TextBehind Frequently Asked Questions

Why is NCDPS instituting a pilot program regarding mail entering prison facilities?

In a continuing effort to make the prison environment safer for staff and offenders, NCDPS is exploring ways to prevent the introduction of drugs and other contraband into its facilities. One way these items enter prisons is through the mail, and NCDPS is piloting a program that partners with an independent vendor to receive and electronically process normal daily mail correspondence.

The pilot began Feb. 3 at the four women’s facilities – North Carolina Correctional Institution for Women, Anson Correctional Institution, Swannanoa Correctional Institution for Women, and the North Piedmont Confinement in Response to Violation (CRV) Center in Lexington.

Why are women’s facilities used for the pilot?

With fewer facilities than are used to house male offenders, piloting the program at these facilities allows NCDPS to conduct the mail system study using a smaller test group.

What is the TextBehind mailing system?

TextBehind allows families to:

- Mail offenders regular, hard-copy correspondence to a centralized mail sorting/distribution area, where it will be scanned to the prison and distributed to the offender; or
- Send letters and photos to offenders electronically to TextBehind by creating a free account accessible through the TextBehind website (www.textbehind.com) by using a computer or smartphone mobile app. Using this option will deliver mail quicker to the offender but will include a cost to the sender. Cost options are available on the TextBehind website.

TextBehind sends the letters electronically to the offender’s correctional facility as identified in the sender’s contact list. The letters/photos are delivered electronically to the prison mailroom staff only, after which the staff prints and distributes approved mail to the offenders.
How does someone address correspondence to an offender?

The address must be in the following format:

OFFENDER NAME – OFFENDER ID NUMBER  
CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION NAME  
P.O. BOX 247  
PHOENIX, MD 21131

Any mailings with an incorrect address format will be rejected and returned to the sender.

What mail will not be processed by TextBehind?

Following the NCDPS Prisons’ offender mail policy (“Inmate Use of the Mail”). TextBehind is unable to process the following mail:

1. Books, magazines and newspapers.
2. Money orders, cash currency, payment checks and IRS checks.
3. Original passports, social security cards, credit/debit cards, prepaid cards and birth certificates. Only copies of these items will be acceptable.
4. Postage stamps, stationery paper, blank envelopes and pre-stamped envelopes.
5. Pieces of fabric of any kind, banners and large posters.
6. Hardware of any type, metallic items, musical cards, popup greeting cards, electronic devices or components, packages, boxes, popup greeting cards that are not scannable into an image using standard process.
7. Mail containing prescription or non-prescription drugs.
8. Oversized envelopes that are not scannable and envelopes that are not properly addressed will be returned to the sender. All envelopes must have the offender’s first and last name, OPUS ID number, the name of the prison facility and the TextBehind address shown above.

Can Legal Mail from an attorney be sent through TextBehind?

TextBehind does not accept or process legal mail for offenders. All legal mail, case files, supporting documents and court documents must be sent to the prison facility directly by an attorney or legal organization. Such mailings must be clearly marked as legal mail and will be inspected by NCDPS mail handlers at the facility.
When will offenders receive their mail?

TextBehind processes all mail within 24 hours of receiving it at its processing center in Phoenix, Maryland. All mail is reviewed and screened for contraband. Once that has been completed, the mail is scanned to the prison facility where the offender resides. The usual DPS Prisons’ review process is repeated at the state prison by mailroom personnel following Prison policy before mail is delivered to the offender.

What does TextBehind do with the original mail?

All original mail will be retained for a period of 30 days unless otherwise instructed by NCDPS. After 30 days, the original mail will be shredded in a secure manner.

The return of the original physical letter with its contents can be requested from TextBehind by the sender within 30 calendar days of the initial receipt. Beyond 30 days, the original physical letters will be unavailable for retrieval since they are securely shredded for recycling. If someone has sent any original mail items such as mail with sentimental value such as drawings, photos and valuable documents, notify TextBehind customer support staff as soon as possible at info@textbehind.com and request the return of the original contents by mail.

A service fee of $2.50 per letter will apply to cover the cost of mailing the original letter contents(s) to the return address within the United States. The mail will be shipped using standard USPS ground method. The company’s website (www.textbehind.com) has more information.

How do you create a TextBehind account to use the electronic service?

Go to https://www.textbehind.com/register and provide the requested information. All fields with an asterisk* are mandatory to be filled in.

Where do people go to get more information about the TextBehind system?

Please do not contact the facility. The TextBehind website has more information on what can/cannot be sent. Go to the TextBehind webpage (www.textbehind.com/contact-us) and the company guarantees a response within 24 hours.