

## How to stay in Contact with your Family?

It is a B.O.P. policy and the B.O.P encourages incarcerated men and women to retain frequent contacts and communications with their families, (e.g. parents, spouses, or children), with their friends and with the general outside community. Maintaining these contacts provides a desired stabilizing effect on inmates, which is, for once, a laudable policy behavior of the Bureau of Prisons. This is especially true in current pandemic times and when, contrary to the B.O.P.'s repeated public claims, nothing is done towards rehabilitation, but warehousing inmates is the only mission that the B.O.P. executes with fervor and great zeal.

USP Tucson is no exception to this enormous chasm between this claim and the sad reality, so that it can only be called a hypocrisy of epic proportions. In fact, its perceived mission seems to be to not only not promote rehabilitation but to make every effort to even prevent it from happening at all, as will be illustrated by an example of impeding direct verbal communication with family in this essay.

For months, allegedly, "technical telephone line problems" seem to persist that shut down all telephone lines abruptly and randomly, the outages lasting then from a few hours to multiple days. "Luckily", it looks as if these "technical problems" are confined to USP Tucson's phone system only and no one else on the outside is affected by these issues. Or else, would anyone truly believe that such problems would not make it to the local or even national news if they continued to persist for months? In the real world someone would be held accountable and if the inability to get the problems fixed were a matter of incompetence, someone would surely have to bear the consequences. Not so in USP Tucson. Neither any notices sent to Trust Fund, who takes responsibility for the phone system, nor messages to the Warden's office (e.g. one message sent on November 15, 2021), have resulted in the remediation or even in an improvement of the situation in any shape or form. The issues simply continue to persist. It may indeed simply be a problem of incompetence, but a presentiment is creeping into this author's mind that this is just another form of malicious collective punishment and the institution is actively involved

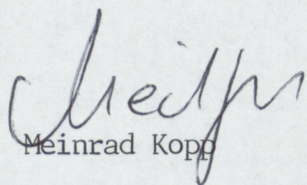
in disabling telephone calls. Why? Hard to tell, it may well remain the institution's own secret.

Notoriously, but not exclusively, telephone outages occur on the weekends, of course they also happen on weekdays, however, on weekends the effect is most disturbing and most damaging if one is not able to call, or even worse, to be cut off in the middle of a conversation, which may then appear as a rude behavior for the one on the other end. This very thing happened to this author on Saturday, January 8, 2022 while calling his spouse in Germany, Europe.

To make things worse, there is no communication whatsoever from prison staff to inmates as to why this happens, and what will be done to fix it, except a short message from Trust Fund, several weeks ago, simply saying that "they are aware of the problem and that it will not be a long term issue." Well, would three months still be considered short term? Certainly not, and therefore considering all options, the question remains: "Are the phones switched off intentionally and if yes for what reason?" Cost Saving? Unlikely. In the absence of any information the situation automatically gives rise to the suspicion that it is for malice and unknown as well as secret collective punishment reasons.

A B.O.P. reform caucus under the auspices of Congressman Fred Keller (R) is currently underway. This caucus hopefully will make every effort to propose meaningful reform measures to the obsolete and counterproductive ways correctional systems are run, as they truly are not at all correctional but merely warehousing and punishment centers. Measures need to be implemented that foster true accountability, and to make the B.O.P and its staff say what they do and do what they say and to hold them accountable for it.

Respectfully,

  
Meinrad Kopp