



Office of Legislative Corrections Ombudsman

Keith Barber
Ombudsman

*Boji Tower – 4th Floor
124 West Allegan
P.O. Box 30036
Lansing, MI 48909
(Office) 517-373-8573
(Fax) (517)373-5550*

Funeral and Sick Bed Visits

The following is based on Michigan Department of Corrections Policy Directive 04.04.140 “Funeral and Sick Bed Visits.”

The Warden may permit a prisoner to leave a facility under escort for the following reasons:

1. To visit a critically ill immediate family member in a hospital or medical care facility; or
2. To attend the private funeral of an immediate family member.

Approval for sick bed and funeral visits is at the discretion of the warden. The warden is not required to approve these visits.

Definitions:

1. Immediate Family Member: Grandparent, parent, step-parent, spouse, child, step-child, grandchild, sibling, step-sibling, half-sibling or an aunt/uncle if verification is provided that s/he served as a surrogate parent.
2. Private Funeral: Funeral service or viewing held at a specific time at a funeral home or place of worship, which is restricted to immediate family members only.
3. Critically Ill: The attending physician will determine whether the family member is critically ill.

Qualifications:

1. The Policy only applies to in-state visitations. Out-of-state visitations will NOT be permitted.
2. Prisoners are only eligible if their true Security Level is Level I or Level II.
3. For those prisoners serving life sentences, visits will only be considered if a commutation has been granted or parole release date established and the prisoner has served at least 15 calendar years with good institutional adjustment.
4. A prisoner cannot have over 30 total days of funeral and sick bed visits during his/her current incarceration.
5. The visits will not be approved for over 12 hours in length, including travel time, but if the visit is over 500 miles round trip, the Corrections Facilities Administration Deputy Director may authorize a visit for up to 24 hours.

Escort costs:

1. All costs (salary, fringe benefits, travel, meals and lodging) shall be paid by the prisoner, the prisoner's family, or the Prisoner Benefit Fund.
2. Escorts are provided on a voluntary basis by qualified, off-duty corrections officers who are not related to the prisoner by blood or marriage.
3. Estimated escort costs must be received by the institution prior to the visit.
4. The actual cost will be calculated after the prisoner returns. If the actual cost is less than the estimated cost, the difference will be refunded to the person who paid the costs.

Required Information Prior to Visit:

1. Funeral Visit:
 - a. Contact person's name, address, phone number;
 - b. Name of deceased and relationship to the prisoner;
 - c. Date and time of the service/viewing;
 - d. Name, address, and telephone number of the funeral home or place of worship;
 - e. Confirmation from the funeral home or place of worship that the service is limited to immediate family members;
 - f. Confirmation of death from the funeral director;
 - g. Confirmation that custodial escort is available; and
 - h. Confirmation of estimated escort costs and that funds have been received to cover costs.

2. Sick bed visit:
 - a. Contact person's name, address, phone number;
 - b. Patient's name and relationship to the prisoner;
 - c. Attending physician's name and phone number and confirmation the patient is critically ill;
 - d. Name, address, and phone number of the hospital or medical care facility;
 - e. Confirmation that custodial escort is available; and
 - f. Confirmation of estimated escort costs and that funds have been received to cover costs.

Security Measures:

1. The minimum staff, restraint equipment, chemical agents and weapons described in the CFA Transportation Manual will be used.
2. The Warden will alert local law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction over the area in which the visit will be in advance.
3. At least one escort officer will be with the prisoner at all times, except when lodged for an overnight stay (at a jail or CFA facility).
4. Participation in social functions, including home and cemetery visits, are not permitted.
5. The prisoner must wear appropriate state-issued clothing while on the visit.