

**[ MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR BJMP-DO-MC-36,  
March 06, 2018 ]**

**CONTROL OF ENTRY AND SUPERVISION OF THE USE OF  
READING MATERIALS OF PERSONS DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY (PDL)  
IN JAILS**

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**I. REFERENCES**

- a. 1987 Philippine Constitution;
- b. Rule 64. United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Mandela Rules);
- c. BJMP Comprehensive Operations Manual Revised 2015;
- d. Policy on Allowable Personal Property of Inmates;
- e. Policy on Disposition, Nuisance and Contraband;
- f. Proper Handling, Custody and Disposition of Seized Nuisance Contrabands; and
- g. Revised List of Authorized Personal Properties for Persons Deprived of Liberty

**II. BACKGROUND**

The State recognizes the vital role of knowledge and information in nation- building and promotes the intellectual well-being of the people. While persons deprived of liberty (PDL) are segregated from the free society, they share the same responsibility in building our nation especially so when they return to the mainstream of society. It is important to allow them to further educate and enrich themselves through reading books, magazines and other information, education, and communication (IEC) materials. Furthermore, it is a mandate under international law that every prison shall have a library for the use of all categories of prisoners, adequately stocked with both recreational and instructional books, and prisoners shall be encouraged to make full use of it.

However, this effort in developing PDL also has its downfall. To mention a few, reading materials brought in jails accumulate in massive volume thereby occupying a great space/area; sheets of paper can be used as cigarette/cigar roll or can be converted into solid materials which can be used in making "kubol"; and stocks of paper can be an additional fire hazard to the jail. Furthermore, unnecessary items stored inside cells hamper the searching process or Operation Greyhound. Lastly unregulated use of printed materials by the PDL can distort the supposed developmental/therapeutic goals of the activities of reading and viewing. Hence, this Memorandum Circular is formulated to regulate, monitor and supervise the entry, use, and disposal of the reading materials of

PDL in order to preempt their improper and illegal use and other unnecessary consequences to jail safety and security.

### **III. PURPOSES**

- a. To control the entry of reading materials in jails.
- b. To regulate the use of reading materials by PDL.
- c. To monitor and supervise the use, storage, and disposal of reading materials.
- d. To provide sanctions for violation hereof.

### **IV. SCOPE/COVERAGE**

This memorandum circular shall be observed in all BJMP-manned jails nationwide.

### **V. DEFINITION OF TERMS**

- a. Reading Material (RM) - refers to bibles, books, prayer booklets comic books, coloring books, puzzle and game booklets, newspapers, magazines journals, pamphlets, posters, flyers, calendars and other information, education and communication (IEC) materials for reading and viewing.
- b. Unauthorized Reading Material (URM) - any printed material for reading or viewing which contains obscene or pornographic images, subversive articles/discussions, and map of the immediate and surrounding vicinity of the jail including any road map or route map. Any RM containing codes or unconventional writings shall be considered as URM.
- c. Record of Reading Materials (RRM) - refers to the official record of all reading materials that are being used by PDL in jails.
- d. Censorship - the suppression or prohibition of any parts of books, films news, etc. that are considered obscene, politically unacceptable, or a threat to security.

### **VI. GENERAL POLICIES**

Each jail shall regulate the entry of reading materials in jails and monitor/ supervise PDL in using the same taking into consideration the security and safety implications that may arise from such undertaking.

### **VII. GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

1. There should be maintained a Record of Reading Materials (RRM) in which all authorized reading materials are recorded, numbered and named. They shall be categorized and tagged as follows:

Category A – “For personal use”;

Category B – “For common use”;

Category C – “RMs relating to religion”;

Category D – “For learning/education”;

Category E – “Informative materials” such as newspapers or magazines

For categories A and C: e.g “RM No. QCJ-A-1234 name of PDL”. For