

# Appalachian Prison Book Project

## Volunteer Handbook

PO Box 601  
Morgantown, WV 26507  
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[appalachianpbp@gmail.com](mailto:appalachianpbp@gmail.com)  
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Instagram: @AppalachianPBP

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# Welcome

Dear friend,

The Appalachian Prison Book Project (APBP) sends free books to women and men incarcerated in the six Appalachian states: Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. Since its inception in 2004, APBP has mailed more than 8,000 books. The organization is affiliated with West Virginia University (WVU) and includes students, faculty, and staff from WVU as well as members of the Morgantown community.

**“Our primary goal is simple: to get books into the hands of people who want and need them,”** explained project founder Katy Ryan, a professor of English at WVU. “But to do that, a lot of things have to be in place: a large supply of books, money to pay for mailing and supplies, and volunteers to respond to each letter.”

That’s where you come in.

Use this handbook to get acquainted with the day-to-day operations at APBP and to find the answers to any questions you have about the volunteer process. At the end of your time each day, please record your time and any relevant notes in our volunteer log.

If you have additional questions or want to get in touch with APBP, please contact us:

- Email: [appalachianpbp@gmail.com](mailto:appalachianpbp@gmail.com)
- Website: [apisonbookproject.wordpress.com](http://apisonbookproject.wordpress.com)
- Facebook: [/AppalachianPBP](https://www.facebook.com/AppalachianPBP)
- Twitter: [@AppalachianPBP](https://twitter.com/AppalachianPBP)
- Instagram: [@Appalachian PBP](https://www.instagram.com/AppalachianPBP)
- Mailing Address: PO Box 601, Morgantown WV 26507

Thank you for all of your help, and we look forward to working with you!

# Letter Requests

The basic day-to-day operations of APBP consist of opening letters from incarcerated people, matching books to the requests, and wrapping the books for shipment. Special projects, such as responding to out-of-area mail or other requests, are assigned to specific members. Please do not take on these roles of your own initiative.

You can choose to perform any of these activities. A letter does not need to be opened, matched, and packaged by one volunteer; if you enjoy matching letters, you can exclusively match letters. Volunteers tend to work where they are needed if there is a deficit; otherwise, feel free to spend your time doing the work you most enjoy.

## Opening Letters

When APBP receives letters from incarcerated people, they are collected and stored in the *Inbox*. If you want to open and read letters, do the following:

1. Take the new, unopened letters out of the *Inbox*.
2. Before you open or sort any letters, flip through them to make sure five things:
  - a. they are from people in facilities in one of the six states we serve;
  - b. they are not from a “no-send” facility (an updated list is on the cork board, taped to the desk, and p. 6-7 of the Volunteer Handbook);
  - c. if they are from NBCI in Cumberland, MD, or Duffield, VA, follow the instructions on the “No-Send” list;
  - d. they contain a DOC number either on the sender address and/or on the letter inside;
  - e. that they’re not requesting any legal assistance.
  - If any of the letters are out-of-region, from a no-send facility, or do not contain an approval form from NBCI, then place them in the appropriate folders for these special letters (next to the tape and in the main plastic bin).
  - If they need a DOC number, follow these steps to locate their DOC number:
    - If a request does not have a DOC number (typically a six digit number) in the sender address or in the letter itself, visit [www.theinmatelocator.com](http://www.theinmatelocator.com), click the state the unnumbered letter is from in the left-hand column, click the first option on the right-hand side (in blue it says “STATE’S NAME INMATE LOCATOR” with “CLICK HERE” beneath in red), and then enter the person’s first and last name. You should also double-check the facility the sender is in once you’ve entered his/her name.
  - If they are requesting legal assistance, put the letter aside with a note on it; also, email Katy Ryan ([kohearnr@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:kohearnr@mail.wvu.edu)) about the letter so she can contact the legal team if necessary.
3. With a letter opener or pair of scissors, carefully open the letter. Be sure not to rip the letter’s return address; typically, it is the only way we know where to send their request.

