



**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
Programs**



Title:	Religious Property (Inmate)	DOC Policy: 90.2.4
Effective:	11/14/08	Supercedes: N/A
Applicability: Institution staff, Religious Services staff, and Transport staff		
Directives Cross-Reference:		
Rule: Religious Activities – Div 143		
Policy: Searches of Medicine Bags – 90.2.2		
Attachments:		
Attachment 1 – Spiritual or Cultural Items for General Population Inmates		
Attachment 2 – Spiritual or Cultural Items for Special Housing Inmates		

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to identify approved religious items for inmates in general population and special housing, including items inmates may have in their cell or bunk area and those which are not restricted to the cell or bunk area.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Religious Property: Items that are used or worn as part of an inmate’s spirituality or cultural practice.
- B. Special Housing: Areas of institutions where inmates with special needs or custody concerns may be housed (e.g., Administrative Housing, Disciplinary Segregation, Mental Health Infirmary, and Intensive Management Unit).

III. POLICY

- A. It is the policy of the Oregon Department of Corrections to allow inmates to practice their spiritual or cultural traditions without jeopardizing the safety and security of the facility. It is also the policy of the ODOC that all staff show courtesy and respect for the various faith traditions practiced by inmates in Department facilities.
- B. Attached are two lists for approved spiritual items:
 - 1. Attachment 1 – Items approved for inmates in general population
 - 2. Attachment 2 – Items approved for inmates in special housing
- C. General Guidelines
 - 1. Use of Spiritual Items: Items authorized are only to be used in a manner consistent with the purpose of the item. Misuse of items may result in confiscation in accordance with the DOC rule on **Personal Property (Inmate)**, OAR 291-117. Items may not be displayed or used as decorations in the cell or bunk area. When not in use, the items must be stored with the inmate’s other personal property.

2. Source of Spiritual Items: Most items are available through the commissary. Others may come from volunteers once they have been approved by the chaplain.
3. Items once available on the commissary may become unavailable because the vendor is no longer able to supply them. In such cases, Religious Services will work with the commissary in locating a new supplier.
4. Search of Spiritual or Cultural Items: All spiritual or cultural items are subject to inspection and search in accordance with the rule on **Religious Activities**, OAR 291-143. A search will be done in a respectful way. When possible, inmates and not staff should handle the item and display it to the staff member conducting the search. Medicine bags shall be searched in accordance with the policy of **Searches of Medicine Bags**, #90.2.2.
5. Native American prayer feathers may be hand carried to the yard, but not to work or other programming. They may not be worn by the inmate. There is no limit on the number of prayer feathers permitted. However, only three feathers can be carried in an institution or transferred to another institution. Additional feathers must be sent home if the inmate is transferring to another institution. Feathers may be bound together with a piece of string and simple beading.
6. Wearing of Spiritual Medallions: There is no limit to the number of medallions and pendants an inmate may own. However, an inmate may only wear up to three medallions on a single chain and only one chain may be worn at a time. An inmate in special housing may have only one medallion and no chain.
7. Modesty Clothing: Islamic or Muslim inmates may wear shorts (for men) or robes (for women) when showering.
8. Islamic prayer rugs must be rolled up and stored in the cell or bunk area when not in use at prayer times.
9. Religious Items Normally Restricted to the Cell or Bunk Area: Generally these items are for individual use only in the cell or bunk area. However, in general population, they may be used in a group at appropriate events organized by Religious Services.
10. Spiritual or Cultural Items Not Restricted to the Cell or Bunk Area: Generally these items are worn under the shirt or carried in the pocket. They may not be worn on the wrist or ankle. In general population, they may be carried, when appropriate, throughout the institution.
11. A Tefillin must be approved by a chaplain following a sincerity interview. Tefillin will not be available on the commissary and must be received through a package authorization. Tefillin are only approved for use in general population.
12. Religious literature may be requested through the chapel library or from a publisher. Books equal to or more than ¼ inch thick should have an authorization stamp from the mailroom or chapel. In general population, religious books,

including a spiritual journal, may be carried to the yard and worship/religious study areas.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

Attachments 1 and 2 may be updated by Religious Services in consultation with institution security managers without revising the policy. Updated attachments will be distributed as necessary.

Certified: Signature on file
Birdie Worley, Rules Coordinator

Approved: Signature on file
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