



Orange County Corrections Department Legal Mail Processing

The Orange County Corrections Department is transitioning to the use of Legal Mail Scanning Carts for the secure provision of legal mail to our inmate population. This shift represents an evolution in technology that is being adopted in many correctional facilities across the country to enhance security while preserving the confidentiality of legal communications. The use of these carts ensures that privileged legal mail is processed in a manner that meets the highest standards of privacy and security, protecting the integrity of attorney-client communication.

Summary of how the Legal Mail Scanning Cart works and how legal mail confidentiality is protected:

- **Secure Processing:** Staff login to the Smart Communication System on the Legal Mail Processing Cart. The inmate and attorney information is entered into the system, using the details from the exterior of the envelope. A camera records the transaction, ensuring transparency.
- **Mail Handling:** Either the inmate or a staff member, in the inmate's presence, opens the legal mail. The mail is then scanned, and its contents are displayed on a monitor for the inmate to verify legibility. Once confirmed, the mail is securely sent to the inmate's legal mail portal on the Smart Communications Platform. The inmate may also choose to print a physical copy. The original mail is shredded in front of the inmate to further protect privacy.

Encryption and Privacy Safeguards:

- **Encryption:** All legal mail scanned through the Legal Mail Processing Cart is fully encrypted and stored securely. Privileged communication is saved across two separate servers—one holding the encrypted document and the other containing the passkey necessary to decrypt it.
- **Controlled Access:** Access to legal mail is exclusively through the "Scales of Justice" application on the inmate's tablet, which requires a password separate from their regular login. Only the inmate can reset this password, ensuring that staff do not have access to create or view these passwords.
- **Privacy Protection:** Corrections staff cannot view the contents of any legal mail. They can only see the number of legal communications and the date and time they were submitted. Even Smart Communications employees can only view the encrypted data, which appears as unreadable unless the correct passkey is provided by the inmate.

This system ensures that legal mail remains confidential and secure, utilizing best practices in encryption and data protection. The decision to implement Legal Mail Scanning Carts stems from a critical need to prevent contraband from entering the facility, ensuring the safety and security of the jail. While this change enhances security, it also fully preserves the confidentiality of attorney-client communication.