4. Staple the envelope to the back of the letter (facing out). The staple should be over the stamp so it doesn't obscure any identifying information.
5. Read each letter carefully to see what the person requests.
6. Using a highlighter or colored pencil, mark the requests in each letter (e.g., "western," "romance," "books by Stephen King," etc.) so we can easily see the request.
7. Add the request (letter and envelope stapled together) to the back of the *Letter Requests* folder. Also, if the letter includes any official documentation from the institution or prison, those documents **must** stay attached to the letter and envelope.
8. When there is a lag in work to do, you can sort the letters in the *Letter Requests* folder by date to ensure that we're filling requests in an organized and timely manner.

## Matching Requests

If you want to match letters to book requests, do the following:

1. Find and open the *Letter Requests* folder.
2. Look at the return address and see if the prison is listed on the *No-Send* (p. 6-7) or *Hardback Allowed* (p. 8) lists. If APBP is not authorized to send packages to that institution, add it to the *No-Send* folder. Additionally, you can only send hardback books to specific institutions (see *Hardback Books Allowed* list, p. 8). Pay attention to whether the letter contains one or more requests, whether it's requesting a pen pal, whether it's making us aware of a specific legal matter that the legal team might need to see (see #2 under "Opening Letters").
3. Read the highlighted sections.
4. Find a book in our collection that matches the request as closely as possible. APBP responds to each request with a maximum of one book and one dictionary or religious text (if requested and available). Make sure the matched item does not have any metal parts (metal cover or edges, staples down the spine, paper clips, etc.).
5. Grab a form letter half-sheet from the tray on the table and add a short note to the person. You can explain that you tried your best to meet their request even if it's not the exact book they wanted; you can say "Stay Strong" or "Keep Requesting" or something else encouraging. Sign the note, but feel free to use a pseudonym or "APBP."
6. After the note is done, rubber band the note, the letter, and the books together before putting the bundle on the *Books to be Mailed* shelf. Each bundle should be added to the lowest, right spot on the bookshelf as older requests will be filled from the top left.

There are some exceptions:

- If the letter includes a request for just a dictionary and there is not one available, add it to the *Dictionaries/Reference Books* folder.

- If the letter includes a request for foreign language or wiccan material and there is none available, add it to the *Foreign Language* or *Wiccan* folders, respectively.
- If the person requests a “list of available books,” you can write them a letter and include the *Book List* document.
- If the letter includes any official documentation from the institution or prison, those documents **must** stay attached to the letter and envelope.
- “Asatru” or “Odinism” can be related to white supremacist material. We, obviously, don’t support those requests, but the APBP Board is still conferring on a way to handle these requests more systematically. For now, if you feel comfortable, just fill those requests with general books (e.g., “thriller,” “mystery”) or any other category that they’ve requested in the letter.

The best way to improve your book-matching skills is to practice. Our collection changes every time we send a book or receive a donation, so look through as many books as you can and use your best judgment to match a book and a letter. It will rarely be a perfect match—and if you find a perfect match, send us a photo!—but most people just want something to read. We almost never receive letters complaining that requests were not matched perfectly; people are grateful that we try so hard to meet their request.

## Packaging Books

If you want to package books, do the following:

1. Choose a book from the *Books to be Mailed* shelf. Pull from top left to bottom right.
2. Look at the letter and make sure that the book is approximately what the person requested. If it is a hardback book, double-check that the institution accepts hardback books (see *Hardback Books Allowed* list, p. 8). Also, double-check that APBP can send books to the institution in the mailing address (see *No-Send* list, p. 6-7).
3. Take off the rubber band, take the original letter request out of the book(s), and make sure a half-sheet note is included in the book(s) as well as any official documentation from the institution or prison. Verify that there are no staples, paper clips, or other metal in the request.
4. Find the *Record of Books Mailed* notebook and neatly record the relevant information.
5. Wrap the half-sheet, books, and any approval form neatly, keeping the sender’s letter and envelop outside of the wrapping. Use copious amounts of tape to make sure there are no edges sticking out or anything that could get caught on the mail machine (as this slows down the mailing process).
6. For the package’s return address, stick an address label in the top left corner, stamp APBP’s address, or write APBP’s address: Appalachian Prison Book Project, PO Box 601, Morgantown WV 26507. If the stamp is faded, fix the address with a pen so it’s all legible.

