



MYRTLE BEACH POLICE DEPARTMENT

ADMINISTRATION REGULATIONS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

Subject: Prisoner Transport

Number: 319-A

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Rescinds: S-128 Inmate Movement

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S-130 Restraints During Inmate Transport

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S-163 Transportation of Inmates in Wheelchairs

07-20-2015

319 – Prisoner Transport

03-01-2024

Approved By:

I. PURPOSE

This policy establishes guidelines for the transportation of persons in police custody.

II. POLICY

The handling and transportation of persons in custody is one of the single most dangerous functions that a police officer performs. All prisoners transported will be physically restrained using any approved restraining device, such as handcuffs. All persons in police custody will be considered a potential danger to the transporting officer(s) and will be properly searched.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Prisoner: A person who has been deprived of their liberty and freedom of movement and kept under involuntary restraint, confinement, or custody, including all persons under arrest but not yet incarcerated and those incarcerated, including mentally ill persons being transported.
- B. Restraining Devices: Equipment used to restrain the movement of the prisoner, such as handcuffs, waist chains, rip hobble, leg irons, flex-cuffs, leg restraints, etc.

- C. **Security Hazard:** Any threat to the security of the prisoner, to the facility in which he or she is held, or to others with whom the prisoner may come into contact. Estimates of the degree of security hazard will govern the means of transport, the kinds of restraining devices to be used, and other actions to be taken by the officer to provide proper protection for the security of the prisoner.
- D. **Temporary Immobilization Device** – A device used to restrain a prisoner's appendages for a temporary period. Examples include a Restraint Chair, a RIPP Hobble, a WRAP Restraint, etc.
- E. **Transporting Officer:** A sworn law enforcement officer responsible for transporting a prisoner from one point to another.
- F. **Transport Vehicle:** The vehicle used for transporting a prisoner from one point to another. This term does not refer to commercial vehicles such as buses, trains, or airplanes that may be used for prisoner transport.
- G. **Prisoner Transport Van (PTV):** Vans outfitted, equipped, and staffed with trained personnel for the transport of multiple prisoners from the arrest location to the jail intake or from one facility to another.

IV. PRISONER PROPERTY INVENTORY

- A. The purpose of the inventory of a person in police custody is to:
 - 1. Promptly identify the property to establish accountability and avoid spurious claims of stolen or missing property.
 - 2. Assist in the prevention of theft of property.
 - 3. Locate toxic, flammable, or explosive substances.
 - 4. Locate weapons and instruments that may facilitate an escape from custody, or that may endanger law enforcement personnel or other inmates.
 - 5. Reduce the danger to persons and property.

- B. An officer will inventory the personal property of a person taken into police custody, and an inventory will be conducted whenever:
1. The person is either placed in a secure holding facility or transported in the secure portion of a police vehicle.
 2. Custody of the person is transferred to another law enforcement agency, correctional facility, or treatment facility.
- C. Inventories of personal property in the possession of prisoners will be conducted according to the following procedures:
1. An inventory will occur prior to the transfer of custody to another officer, placing a person into the temporary holding facility or a police vehicle, whichever occurs first.
 2. All officers involved in the inventory will engage their BWC, and the inventory will be conducted in view of an in-car camera when possible.
 3. To complete the inventory of personal property, the officer will remove all items of personal property in the possession of a person and from the clothing worn by the person.
 4. When practical, officers will inventory the contents of all containers (i.e., suitcases, backpacks, packages, or boxes) in the possession of a prisoner when the contents cannot be determined from an examination of the container's exterior.
 5. Prisoners will retain no personal property in their possession during transport. Evidence, contraband, and dangerous substances/items will be seized and documented on a Property Voucher. All remaining personal property will be secured by an officer and relinquished to the detention facility staff.
 6. The list of property found during the inventory process will be documented in JMS during prisoner intake into the detention facility.

V. TRANSPORTING PRISONERS

A. Search of Police Vehicles - Officers are to conduct and document a thorough search of the interior of their police vehicle at the beginning of each tour of duty, upon any change in vehicle assignment, and after any non-police personnel has been inside the vehicle.

1. Officers should mark themselves busy using the code "PSVI" for pre-shift vehicle searches or code "PTVS" for post-transport vehicle searches.
2. Officers should activate their BWC to document the search.

