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| Policy # Prisoner Transportation | Related Policies: | |
| *This policy is for internal use only and does not enlarge an employee’s civil liability in any way. The policy should not be construed as creating a higher duty of care, in an evidentiary sense, with respect to third-party civil claims against employees. A violation of this policy, if proven, can only form the basis for internal discipline and/or criminal charges.* | | |
| Applicable State Statutes: | | |
| KACP Accreditation Standard: 1.5, 1.7 | | |
| Date Implemented: | | Revision Date: May 1, 2025 |

1. Policy

This police department is dedicated to ensuring the officers’ and prisoners’ safety during prisoner transportation.

1. Procedure
   1. To reduce the presence of weapons and contraband, every police vehicle will be searched by the assigned officer:
      1. At the beginning and end of that officer's shift.
      2. Prior to and after transporting prisoners.
   2. At the beginning of each shift, the assigned officer will examine the police vehicle to ensure that it is in good operating condition and equipped with the proper safety items such as flares, first aid kit, spare tire, and jack.
   3. Prisoners transported by officers shall be searched and secured in handcuffs with their hands behind their backs unless meeting an exemption outlined in this policy. Every prisoner shall be placed in the patrol vehicle and secured with seat belts. This provides for safety for the prisoner in the event of an auto accident as well as additional security for the officer. If readily available, female officers are to search female prisoners and male officers are to search male prisoners.

* + 1. Officers may elect not to handcuff individuals in special transport situations or handcuff the person in front of their body. Officers should seek assistance from other officers when these special transport circumstances are present. These exemptions will be limited to the following:
       1. Elderly or ill persons arrested for minor offenses.
       2. Juveniles who pose no apparent threat of violence or escape.
       3. Persons who are physically disabled, injured, or otherwise physically incapacitated.
  1. Restraints

The police department utilizes the following types of restraints to secure prisoners prior to transportation or for temporary detention:

