

University of Florida Police Department Department Standards Directive

Title: Prisoner Transport

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Responsibility: Patrol

Attachments: None

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4020 Prisoner Transport

4020.1 Purpose. The purpose for this directive is to establish guidelines for restraining, searching, and transporting prisoners.

4020.2 Discussion. It is critical that law enforcement officers maintain a high degree of security when restraining, searching and transporting prisoners. Officers must provide for the safety of the public, himself/herself, and the prisoner.

4020.3 Policy. Officers are legally responsible for the safety of persons they arrest while in their custody. Officers shall ensure that these individuals are restrained, searched and transported in accordance with this directive.

4020.4 Procedure.

A. Transport Vehicles.

1. Vehicles used to transport prisoners shall have the inside rear door handles and window crank handles (if installed) disabled. Electrical window controls shall be left in the locked position. Child locks on the rear doors shall be placed in the locked position and shall remain in the locked position.
2. The area of the vehicle used to transport prisoners shall be separated from the front by a barrier that allows constant visual contact between the officer and the prisoner in custody.

B. Inspection and Search of Transporting Vehicles.

1. All department officers will inspect their vehicle(s) prior to being used. This ensures that assigned equipment is available and in working order.
 - a. It is the transporting officer's responsibility to ensure that the vehicle is safe and equipped with appropriate items. The vehicle itself should be examined to ensure

proper working order, to include proper inflation of tires, fuel and oil levels, ignition system, and engine operation. Missing equipment or discrepancies shall be noted and corrected in a timely manner.

2. The transporting officer shall search the entire inside of the vehicle, looking under and behind seats (front and rear), under floor mats, in the creases between the top of the seat and the bottom, and the area around the rear window. All areas accessible to a prisoner shall be searched. The officer should never assume the officer who was previously assigned to the vehicle searched the vehicle.
3. When conducting searches of the vehicle, the officer must be extremely careful. Prisoners have been known to hide or conceal items that can inflict injury, i.e. razor blades, needles, knives, etc.
 - a. As soon as practicable after a prisoner has been removed from the vehicle, it shall be searched again. This not only insures that the prisoner has left nothing in the vehicle, but if items are found, link those items in a timely manner to the prisoner. Special attention shall be given to the area of the vehicle occupied by the prisoner. The officer should be aware of any evidence or contraband the prisoner may have tried to conceal.

C. Search of Prisoner(s) to be Transported.

1. In most circumstances it is preferable that male officers search male prisoners and female officers search female prisoners. However, if there is an absence of either male or female officers to conduct a search, the officer responsible for initiating the arrest will conduct the search. In any event, the arresting officer (male or female) will conduct a search of the prisoner to detect possession of items capable of injuring himself/herself or others, or the possession of contraband/evidence.
2. If it becomes necessary for a male officer to search a female prisoner and time and circumstances permit, a female civilian employee shall be present to act as a witness. However, in no way will the officer compromise his/her safety or the safety of others.
3. All prisoners will be searched before being placed into a vehicle. Each officer who transports the prisoner will conduct a search of that person to include a complete pat down of the person and an inspection of all footwear both inside and out. Transporting officers should never assume that another officer has searched the prisoner.
4. The Department does not authorize strip searches or body cavity searches by Department officers/personnel. Officers needing a prisoner to be strip and/or body cavity searched shall, after conference with and at the discretion of the ACSODOJ medical staff, have the search conducted by either the ACSODOJ or the contracted medical vendor, Prison Health Services (PHS) at North Florida Regional Medical Center. The search will be conducted out of public view and by the same gender of the prisoner. A written report detailing the circumstances shall be complete.

D. Transport Procedure.

1. Restraining Devices (Handcuffs, Hobble Restraints, Seatbelts). The decision whether or not to handcuff an arrested person is not governed by law or court guidelines. It is a decision that should properly be left to the sound judgment of the arresting officer.

In all situations in which handcuffs are used, they shall be double locked.

