

Mail Guide



“Snail mail” is an important part of life in the Santa Cruz County Main Jail - allowing incarcerated individuals to maintain contact with their support systems on the outside. Everyone loves getting mail – inmates especially. The arrival of morning letters and packages does wonders to carry men and women through what are often joyless and monotonous days. Mail gives inmates reminders that despite their life choices and (often) dire predicaments, there are still people who care about them. You can send to and receive mail from inmates in the Main Jail. Here’s how to send it:

You can send many items to your incarcerated friend or loved one in jail. You do need to follow the rules and understand how the Jail’s mail policy works so you don’t send a book, card, or magazine to the wrong address or in the wrong way. The jail staff is very adamant and strict about what and how things can be sent.

To send mail to an inmate at the Main Jail, write the inmate’s address like this:

Inmate Name, Inmate S#
Santa Cruz County Jail
259 Water Street
Santa Cruz, CA, 95060

All mail must include the sender’s name and mailing address in the top left corner of the envelope or postcard.

Acceptable mail includes letters, paperback books, newspapers, magazines, greeting cards (single layer), pictures and photos – but some of these items must be sent in a very specific way. The only way for a publication (book, magazine, or periodical) to reach an inmate is if it’s sent directly to the jail by a publisher or internet bookstore (like Amazon).

Books with hardbound covers are not allowed inside the jail- hardcover books, CD’s, and tape cassettes will either be returned to sender, or placed in storage at the jail.

Feel free to send photos (up to 10 4x6 prints) to your friend or loved one - to add a splash of color and life to their time in jail.

It’s recommended that you use “first class” mail when sending any items to inmates in the Santa Cruz County Jail.

The Main Jail’s mail policy is strict when it comes to what and how items are sent. Here are some no-no’s:

Glitter, staples, stickers, tape, or paper clips must be removed prior to delivery to an inmate, and any mail with powder, perfumes, or stains will not be delivered. Pornography (in images, photos, and drawings) will

be confiscated or returned to sender – as will any material that is gang-related, can aid an escape, may invoke violence, or is racist. You aren't allowed to send an inmate any stamps, envelopes, or writing instruments. Inmates are provided one stamped envelope when they are housed, but they must purchase additional postage-paid envelopes utilizing their own inmate accounts. All ingoing and outgoing mail is subject to inspection, and all contents sent to the jail will be opened and inspected for contraband. Just assume that everything written in letters to inmates will be read by jail staff-- and could potentially be used against you or your friend or loved one in court.

The Santa Cruz County Jail is pretty picky about their mail policies, but if you are detailed and follow the rules, your friend or loved one should be able to receive the care, entertainment, heartfelt words of encouragement, and connection to the outside world, they need and deserve.

Mail From Inmates

Inmates can send an unlimited number of letters each day – as long as they have the envelopes to do so. Postage-paid envelopes can be purchased through the jail's commissary program, and those lacking financial resources can obtain two postage paid envelopes each week if they order an "indigent kit" through the commissary system.

To send an outgoing letter, an inmate must list their name, S number, and the facility's address. Outgoing mail is subject to inspection, and any letter with doodles, graffiti and not sent out.ffiti, or artwork on it will be returned to the inmate and not sent out.

Inmates are permitted to possess up to five books, one newspaper, and two magazines or periodicals at any one time.

It may sound harsh, but mail is considered "a privilege" in the Santa Cruz County Main Jail, and any violations of mail policies can result in the inmate's mail access being suspended.

Information on jail mail policy is also published on the Sheriff's Department website, the "Inmate Rules and Regulations," and in the "Inmate Handbook."

See Also: <https://www.scsheriff.com/Home/InmateVisitingInformation/SantaCruzMainJail.aspx>

To provide feedback, comments, questions, and to correct errors please contact jailguide@namiscc.org

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