

## Update: Phone call rate increases to roll back tonight

February 3, 2011

As you are all aware by now, most inmate phone call rates increased unexpectedly Feb. 1.

As a result of the quick notifications that DOC staff received from inmates and inmate-families, we immediately launched an investigation into what happened and why the department wasn't alerted by our inmate phone service provider ahead of any proposed rate changes.

DOC contacted the inmate phone contract administrator and the phone service provider, and confirmed that rates had been changed effective Feb. 1.

Upon receiving confirmation of the change, we asked for a contract review. Based on that review it is the state's position that the phone service provider was in violation of its contract with the state of Oregon for inmate phone services, which requires:

- 30-day notification prior to rate changes to collect calls.
- Mutual agreement between the phone service provider, the contract administrator and DOC on any rate changes to debit calls.

In this case, neither action occurred.

As a result, the state demanded that rates for inmate phone calls be immediately returned to previous levels. We also requested repayment of extra charges incurred by inmates or families during the period of time when the rate changes occurred. **The service provider has responded, and phone call rates will be rolled back tonight to Jan. 31, 2011 levels.**

One important fact to clarify is that this problem occurred with our existing phone service provider, and not as a result of a new phone contract with a new provider.

Again, we apologize that inmates, families and friends experienced frustration from such a significant and unexpected change in rates.