- a. **Hobble Restraints.** The use of Hobble Restraints is authorized under the following condition. The prisoner shall never be placed in a prone position. Research has linked laying a prisoner on his/her stomach with positional asphyxia, a cause of sudden in custody death syndrome.
 - b. Seatbelt. All prisoners being transported shall wear the seatbelt.
 - c. If extended transportation is necessary, restraining devices will be used in such a manner as to make the prisoner as comfortable as possible without lessening the officer's control over the prisoner.
 - d. Under no circumstances will a prisoner be handcuffed or Hobble Restrained to a part of the transport vehicle.
 - e. The types of restraints used shall be documented in the police report.
2. Prisoners shall be transported in such a manner so as to maximize their safety, safety of the public, and safety of the transporting officer. The prisoner should be transported as soon as possible after completion of necessary paperwork.
 3. It is the transporting officer's legal obligation to ensure the safety of a prisoner in custody. All prisoners will be searched each time there is a change in the officer taking custody of the prisoner.
 4. If the prisoner to be transported is considered a security or medical risk, the arresting officer shall so note on the arrest form and notify the facility assuming custody of the prisoner.
 5. When transporting a single prisoner, he/she shall be placed in the rear seat and secured with a seatbelt. The transporting officer should be able to see the head and shoulders of the prisoner through the rear view mirror.
 6. When transporting more than one prisoner, both subjects shall be placed in the rear seat and secured with seat belts.
 7. Prisoners shall not be transported in the front seat of the vehicle.

8. When there are two officers transporting one prisoner, the officer not driving should keep the prisoner under observation at all times.
9. Prisoners should be transported in a vehicle that has a safety barrier. When this is not possible, two (2) officers shall transport the prisoner. The second officer will sit in the rear of the vehicle with the prisoner. The officer's weapon should be on the opposite side from the prisoner.
10. Adult prisoners and juvenile prisoners shall not be transported in the same vehicle unless they are suspects in the same crime.
11. Communications shall be given the starting location, prisoner's race and sex, destination, starting and ending mileage.

E. Mentally Disturbed Prisoners. Mentally disturbed prisoners and prisoners who appear to be under the influence of a controlled substance, may pose a significant threat to themselves and others.

1. Decisions regarding the use and type of restraining device will be dependent upon the particular prisoner's mental attitude.
2. Flex cuffs may be used in place of handcuffs when the latter are impractical due a physical impairment of the prisoner or other circumstances.

F. Handicapped, Injured or Ill Prisoners. When the handicap is such that there is a minimal risk of escape or danger of injury to the prisoner or officer, restraining devices may be inappropriate. It should not be assumed that restraining devices are unnecessary for disabled prisoners.

1. In order to safely and securely transport sick, injured or disabled prisoners, officers must first have EMS determine the nature of the illness or injury. All sick, injured or disabled prisoners not requiring immediate medical attention shall be transported in normal fashion, i.e. proper restraints.
2. Should a prisoner be injured or ill to such an extent that transportation in a police vehicle is impractical, EMS will be requested for transportation. The officer will accompany the prisoner in the ambulance maintaining sight of the subject, following procedures as set forth in this Directive, Section K.
3. Restraints on injured prisoners shall only be placed in areas unaffected by the injury.
4. When transporting wheelchair prisoners, the wheelchair shall be placed in the trunk of the transport vehicle after being searched. The disabled prisoner shall then be transported in the normal manner.

5. All transport situations falling outside the above guidelines shall be handled by specialized emergency vehicles with the transporting officer's assistance.

G. Violent or Aggressive Prisoners. For violent and/or aggressive prisoners, officers may control the prisoner using leg restraints in addition to handcuffs. Under no circumstances will a prisoner be handcuffed to a part of the transport vehicle.

H. Control of the Prisoner while Transporting

1. When transporting a prisoner, the officer should have visual contact at all times. Officers will not make unnecessary stops while transporting the prisoner from the point of arrest to the booking/processing location or from the booking/processing location to the detention facility except as noted below.
 - a. When an officer transporting a prisoner observes a situation where there is a risk to third parties that is life threatening, e.g. the officer observes a vehicle on fire with persons trapped inside, he/she shall take the appropriate action;
 - b. The risk to the prisoner must be minimal;
 - c. When stopping, the officer must be aware of any diversionary actions the prisoner, or anyone on his/her behalf, might take.
2. Prisoners shall not be allowed to communicate with other people while in transit. Any communication needed with attorneys or others on the prisoner's behalf shall occur at the detention facility.

