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POLICY/PROCEDURE NUMBER: 08-L.E.-009

Page 1 of 9

SUBJECT: PRISONER TRANSPORTATION

EFFECTIVE DATE: March 21, 2022

REVIEW DATE: March 21, 2023

AMENDS/SUPERSEDES: SOP# 200-4: Transportation of Prisoners, January 1, 2000; January 4, 2008 version, January 25, 2008 version; March 7, 2008 version; January 27, 2010 version; February 16, 2011 version; January 8, 2014 version; January 7, 2015 version; December 18, 2019 version.

IACLEA STANDARDS: 8.3.1, 8.3.2, 8.3.3, 8.3.4, 8.3.5, 8.4.1(c)

CSU POLICE SYSTEMWIDE POLICY: NO

APPROVED: Alfredo B. Fernandez, Chief of Police

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## I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures to ensure that prisoners are transported in a safe and secure manner. Additionally, these procedures are designed to establish good officer safety practices.

## II. Policy

The policy of this Department is to reasonably ensure the safety and security of prisoners, both adults and juveniles, during transports and to require good officer safety practices in such circumstances.

## III. Procedures

### A. Search of Prisoners and Transport Vehicles

1. Officers shall examine their vehicles at the beginning of each shift.
  - a. Police vehicles used for transporting prisoners shall be equipped with a safety barrier comprised of a metal and plexi-glass screen-type shield between the driver and the rear seat.
  - b. Police vehicles used for transporting prisoners are modified so that rear windows and doors of the prisoner compartment cannot be opened from inside the vehicle. The door and window

locking switches shall be checked for proper functioning prior to the start of an officer's watch (documented on the officer and supervisor's shift logs) and prior to any prisoner transportation detail.

- c. Per Policy/Procedure Number 05-L.E.-002 (Vehicle Use/Daily Vehicle Inspection, Checklist, II. Procedures, sub-section B): "All patrol division personnel assigned to a vehicle will complete an Officer's Daily Log, which includes a Vehicle Inspection Checklist for the vehicle he or she is using."
  - d. The policy requires checks for proper equipment and general condition of the patrol vehicle.
  - e. Prior to start of watch, officers shall conduct a search of the vehicle's prisoner transport area, in addition to the driver's compartment, to ensure it is free of weapons, contraband, or any other item(s) of an evidentiary nature.
2. The transporting officer shall search all prisoners before they are transported.
    - a. Prisoners will be searched each time they come into the transporting officer's custody, or are placed in the custody of a different officer, including transports between detention facilities.
    - b. It will be assumed that the prisoner may have had an opportunity to obtain contraband or a weapon prior to the time of transport.
    - c. It should never be assumed that someone other than the transporting officer has searched the prisoner.
  3. The transporting officer, prior to and after transporting prisoners, will search the transport vehicle.
    - a. The entire area that would be accessible to a prisoner will be searched for weapons, contraband and other items. This includes under, between, and behind all seats, as well as all visible cracks and crevices around areas such as the door and wall panels.
    - b. Any evidence/property found during the inspection will be brought to the attention of the shift supervisor and will be handled according to Policy/Procedure Number 06-C.I.-003 (Property and Evidence Packaging and Control) and/or Policy/Procedure Number 07-C.I.-004 (Crime Scene Processing and the Collection and Preservation of Evidence).
  4. Any evidence/property found during the inspections shall be brought to the attention of the shift supervisor and will be handled according to Policy/Procedure Number 06-C.I.-003 (Property and Evidence Packaging and Control) and/or Policy/Procedure Number 07-C.I.-004 (Crime Scene Processing and the Collection and Preservation of Evidence).