7. For the mailing address, write the address of the person exactly as it is written on the original letter request. Make sure their ID number is listed after their name.
8. For all materials except for magazines or coloring books, stamp or write “Media Mail” on the outside front of the package, too. If it’s a magazine or coloring book, DO NOT STAMP OR WRITE MEDIA MAIL. This will be returned to sender.
9. Put the packaged book in a mailing tub.
10. Put the original letter request in the appropriate folder (correct month, year) in the *Completed Requests* folder unless it’s asking for a pen pal, contains a unique thank you, or contains artwork (see below if it contains any of these three special filing needs).

There is an exception:

- If the package will be mailed **to Mount Olive, West Virginia**, put the packaged book in the *Mount Olive* mailing tub. APBP ships packages in bulk to Mount Olive.
- Special Filing Post-Wrapping
  - **Pen Pal Requests**—After you’ve wrapped the bundle, check to see if the sender has requested a pen pal. If so, place the filled request in the “Pen Pal” folder in the plastic bin near the table.
  - **Artwork**—After you’ve wrapped the bundle, you can put aside any artwork you find included in the letter, on the letter, or the envelope. This artwork can go in the photo album on the mantle in the Aull Center.
  - **Thank You Notes**—After you’ve wrapped the bundle, you can hang up any thank you notes from the letters on the corkboard. You can also put the thank you notes on the mantle.

# No-Send Prisons in our Region

## **KENTUCKY**

EKCC—Eastern Kentucky Correctional Complex  
200 Road to Justice  
*West Liberty, KY 41472*

## **MARYLAND**

MCI-H—Maryland Correctional Institution, Hagerstown  
18601 Roxbury Road  
*Hagerstown, MD 21746*

**\*WCI & FCI in *Cumberland, MD*—OK to send\***

## **OHIO**

LECI—Lebanon Correctional Institution  
P. O. Box 56  
*Lebanon, OH 45036*

**\*Warren Correctional Institution (WCI) in *Lebanon*—OK\***

LCI—London Correctional Institution  
1580 State Route 56 SW  
*London, OH 43140*

NCCC—North Central Correctional Complex  
670 Marion-Williamsport Road E  
*Marion, OH 43302*

ORW—Ohio Reformatory for Women  
1479 Collins Avenue  
*Marysville, OH 43040*

CRC—Correctional Reception Center  
P. O. Box 300  
*Orient, OH 43146*

PCI—Pickaway Correctional Institution  
P. O. Box 209  
*Orient, OH 43146*

## **VIRGINIA**

CC—St. Brides Correctional Center  
701 Sanderson Road  
*Chesapeake, VA 23322*

**\*Indian Creek Correctional Center (ICCC)—OK to send\***

Haysi Regional Jail  
P. O. Box 535  
*Haysi, VA 24256*

Lee USP—United States Penitentiary  
P. O. Box 305  
*Jonesville, VA 24263*

Lee USP—United States Penitentiary—Satellite Camp  
P. O. Box 644  
*Jonesville, VA 24263*

BRRJ—Blue Ridge Regional Jail or  
Amherst County Adult Detention Center  
219 Riverview Road

*Madison Heights, VA 24572*

HRRJ—Hampton Roads Regional Jail  
2690 Elmhurst Lane  
*Portsmouth, VA 23701*

Portsmouth City Jail  
701 Crawford Street  
*Portsmouth, VA 23704*

## **WEST VIRGINIA**

FCI Beckley  
P. O. Box 350  
*Beaver, WV 25813*

Bluefield City Jail  
200 Rogers Street  
*Bluefield, WV 24701*

FCI Hazelton  
P. O. Box 5000  
*Bruceston Mills, WV 26525*

FCI Hazelton—Secure Female Facility  
P. O. Box 3000  
*Bruceston Mills, WV 26525*

USP Hazelton (and satellite camp)  
P. O. Box 2000  
*Bruceston Mills, WV 26525*

### WV Regional Jails:

Central Regional, 1255 Dyer Hill Road, ***Sutton***, WV 26601

Eastern Regional, 94 Grapevine Road, ***Martinsburg***, WV 25405

Northern Regional, 112 Northern Regional Correctional Drive, ***Moundsville***, WV 26041

