

September 22, 2019

Prison Issues Board Meeting September 24, 2019

I am writing this complaint/concern regarding visitation and inmate mail at MSP in Deer Lodge, MT.

My name is Debra Smith and my son is Parker Smith, AO 3016481. My husband and I are currently the guardians for Parker's son, Gregory Smith, now aged 7.

The new visitation policy requiring family members to register and request visitation thru IC Solutions is a hardship placed on the families of incarcerated persons. My visit dated July 7, 2019 was cancelled at 12 am via an automated email. No reason for the cancellation was given. I spent 3 hours trying to determine that we would risk the 310 mile round trip to visit my son. The frustration level is high due to incorrect numbers being placed on the DOC website and the IC Solutions website for contact information.

With the current visitation procedures, Gregory can only have a contact visit once a week and for two hours. This is a hardship placed on a young child. Previously, we were able to visit for up to 3 to 4 hours at a time due to availability.

I have been able to schedule in advance for contact visits and it seems the system currently will NOT allow me to schedule video visits in addition to contact visits. Please contact your vendor to repair the system.

The new regulations regarding no postage stamps and no greeting cards are another hardship placed upon the families. We use greeting cards to encourage our imprisoned loved ones to let them know they are cared about and not forgotten. A child sends pictures made in school to show progress or to tell a story to their parent. The child did not commit the crime, yet ultimately they are being punished by not allowing them to share their work with their inmate family member.

I am requesting the correct contact numbers for IC Solutions visit be published and the visitation and mail procedures be restored to the former policy.