#### B. Procedures for Prisoner Transports

1. Positioning of prisoners in any transport vehicle.

*(Note: detainees shall not be transported in a vehicle without a safety barrier.)*

- a. When one officer is transporting one prisoner, the prisoner will be positioned on the rear seat on the side opposite the officer driving.
  - b. When one officer is transporting more than one prisoner, the prisoners will be located on the rear seat.
  - c. If more than one officer is involved in the same transport, the assisting officer should position him/herself in the right front passenger seat in such a way as to keep an eye on the prisoner at all times. The prisoner may be located on either the right or left rear seat areas.
2. All prisoners being transported shall be secured to the degree necessary to avoid escape with appropriate restraining devices (as described in Section IV.G of this policy) and fastened with a seat belt.
  3. No more than two prisoners shall be transported in any police vehicle. Juveniles however shall be transported separate from adult prisoners, as well as transported separately by sex (i.e., male / female).
  4. When it is necessary for an officer to transport a detainee, the transporting officer shall log mileage and departure and arrival times with the police dispatcher. The dispatcher shall record all information within RIMS.
  5. Normally, no stops shall be made while transporting from the point of arrest to the booking/processing location. However, on lengthy transports (over 3 hours), a two-officer transportation detail shall be utilized. Where a prisoner may require the use of toilet facilities, the officers should ensure that they have as much control of the situation as possible.
    - a. Do not allow another person in the facility with the prisoner.
    - b. Ensure that there are no escape routes within the facility.
    - c. Ensure that there are no potential weapons available to the prisoner.
  6. Stopping to provide law enforcement services while transporting
    - a. The primary duty of the transporting officer is the safe delivery of the prisoner in his/her care.
    - b. Officers may only stop to render assistance when the risk to third parties is both clear and life-threatening and the risk to the prisoner is minimal.
    - c. In all other cases, the officer shall advise dispatch to notify the appropriate agency, and have other officers respond.
- C. Circumstances when a prisoner may communicate with others while being transported.
1. A prisoner's right to communicate with others will not normally be exercised during the period when the prisoner is being transported.

2. Officers may allow prisoners to communicate with others if the situation is such that a verbal exchange is necessary. These actions shall be documented in a written supplemental report. There is no expectation of privacy within a police car, and officers may desire to record conversations between prisoners without their knowledge, so long as all legal considerations are met.
- D. In the event a prisoner escapes while being transported, the transporting officer shall:
1. Notify the dispatcher to immediately advise the shift supervisor and appropriate jurisdiction in which the escape occurred. On-duty CSUN officers should be notified for assistance if the escape occurred within the one-mile jurisdictional boundary of the campus.
  2. The transporting officer will advise dispatch of the following information and assist in apprehension of the escaped prisoner:
    - a. suspect description and clothing;
    - b. want information or charges being held on;
    - c. any weapons;
    - d. direction and mode of travel;
    - e. request outside agency assistance, if applicable;
    - f. establishment of a perimeter, if applicable; and
    - g. establishment of a command post, if applicable.
  3. The appropriate Patrol Operations Commander or other on-duty Commander will be notified as soon as possible of the circumstances involving the escape and will notify the Chief of Police of the incident and all known circumstances. The transporting officer shall submit a written report to the Chief of Police via the chain of command explaining the circumstances of the escape. A supplemental RIMS report shall also be completed documenting all aspects of the incident. These reports shall be completed before end of watch.
- E. Actions of the transporting officer(s) upon arrival at the custodial facility and required documentation.
1. Firearms and other weapons as determined by the receiving facility will be secured in the designated place provided at the custodial facility. Custodial facilities usually provide a firearm/weapons lockbox or if unavailable, officers shall use the rear trunk of the patrol unit when parked within a secured parking lot.
  2. Restraining devices will be removed from a prisoner only when directed to do so by the custodial facility or when the officer is certain that the prisoner is properly controlled within a secured environment (i.e., holding cell, booking room).
  3. The proper documentation will be transported with the prisoner and submitted to the appropriate person at the custodial facility. This will include:
    - a. Booking forms, warrants, field interview cards, etc.;