I. Transport of Prisoners of the Opposite Sex. The transporting officer shall be the same sex as the prisoner. If such an officer is unavailable, two officers shall transport to minimize the possibility of unwarranted complaints and provide an extra measure of safety. Communications shall be given the starting location, prisoner's race and sex, destination, starting and ending mileage.

J. Medical Treatment of Sick/Injured Prisoners to be Detained at the ACDOJ. Medical treatment of prisoners with minor injuries/illness will be performed at the ACDOJ when medical staff is available. Prior to transporting a sick/injured prisoner the arresting officer shall call the ACDOJ to determine the availability of medical staff and, if available, advise the medical staff of the nature of the sickness/injury.

1. When medical staff is available, prisoners with the following medical conditions should be transported directly to ACDOJ where the on-duty nurse and/or on-call physician will provide treatment:
 - a. Minor lacerations, including those requiring stitches. Minor head and facial lacerations requiring stitches may also be treated as long as symptoms of significant injury are not present.

- b. Mild to moderate chemical intoxication without extreme or other symptoms indicating toxicity or major distress.
 - c. Minor to moderate contusions (bruises), abrasions (scrapes), incisions (cuts), lacerations (tears), etc.
 - d. Minor to moderate strains, sprains, jams, etc. of joints.
 - e. Chronic illness which require administration of medication (i.e. diabetes, epilepsy, asthma, etc.)
 - f. Suspected simple fractures.
 - g. Other illnesses for which hospital treatment would not be necessary.
2. Upon arrival at the ACDOJ booking room, it is the transporting officer's responsibility to make personal contact with the screening nurse to ensure accurate and complete communication of pertinent injury information. Only in exigent circumstances (the nurse is unavailable or the officer is needed for an emergency) may this face-to-face contact be waived.
3. Depending on the nature of the injury/illness, ACDOJ staff may require that the screening nurse check an injured prisoner in the sally-port area. It is the nurse's decision whether or not the jail will accept the prisoner. If not accepted, it is the transporting officer's responsibility to take the prisoner to the emergency room for treatment.
4. ACDOJ medical staff is not prepared to treat the following:
 - a. Broken bones, compound fractures, avulsed tissue resulting in exposure, et al.
 - b. Gunshot, stabbing, cutting or other serious traumatic wounds.
 - c. Partially/totally amputated digits, limbs or other body parts.
 - d. Significant head/facial wounds which could cause concussion, laceration of soft head/brain tissue from bones, or symptoms like dizziness, nausea, disorientation, etc.
 - e. Any injury, illness or condition which could likely result in the patient going into shock, seizures, losing significant blood/fluid volume, losing sensual capability (sight, hearing), protracted or permanent loss of or reduction in the use of body parts/motor skills, going into respiratory or cardiac distress/arrest, becoming disoriented, et al.

- f. Chemical intoxication from drugs/alcohol, which contributes to or result in unconsciousness, extreme stupor, significant reaction or lack of reaction in the pupils, DT's, convulsions, respirator and/or cardiac distress/cessation, etc.
5. All prisoners who require other than ACDOJ medical attention prior to delivery to the jail shall be taken to Prison Health Services (PHS) at North Florida Regional Medical Center, the contracted hospital, regardless of the time of day.
 - a. Transporting officers are responsible for obtaining all pertinent documentation resulting from a prisoner's treatment at an emergency facility, including a release of medical treatment if appropriate. This documentation shall be delivered to ACDOJ staff upon transfer of custody of the prisoner.
6. Medical staff at ACDOJ will not draw blood for evidentiary purposes.

K. Medical Treatment of Sick/Injured Juvenile Prisoners to be Delivered to the Juvenile Assessment Center. Juvenile prisoners needing medical treatment for any injury/illness must be treated by medical professionals prior to delivery to the Juvenile Assessment Center. Juvenile prisoners needing medical treatment shall be transported to the nearest medical emergency room for treatment.

L. Security and Control of Prisoners Transported to Hospitals or Medical Facilities for Treatment, Examination or Admission. Individuals transported to medical facilities for treatment or examination shall be prevented from coming into physical contact with persons other than those medically assigned to the case.

