted to be in the inmate's possession. Personal books must be marked with the inmate's name and booking number.

Any books or materials found in the inmate's possession beyond what is authorized will be returned or placed in the inmate's property.

603.8.3 PRO PER INMATES INTERVIEWING WITNESSES

A pro per inmate may be permitted to interview prospective witnesses in the regular visitation area. Requests for visits outside of normal visiting hours will be directed to a supervisor for approval and should be accommodated when practicable.

Interviews conducted by pro per inmates are subject to the following rules and restrictions:

- (a) No interview will be permitted without notification from a judge confirming or validating the prospective witness. The pro per inmate is responsible for providing the judge with the list of prospective witnesses for validation.
- (b) No visit shall be permitted by a prospective witness who is in the custody of this office or otherwise detained by a government agency, except upon a specific court order.

603.8.4 TELEPHONE USAGE

Pro per inmates may use the telephones in their housing areas to place calls concerning their cases. Court-authorized pro per telephone calls shall not be monitored and shall be provided without charge to the inmate in accordance with the orders of the court (see the Inmate Telephone Access Policy).

Attachments

Writ of Habeas Corpus.pdf

Name: _____

Address: _____

CDC or ID Number: _____

(Court)

PETITION FOR WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS

No. _____

(To be supplied by the Clerk of the Court)

Petitioner
vs.
Respondent

INSTRUCTIONS—READ CAREFULLY

- If you are challenging an order of commitment or a criminal conviction and are filing this petition in the Superior Court, you should file it in the county that made the order.
- If you are challenging the conditions of your confinement and are filing this petition in the Superior Court, you should file it in the county in which you are confined.

- Read the entire form *before* answering any questions.
- This petition must be clearly handwritten in ink or typed. You should exercise care to make sure all answers are true and correct. Because the petition includes a verification, the making of a statement that you know is false may result in a conviction for perjury.
- Answer all applicable questions in the proper spaces. If you need additional space, add an extra page and indicate that your answer is "continued on additional page."
- If you are filing this petition in the superior court, you only need to file the original unless local rules require additional copies. Many courts require more copies.
- If you are filing this petition in the Court of Appeal, file the original of the petition and one set of any supporting documents.
- If you are filing this petition in the California Supreme Court, file the original and 10 copies of the petition and, if separately bound, an original and 2 copies of any supporting documents.
- Notify the Clerk of the Court in writing if you change your address after filing your petition.

Approved by the Judicial Council of California for use under rule 8.380 of the California Rules of Court (as amended effective January 1, 2018). Subsequent amendments to rule 8.380 may change the number of copies to be furnished to the Supreme Court and Court of Appeal.

This petition concerns:

- A conviction
- Parole
- A sentence
- Credits
- Jail or prison conditions
- Prison discipline
- Other (specify): _____

1. Your name: _____
2. Where are you incarcerated? _____
3. Why are you in custody? Criminal conviction Civil commitment

Answer items a through i to the best of your ability.

a. State reason for civil commitment or, if criminal conviction, state nature of offense and enhancements (for example, "robbery with use of a deadly weapon").

b. Penal or other code sections: _____

c. Name and location of sentencing or committing court:

d. Case number: _____

e. Date convicted or committed: _____

f. Date sentenced: _____

g. Length of sentence: _____

h. When do you expect to be released? _____

i. Were you represented by counsel in the trial court? Yes No *If yes, state the attorney's name and address:*

4. What was the LAST plea you entered? (Check one):

- Not guilty
- Guilty
- Nolo contendere
- Other: _____

5. If you pleaded not guilty, what kind of trial did you have?

- Jury
- Judge without a jury
- Submitted on transcript
- Awaiting trial

8. Did you appeal from the conviction, sentence, or commitment? Yes No If yes, give the following information:

a. Name of court ("Court of Appeal" or "Appellate Division of Superior Court"):

b. Result: _____ c. Date of decision: _____

d. Case number or citation of opinion, if known: _____

e. Issues raised: (1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

f. Were you represented by counsel on appeal? Yes No If yes, state the attorney's name and address, if known:

9. Did you seek review in the California Supreme Court? Yes No If yes, give the following information:

a. Result: _____ b. Date of decision: _____

c. Case number or citation of opinion, if known: _____

d. Issues raised: (1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

10. If your petition makes a claim regarding your conviction, sentence, or commitment that you or your attorney did not make on appeal, explain why the claim was not made on appeal (see *In re Dixon* (1953) 41 Cal.2d 756, 759):

11. Administrative review:

a. If your petition concerns conditions of confinement or other claims for which there are administrative remedies, failure to exhaust administrative remedies may result in the denial of your petition, even if it is otherwise meritorious. (See *In re Dexter* (1979) 25 Cal.3d 921, 925.) Explain what administrative review you sought or explain why you did not seek such review.

b. Did you seek the highest level of administrative review available? Yes No

Attach documents that show you have exhausted your administrative remedies. (See People v. Duvall (1995) 9 Cal.4th 464, 474.)

12. Other than direct appeal, have you filed any other petitions, applications, or motions with respect to this conviction, commitment, or issue in any court, including this court? (See *In re Clark* (1993) 5 Cal.4th 750, 767-769 and *In re Miller* (1941) 17 Cal.2d 734, 735.)

Yes If yes, continue with number 13. No If no, skip to number 15.

- 13 a. (1) Name of court: _____
 (2) Nature of proceeding (for example, "habeas corpus petition"): _____
 (3) Issues raised: (a) _____
 (b) _____
 (4) Result (attach order or explain why unavailable): _____
 (5) Date of decision: _____
- b. (1) Name of court: _____
 (2) Nature of proceeding: _____
 (3) Issues raised: (a) _____
 (b) _____
 (4) Result (attach order or explain why unavailable): _____
 (5) Date of decision: _____

c. For additional prior petitions, applications, or motions, provide the same information on a separate page.

14. If any of the courts listed in number 13 held a hearing, state name of court, date of hearing, nature of hearing, and result:

15. Explain any delay in the discovery of the claimed grounds for relief and in raising the claims in this petition. (See *In re Robbins* (1998) 18 Cal.4th 770, 780.)

16. Are you presently represented by counsel? Yes No If yes, state the attorney's name and address, if known:

17. Do you have any petition, appeal, or other matter pending in any court? Yes No If yes, explain:

18. If this petition might lawfully have been made to a lower court, state the circumstances justifying an application to this court:

I, the undersigned, say: I am the petitioner in this action. I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing allegations and statements are true and correct, except as to matters that are stated on my information and belief, and as to those matters, I believe them to be true.

Date: _____



(SIGNATURE OF PETITIONER)