North Central Regional, #1 Lois Lane, ***Greenwood***, WV 26415

Potomac Highlands Regional, 355 Dolan Drive, ***Augusta***, WV 26704

South Central Regional, 1001 Centre Way, ***Charleston***, WV 25309

Southern Regional, 1200 Airport Road, ***Beaver***, WVU 25813

Southwestern Regional, 1300 Gaston Caperton Drive, ***Holden***, WV 25625

Tygart Valley Regional, 400 Abbey Road, ***Belington***, WV 26250

Western Regional, One O'Hanlon Place, ***Barboursville***, WV 25504

### **In Test-Run Phase:**

Petersburg FCI LOW; FCI MEDIUM; and Satellite Camp  
P. O. Box 1000  
*Petersburg, VA 23804*

Southern Ohio Correctional Facility (SOCF)  
P. O. Box 45699  
*Lucasville, OH 45699*

**Book Room / Library Requests (with Form Letter Required):**

**MARYLAND**

ECI—Eastern Correctional Institution  
30420 Revells Neck Road  
*Westover*, MD 21890

**Requires approval form (sent with book request letter)**

**Requires also library instruction sheet**

NBCI—North Branch Correctional Institution  
14100 McMullen Highway SW  
*Cumberland*, MD 21502

**Requires approval form (sent with book request letter)**

**\*WCI & FCI—OK to send\***

**VIRGINIA**

**\*These requests are sent to the Book Room (with Attention: Lieutenant Hayes). Write the imprisoned person's name and DOC number on a note inside the package to tell Lieutenant Hayes where the book should go after receipt.\***

Attention: Lieutenant Hayes  
Book Room  
Southwest Virginia Regional Jail  
P. O. Box 367  
Duffield, VA 24244

**Bulk Mailing Requests:**

**\* We CAN send to Mount Olive, but put the packaged book in the *Mount Olive* mailing tub. APBP ships packages in bulk to Mount Olive.\***

MOCC—Mount Olive Correctional Complex  
1 Mountainside Way  
*Mt. Olive*, WV 25185

# Hardback Books Allowed: List of Prisons

Most institutions will not accept hardback books from APBP. However, there are a few exceptions. When you are matching a book to a request, look at the city of the return address. If it is one of the following cities, hardcover books are accepted at that prison.

## Kentucky

- Lexington
- Pine Knot

## Maryland

- Hagerstown

## Ohio

- Chillicothe
- Conneaut
- Cumberland
- Dayton
- Grafton
- Lima
- Lucasville
- Mansfield
- Marion
- Marysville
- Nelsonville
- Toledo

## Tennessee

- Clifton
- Henning
- Memphis
- Mountain City
- Nashville
- Pikeville
- Tiptonville
- Whiteville

## Virginia

- Mitchells
- Petersburg
- Pound

## West Virginia

- Glenville
- Grafton
- Hillsboro
- Huttonsville
- Morgantown
- Mount Olive
- St. Mary's

# Aull Center

Since 2006, the Aull Center has generously donated space to our organization. Since this building has important ties to the history of Morgantown, West Virginia, please adhere to the following guidelines while volunteering:

- Do not mark or hang anything on the walls.
- If you are playing music as you work, please keep the music at a moderate level or close the door.
- Refrain from running up and down the corridor or stairs.
- If the space is too hot or cold, please ask the attendant downstairs before adjusting the hallway thermostat.
- If the bathroom is running low on soap, toilet paper, or paper towels, let the Aull Center front desk staff know, and they will take care of it.
- If trash is overflowing, please collect it from the two trashcan found in the APBP room and the down-the-hall bathroom and dispose of it near the Dairy Queen dumpster (about a block away) or in the trashcans in front of the Morgantown Public Library (next door). New bags for the trashcans are in the APBP closet.

For more information about the Aull Center, visit the Morgantown Public Library's website at [morgantown.lib.wv.us](http://morgantown.lib.wv.us).

# Other Materials

In this binder, you will find scrapbooks, thank you notes, artwork, volunteer correspondence, and hourly schedules. Additionally, you can see example highlighted letters for your convenience.