- b. Prisoner property and property form; and
    - c. Information on escape or suicide tendencies.
  - 4. The transporting officer will obtain documents from the custodial facility's booking officer detailing the prisoner transaction (i.e., a booking form).
  - 5. The transporting officer shall also complete/submit a Probable Cause Determination (PCD) form as needed.
  - 6. Transporting officers will convey to the receiving facility any information of a medical or security nature involving a prisoner, to include:
    - a. escape tendencies;
    - b. suicide tendencies;
    - c. unusual illnesses with any known prescribed medications; and/or
    - d. use of force incidents (i.e., pepper spray, any physical force utilized, if prisoner was treated and cleared by medical personnel for booking).
- F. If an officer makes a transport to another agency or court and the prisoner is considered an unusual security risk, the transporting officer shall notify the receiving agency of this situation.
- 1. The transporting officer will inform the shift supervisor that they have received approval to transport to the holding facility and will provide the shift supervisor with the name of the receiving official from whom they obtained authorization. This name shall be included in the narrative portion of the RIMS report.
  - 2. When the transporting officer arrives at the agency or court, the transporting officer will assist the receiving officials in making a safe exchange.
  - 3. Should a use of force incident or injury occur during the transport or the exchange of a prisoner, the transporting officer shall notify the shift supervisor as soon as possible. The shift supervisor will document the incident in a supplemental RIMS report.
- G. Restraining devices and methods to be used during prisoner transports
- 1. All prisoners being transported by members of this Department shall be restrained during transport.
  - 2. Single prisoners will be handcuffed behind their back, with the only exceptions being for medical or physical conditions.
    - a. In such instances, the shift supervisor will be notified to assess and approve the transport. He/she will assess the medical circumstances, charges, and criminal history of the arrestee and only then will a determination be made as to the devices and restraining techniques to be utilized.
    - b. Only with the shift supervisor's permission may a subject be handcuffed in front of their body.

3. Prisoners who pose a bio-hazard risk (i.e., sneezing, coughing, suspected to possess an infectious disease, etc.), should be transported using a department issued N95 respirator mask.
4. Prisoners who pose a risk by spitting may be transported using a department issued “Armor Forensics - Transport Hood” only with the approval of the shift supervisor. The “Transport Hood” is only to be used as a temporary protective hood and shall only be used under the following conditions:
  - a. The prisoner is under control and restrained (either with handcuffs, or seatbelt or by both handcuffed and seatbelt).
  - b. Wearer must be under constant visual supervision and shall NEVER be left unattended.
  - c. DO NOT USE on anyone that is vomiting, having difficulty breathing, or is bleeding profusely from the area around the mouth or nose.
  - d. Remove prisoner’s jewelry and eyewear from the head areas before application.
  - e. If there is difficulty applying due to a large size head, permanent jewelry, etc., then discontinue use.
  - f. After using the product, its usage and reason shall be documented in the RIMS report.

Use of the “Transport Hood” requires completion of a “Use of Force” form which shall be completed by the arresting and/or transporting officer, and submitted to the Patrol Operations Commander or his/her mailbox prior to his/her end of watch.

5. When transporting a prisoner that an officer has reason to believe will pose an escape risk, he/she may use flex-cuffs with the approval of the shift supervisor. For example, flex-cuffs may be used to control the legs of prisoners who have demonstrated violent tendencies.
6. Under no circumstances will a prisoner be handcuffed to a part of the transport vehicle itself, such as the door, post, protective screen barrier, etc.
7. When a prisoner has a disability which physically indicates that there is NO danger of escape by the prisoner or injury to the prisoner or officer, restraining devices may be inappropriate. *Only the shift supervisor may make the determination that restraining devices are not required.*
8. Mentally disturbed prisoners will be restrained in such a manner as to prevent them from injuring themselves or others. Flex-cuffs may be utilized to restrain the extremities of the detainee.
9. For requests for police response initiated by the Counseling Center, refer to Department Policy 10-S.O.-22 (Police Response to People with Mental Illness).
10. Whenever handcuffs are utilized, they will be double-locked prior to placing the prisoner into the transport vehicle.
11. Tying the hands and feet together behind a prisoner’s back (i.e., “hog-tying”) is strictly prohibited by this Department.

H. Procedures for transporting sick, injured, or disabled prisoners

1. If a prisoner becomes sick or complains of an injury subsequent to arrest:
  - a. The officer shall notify the dispatcher immediately.
  - b. The shift supervisor will respond and evaluate the situation.
  - c. Paramedics will be called to the scene and transport the prisoner to a local hospital if deemed appropriate by the shift supervisor and/or paramedics. This includes being suspected of a pandemic infection.
    - i. Should hospital transportation occur, the shift supervisor will take the appropriate measures (i.e., assign escorting patrol units) to ensure the safety of the prisoner, transporting paramedics, and hospital staff.
    - ii. When the LAPD Van Nuys jail advises they are unable to provide the necessary care for the sick, injured, or disabled person, the approval will be made by the shift supervisor to transport the prisoner to:

Keck School of Medicine/USC  
(i.e., LAC+USC Medical Center/County USC Hospital)  
2051 Marengo St. (1<sup>st</sup> Floor)  
Los Angeles, CA 90033

Per the Los Angeles County Sheriff Department regulations, all patients in custody who are brought to LAC+USC for care prior to booking require the transport officer call the on-duty Sheriff Sergeant to advise of the transport and security situation involving the in-custody patient. The number to call is 323-226-3333.
  - d. The shift supervisor will ensure that all reports are completed as needed (i.e., crime, arrest, booking, 5150, injury/illness, etc.).
  - e. If the prisoner is subsequently transported to a holding facility, the transporting officer is to inform the receiving agency of the sickness, injury, and/or disability prior to arrival.
2. Transportation of disabled prisoners
  - a. Officers who encounter this situation shall notify the shift supervisor immediately.
  - b. A disabled prisoner will never be placed into a position that could possibly result in injury or compromise their safety.
  - c. The shift supervisor will evaluate the situation to determine what proper and safe actions need to be taken.
  - d. The receiving agency will be notified of the nature of the disabled prisoner and a determination will be made as to whether they will accept the prisoner.
  - e. A request will be made to the receiving agency to provide a special transport vehicle, if required.
  - f. When appropriate, paramedic transport may be utilized.

### 3. Transport to a Medical Care Facility

- a. When a prisoner is transported to a medical facility and is admitted to the facility by the attending physician, the transporting officer will immediately notify the shift supervisor and shall utilize the following procedures to ensure control of the prisoner in the medical facility.
  - i. Have the prisoner released from custody, if possible and appropriate, given the nature of the offense.
  - ii. If the prisoner has to remain in police custody, the medical facility should be requested to put the prisoner in as secure a private room as possible.
  - iii. If admitted but not released to the custody of the hospital, the prisoner should be kept under observation by a police officer at all times. Normally restraining devices should be utilized, however officers should consult with the attending physician in reference to the best utilization of restraining devices and only then shall a decision be made by the shift supervisor as to the appropriate use or no use of restraining devices.
- b. The procedures listed above also apply for the commitment of mentally disturbed persons (i.e., 5150 WIC), with the exception that officers may be relieved when the subject has completed the intake process and has been turned over to the facility staff.

#### I. Special Transport Situations

1. It is recommended to utilize a transportation officer of the same sex when transporting prisoners. However, when this is not possible, transporting officers of the opposite sex (i.e., a female prisoner with a male transporting officer) shall:
  - a. At the beginning of the transport, advise dispatch of their vehicle number and odometer mileage and request dispatch to advise of the current time shown on the RIMS system.
  - b. Proceed directly to the destination via the shortest route deemed safe and practical.
  - c. Upon arrival at the destination, advise dispatch of their vehicle's odometer mileage and request dispatch to advise of the time shown on the RIMS system.
  - d. Dispatch shall record all transport information listed above within the RIMS system.
2. When making lengthy transports (over three hours), a two-officer transportation detail is required and an officer of the same sex should be used. If this is not possible, two officers of the opposite sex may be used for the transport.

#### J. Documentation for Positive Identification of a Prisoner Being Picked Up from a Detention Facility

1. Prisoner Identification – When picking a prisoner up for transport at a detention facility, the transporting officer shall ensure that he/she has the correct person. This can be accomplished by:
  - a. Officer's personal knowledge of the prisoner.
  - b. Requesting verification by jail personnel of the prisoner's identity.
  - c. Verifying booking papers and the prisoner's personal identification, to include viewing the booking photograph when possible.
  - d. Verifying the band on the prisoner's left hand (if one is present) that displays the prisoner's identifying information.
  
2. Documentation that should accompany the prisoner being transported between facilities shall include:
  - a. The commitment papers of the relinquishing agency;
  - b. The prisoner's medical records, if any; and
  - c. The prisoner's personal property.
  
3. Information shall be sought as to the prisoner's potential for escape, suicidal tendencies, or any other personal traits of a security nature. This shall be recorded within a supplemental report and provided to the next receiving agency.