B. Use of Transport Vehicles

1. All prisoners must be physically restrained using approved restraining devices, such as handcuffs, waist chains, rip hobble, leg irons, flex-cuffs, leg restraints, restraint chair, etc., in accordance with the officer's training.
2. Officers will use discretion and, when necessary, consult a supervisor when confronted with a prisoner who has an obvious or known physical condition that will prohibit the use of restraining devices.
3. The transportation of prisoners will be conducted using only vehicles equipped with a protective shield and modified to minimize opportunities for the prisoner to exit from the rear compartment of the vehicle without the aid of the transporting officer. Officers will disable the rear window controls and door handles in the rear compartments.
4. All prisoners will be placed in the rear of the vehicle behind a protective shield, and a seatbelt will be used for each. The number of prisoners transported at once must not exceed the vehicle's rated capacity or the number of available seatbelts.
5. If a prisoner must be restrained in a Temporary Immobilization Device, a second officer should be in the vehicle to monitor the prisoner.
6. When transporting prisoners in patrol vehicles, the following procedures will be observed:
 - i. Patrol Vehicles consisting of one officer may transport no more than two (2) prisoners.

- ii. Patrol Vehicles consisting of two officers may transport up to three (3) prisoners if the available number of seatbelts allows.
 - iii. Prisoners of the opposite sex will not be transported in the same patrol vehicle unless they are family or household members.
 - iv. Juvenile prisoners will not be transported in the same patrol vehicle with adult prisoners unless they are family or household members.
- 7. PTVs may transport prisoners in accordance with the following procedures:
 - i. Prisoners should not be restrained with their hands behind their backs during transport.
 - ii. Prisoners of the opposite sex will not be transported in the same PTV unless it is equipped with a solid partition.
 - iii. Juvenile prisoners will not be transported in the same PTV with adult prisoners.
- 8. Safety aspects of prisoner transport require that the prisoner's right to communicate with attorneys and others will not normally be exercised during the period that the prisoner is being transported. Except for unavoidable contact that one prisoner may have with another secured prisoner, or with transporting officers in the same vehicle, prisoners being transported will not be permitted to communicate or have physical contact with other persons, unless, in the transporting officer's judgment, the communication is essential.
- 9. The starting location and beginning vehicle odometer mileage must be stated over the radio to the Communications Division telecommunicator at the start of every prisoner transport. The arriving location and vehicle odometer mileage must be given over the radio to the telecommunicator at the conclusion of every prisoner transport.
- 10. Transport Officers will engage all equipped audio/visual equipment.
 - i. Officers may position the camera to record the actions of the prisoner in any situation that the officer deems necessary.

- ii. Officers may reposition the camera to observe the prisoner and record any verbal utterances.

C. Special Transport Situations

1. If a prisoner becomes sick or is injured incident to arrest and needs medical treatment, the arresting officer must seek medical treatment for the prisoner at that time. Prisoners with life-threatening medical conditions or injuries must be transported to a medical facility by ambulance. If this situation occurs, an officer will be designated to accompany the prisoner during transport. The need for restraining devices will be determined upon consultation with the medical personnel providing immediate treatment to the prisoner.
2. Officers having knowledge of any prisoner's medical conditions or injuries must inform the receiving agency personnel of such.
3. Officers will use discretion and sound judgment when determining whether restraining devices are necessary for physically handicapped prisoners.

D. Observation of Prisoners

Transporting officers will ensure that the individual is under continual observation and monitoring, except during certain medical examinations that require privacy. Under no circumstances will a prisoner in custody be left unattended in a transport vehicle or any other non-secure area.

E. Diversions During Prisoner Transport

1. Transporting officers are not authorized to stop for or respond to the need for law enforcement services except in life-threatening situations. If this situation occurs, the transporting officer will:
 - i. Immediately notify Dispatch and a Patrol supervisor;
 - ii. Ensure the safety and security of the prisoner; and
 - iii. Minimize risk to the officer and the public.

2. Officers are prohibited from engaging in any type of emergency response while transporting a prisoner unless an urgent or emergency situation arises that warrants the use of emergency equipment.
3. Transporting officers should always travel the most direct route to their final destination when transporting prisoners unless they can articulate reasons why an alternate route was selected.
4. PTVs are permitted to travel to multiple locations to pick up prisoners before travelling the most direct or reasonable route to the detention center or destination.

