

§ 542.16 Assistance.

(a) An inmate may obtain assistance from another inmate or from institution staff in preparing a Request or an Appeal. An inmate may also obtain assistance from outside sources, such as family members or attorneys. However, no person may submit a Request or Appeal on the inmate's behalf, and obtaining assistance will not be considered a valid reason for exceeding a time limit for submission unless the delay was caused by staff.

(b) Wardens shall ensure that assistance is available for inmates who are illiterate, disabled, or who are not functionally literate in English. Such assistance includes provision of reasonable accommodation in order for an inmate with a disability to prepare and process a Request or an Appeal.

§ 542.17 Resubmission.

(a) *Rejections.* The Coordinator at any level (CCM, institution, region, Central Office) may reject and return to the inmate without response a Request or an Appeal that is written by an inmate in a manner that is obscene or abusive, or does not meet any other requirement of this part.

(b) *Notice.* When a submission is rejected, the inmate shall be provided a written notice, signed by the Administrative Remedy Coordinator, explaining the reason for rejection. If the defect on which the rejection is based is correctable, the notice shall inform the inmate of a reasonable time extension within which to correct the defect and resubmit the Request or Appeal.

(c) *Appeal of rejections.* When a Request or Appeal is rejected and the inmate is not given an opportunity to correct the defect and resubmit, the inmate may appeal the rejection, including a rejection on the basis of an exception as described in § 542.14(d), to the next appeal level. The Coordinator at that level may affirm the rejection, may direct that the submission be accepted at the lower level (either upon the inmate's resubmission or direct return to that lower level), or may accept the submission for filing. The inmate shall be informed of the decision by delivery of either a receipt or rejection notice.

§ 542.18 Response time.

If accepted, a Request or Appeal is considered filed on the date it is logged into the Administrative Remedy Index as received. Once filed, response shall be made by the Warden or CCM within 20 calendar days; by the Regional Director within 30 calendar days; and by the General Counsel within 40 calendar days. If the Request is determined to be of an emergency nature which threatens the inmate's immediate health or welfare, the Warden shall respond not later than the third calendar day after filing. If the time period for response to a Request or Appeal is insufficient to make an appropriate decision, the time for response may be extended once by 20 days at the institution level, 30 days at the regional level, or 20 days at the Central Office level. Staff shall inform the inmate of this extension in writing. Staff shall respond in writing to all filed Requests or Appeals. If the inmate does not receive a response within the time allotted for reply, including extension, the inmate may consider the absence of a response to be a denial at that level.

§ 542.19 Access to indexes and responses.

Inmates and members of the public may request access to Administrative Remedy indexes and responses, for which inmate names and Register Numbers have been removed, as indicated below. Each institution shall make available its index, and the indexes of its regional office and the Central Office. Each regional office shall make available its index, the indexes of all institutions in its region, and the index of the Central Office. The Central Office shall make available its index and the indexes of all institutions and regional offices. Responses may be requested from the location where they are maintained and must be identified by Remedy ID number as indicated on an index. Copies of indexes or responses may be inspected during regular office hours at the locations indicated above, or may be purchased in accordance with the regular fees established for copies furnished under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).