1. Officers shall not divulge information pertaining to the physical or legal status of the prisoner except to those medically assigned to the case.
2. Appropriate health and safety precautions shall be taken when transporting prisoners for medical purposes. These precautions may include wearing gloves and masks, as well as keeping the prisoner at a safe distance from uninvolved persons.
3. Officers shall maintain control over the prisoner's actions at all times. The prisoner shall be kept in restraints unless the attending physician requests they be removed for medical purposes, but only if the officer determines that it is safe to do so.
4. Officers shall remain with the prisoner unless the physician requests the officer stay clear. In such cases, officers shall maintain a close vigil immediately adjacent to the treatment area.
5. Injured prisoners are the responsibility of the Department until the prisoner is admitted into the medical facility for an extended period.
 - b. Officers shall immediately notify the Alachua County Department of the Jail (ACDOJ) of prisoners who are injured while in the officer's care.

- c. If the injury can be treated within a reasonable short period of time, the officer shall remain with the prisoner. If the injury requires a prolonged stay at the medical facility, the Alachua County Department of the Jail (ACDOJ) shall assume security for the prisoner.
 - d. The officer having custody of the prisoner shall maintain custody until officially relieved.
6. If the circumstances are such that the transporting officer is to take the prisoner to Alachua County Department of the Jail (ACDOJ) following treatment, the prisoner's condition shall be carefully recorded and supplemented in the appropriate report. Any directions from the physician regarding future treatment and/or medication shall be obtained in writing and signed by the attending physician. The prisoner shall be searched and restrained prior to be placed in the transport vehicle.

M. Escape During Transport.

1. If a prisoner should escape during transport, the transporting officer will use the following procedure:
- a. The officer will immediately notify the Communications Section that an escape has occurred and provide the location and any other pertinent information.
 - b. Communications shall immediately notify the agency in whose jurisdiction the escape occurred and facilitate contact between the transporting officer and that agency.
 - c. The transporting officer will make all efforts to recapture the escaped prisoner. The officer will coordinate all efforts with personnel from the applicable agency.
 - d. The transporting officer will meet with department supervisors and advise them of the situation.
 - e. The officer will complete a general incident report, providing a detailed account of the circumstances. The report should include, but not be limited to the following:
 - (1) Time of the escape;
 - (2) Events that occurred from the time the transporting officer took custody until the time of the escape;
 - (3) Comments made by the prisoner;
 - (4) Method of escape;

(5) Direction of travel;

(6) Any action taken to recapture the prisoner, and notification of the agency having jurisdiction.

(7) Any further actions to be taken.

N. Upon Arrival at the Receiving Facility.

1. The transporting officer will secure all weapons, including guns, knives, OC Pepper Spray and ammunition in the trunk of the transport vehicle before entering a detention facility.
2. The detention facility staff will remove the prisoner's handcuffs/restraining devices once inside the detention facility.
3. The transporting officer will deliver all proper documentation, i.e. tickets, mittimuses with all copies attached, to the detention facility.
 - a. The jail will not accept prisoner property other than small items. Luggage and other bulky possessions shall be stored in accordance with standard Department procedures.
 - b. The jail will not accept metal objects, pocket knives, tools or any other potential weapon and/or an aid to escape. Any such items shall be confiscated from the prisoner prior to transport to ACSODOJ and processed in accordance with department procedures.
 - c. The jail will not accept tobacco products or disposable lighters. Any such items shall be confiscated from the prisoner and disposed of prior to transport to ACSODOJ. If applicable, these items may be placed in the prisoner's vehicle or, with the permission of the prisoner, turned over to an adult acquaintance of the prisoner at the scene.
4. The transporting officer shall note any unusual prisoner activity or comments. Suicidal comments and escape threats shall be documented and detention staff notified. Any known illnesses or medication needs of the prisoner shall be brought to the attention of the detention facility personnel.
5. The transporting officer shall ensure that the receiving officer at the detention facility places his/her signature and i.d. number on the mittimus. In lieu of the signature, the receiving facility may stamp the mittimus with a date stamp. In either case a copy of the acknowledged mittimus shall be forwarded to records.
6. The transporting officer shall ensure that the green copy of the mittimus is detached and brought back to the Department where it shall be included with the incident report.

4020.4 Glossary.

Restraining Devices -- Equipment used to restrain the movement of the prisoner i.e. handcuffs, tie downs.

Transport Vehicle -- A vehicle used for transporting person(s) in custody from one point to another. This term does not include civilian vehicles that may be used for transportation of persons in custody such as buses, trains, or airplanes.

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