F. Transporting to a Detention Facility with Prisoners

1. Officers transporting prisoners will normally enter a Detention Facility through a Sally Port. The Sally Port door(s) should be closed before the prisoner compartment of the vehicle is opened.
2. The transporting officer will leave any restraining devices on the prisoner until safely inside a secure area of the facility and detention personnel have authorized removal.
3. Officers are prohibited from taking any firearm into the secure area of the detention facility. Before entering the secure detention area, the transporting officer will secure their firearm in the lockbox adjacent to the door or in a lockbox within the transport vehicle. For vehicles not equipped with a lockbox, the trunk or rear compartment of an SUV is not an approved location for an unattended weapon.
4. The transporting officer will deliver to the detention officer all applicable documentation pertaining to the prisoner, which may include charging document(s), a detainer, arrest report, and any information about the prisoner's escape or suicide potential or other issues of a security nature.
5. The transporting officer will remain in the receiving area with the prisoner until the prisoner has been searched, examined for injuries, an intake assessment has been completed, and the detention officer has accepted the prisoner. The acceptance may be verbal or by signature.

G. Transporting Prisoners to Other Secure Facilities

1. Prisoners transported from one detention or prison facility to another must be positively identified as the person to be transported. Booking records and numbers assigned to the detainee, as well as date of birth, Social Security number, race, sex, available photograph(s), and any physical characteristics, should be compared and verified by both the facility staff and transporting officers prior to release for transport.
2. Transportation documentation will include the following information:
 - i. Detainee name;
 - ii. Facility detainee identification number (if assigned);
 - iii. A certified court order to transport (if applicable);
 - iv. Medical records (if applicable);
 - v. A detainer, if the detainee is being taken temporarily from one facility to another while awaiting trial;
 - vi. A certified court order, if a juvenile has been remanded to the custody of a state juvenile facility; and/or
 - vii. Inventory sheet(s) listing detainee's personal property.
3. Transporting personnel will inquire about any potential security risks the detainee may represent as a result of suicidal tendencies, behavior while incarcerated, mental disorders, or escape potential. Information should be noted on the transport documentation and provided to the receiving facility upon arrival.
4. In the case of an unusually high prisoner security risk, the detention supervisor will contact the destination facility or court well in advance to ensure the receiving location is equally prepared for the prisoner's intake. This contact is to include, at a minimum, a briefing of the prisoner's identification, potential risk(s), recommendations regarding security, any requests for additional personnel, and the process to be followed during

the transfer of custody.

H. Security and Control of Prisoners at Medical Facilities

1. Sick or injured prisoners will be evaluated by EMS when possible. Those with serious conditions will be transported by EMS and accompanied by an officer to a medical facility for treatment.
2. If directed by the on-duty detention supervisor, the transportation officer may transport a sick or injured prisoner to a medical facility for treatment.
3. Prisoners will be searched and placed in appropriate restraints before leaving the detention facility.
4. Prisoners will remain in restraints at unsecured medical facilities unless it becomes necessary to remove or modify them in order to facilitate medical treatment. Attachment of restraints to medical tables or hospital beds to prevent escape and unnecessary movement is permissible and warranted in many cases. Prisoners will remain under constant observation and control by the transportation officer.
5. If a prisoner is admitted to a medical facility, transporting personnel will immediately notify the on-duty detention supervisor in order to provide for continuous security and relief.
6. All documentation of medical treatment from the attending physician, as well as prescriptions, medications, and any follow-up information, will be given to the detention supervisor upon arrival at the detention facility.
7. Any refusal of treatment by the prisoner will be documented in writing by the transporting officer and attending physician and reported to detention facility staff.
8. The prisoner will be searched and restrained before transport from the medical facility.

I. Escape from Custody During Transport

1. In the event a prisoner escapes from custody, the transporting officer will:

- i. Immediately notify the Communications Division,
 - ii. Provide necessary details to re-capture the prisoner,
 - iii. Notify the on-duty watch commander,
 - iv. If a danger to the public exists, notify the Public Information Team.
2. A Uniform Crime Report will be completed.
3. If equipment has been damaged or stolen, then appropriate loss reports will be completed.
4. If the prisoner is not recovered prior to the officer's completion of their shift, then the officer shall ensure warrants have been or will be issued for the prisoner.
5. Notify SCDOC of the escape per SCDOC regulations.
6. OPS will complete an investigation.