* + 1. Handcuffs - Handcuffs are the recommended method for restraining arrested persons or for persons who are detained temporarily for security reasons.
    2. Leg Shackles/Leg Cuffs – Leg shackles are extra-large handcuffs with an extended connecting chain between them used to restrict walking capabilities.
    3. Belly-Chain Restraint- A belly chain is a physical restraint worn by prisoners, consisting of a chain around the waist, to which the prisoner's hands may be chained or cuffed.
    4. Leg Hobble Restraints - Leg hobble restraints should be used whenever a prisoner needs to be totally restrained.
    5. Flex Cuffs - These restraints are intended as temporary, emergency restraining devices. Officers utilizing flex cuffs should replace flex cuffs with handcuffs as soon as practicable.
    6. Officers utilizing handcuffs to restrain prisoners or to temporarily detain persons shall make every effort to handcuff the individual's hands behind their back. Handcuffs must not be applied in a manner that intentionally inflicts injury or pain to the prisoner. Handcuffs should be checked for tightness, double locked, and documented.
    7. If a prisoner complains that the restraints are causing pain or injury, when safe to do so, the officer should inspect the restraints for proper fit and document the request and inspection, as well as any action taken.
    8. In instances where the individual cannot physically place his hands behind his back, the officer may elect to use two sets of handcuffs linked together. Such circumstances may be due to the physical stature of the person being handcuffed, or because of an injury or illness sustained by the prisoner.
  1. Additional transporting considerations:
     1. When deemed appropriate, prisoners may be restrained with leg hobble restraints and/or leg shackles. If a supervisor is available, they will be notified. These restraints will be used, according to the manufacturer’s specifications, to assist in restraining uncooperative or combative prisoners, or as an alternative means of restraining a prisoner when handcuffs are not feasible. (Example: When a prisoner has a cast or brace on one arm and handcuffs cannot be used, leg shackles may be used to restrain the prisoner.) Leg hobble restraints and/or leg shackles will not be used to “hog tie” (handcuffs attached and cinched to hobble restraint on the ankles) a prisoner or to intentionally cause injury or unnecessary pain to any prisoner.
     2. All prisoners will be transported in a seated, up-right, position, facing forward. Due to the inherent risk of “positional asphyxia,” officers are strictly prohibited from transporting any prisoner, under any circumstances, in any prone position in a police vehicle. If a prisoner must be transported in a prone position due to illness or injury, the officer will request EMS to transport the prisoner by stretcher.
     3. No person shall be handcuffed to any stationary object or to any part of the transporting vehicle except in an emergency situation where no other alternative exists. If such a situation arises, proper documentation of the incident shall be required. Under no conditions will a prisoner be handcuffed to any part of the police unit during transportation.
     4. A single officer transporting prisoners in a screened vehicle will transport the prisoners in the rear seat, handcuffed, and with seat belts fastened. Both prisoners shall be handcuffed and seatbelts fastened. A single officer shall not transport a prisoner in an unscreened vehicle except under emergency circumstances and with a supervisor’s approval. An investigative officer may transport a prisoner in an unscreened vehicle.
     5. Two officers transporting a single prisoner or two or three prisoners in a screened vehicle may transport with both officers in the front seat and the prisoner(s) secured in the rear seat, handcuffed, and with seat belts fastened.
  2. If a prisoner becomes disorderly during transport:
     1. The transporting officer should continue to the detention center if the prisoner does not pose a threat to the safe operation of the vehicle. The communications center should be notified that there is a disorderly subject in the vehicle and assistance will be required when the prisoner is removed from the vehicle. The prisoner must be kept in the vehicle until help arrives.
     2. If the prisoner poses a threat to the safe operation of the vehicle, the officer should pull to the side of the road, notify the communications center of the location and problem, exit the vehicle, and wait for help to arrive. The prisoner should be kept in the rear passenger compartment of the police vehicle. The officer should not open the rear doors until another officer arrives on the scene.
  3. A security partition between the front and back seats of all marked patrol vehicles provides protection for the transporting officer. The partition is constructed to allow for communication between the prisoner and the transporting officer. For the security and safety of the prisoner and transporting officer, the prisoner's right to communicate with attorneys and others will not normally be exercised during the period that the prisoner is being transported.
  4. Whenever there is an indication that a prisoner may be a potential hazard to the safety and security of anyone, including the prisoner, while undergoing transportation, confinement, or trial, this fact shall be communicated to personnel to whom the officer is transferring custody of the prisoner.
     1. Specific reasons such as escape or suicide risk, mental disability, etc., shall be detailed.
     2. The intake officer at the detention facility or court personnel where applicable shall be notified so that additional personnel or restraining devices may be used.
  5. Prior to being transported to or from a detention facility, the transporting officer should make every effort to positively identify the prisoner and complete required paperwork. Paperwork should include information detailing the prisoner’s escape or potential suicide risks or other personal traits of a security nature.
     1. Identification verification may be accomplished by comparing the prisoner's physical appearance with jail records, comparing fingerprints, comparing signatures, interviewing the prisoner, or any other method that will assure the officer of the correct identity of the prisoner.
     2. The Kentucky Uniform Citation and all personal property, except that which the detention center will not accept, should be transported with the prisoner. For interstate transports a properly executed extraditions warrant, or waiver shall be obtained in advance and transported with the prisoner.
  6. The primary duty of the transporting officer is the safe delivery of the prisoner. Diversionary incidents, whether instigated by the prisoner or others, may enhance the chances for an escape or the potential danger to the safety of the prisoner. Therefore, an officer transporting a prisoner shall not stop to render assistance unless the officer recognizes a clear, immediate, and grave risk of physical harm to a third party, and no other police unit is readily available to render the assistance.
     1. Under such circumstances, the communications center will be notified of the identity of the unit, the fact that the officer is in the process of transporting a prisoner, and the location and nature of the incident.
     2. The officer shall remain at the location only until other emergency assistance has arrived.
     3. If an officer needs to leave their vehicle, they should take the keys with them. Prisoners should not be left unattended for other than a short duration of time, giving consideration to heat or cold that may impact the prisoner while the vehicle is turned off.
  7. Officers who are transporting prisoners should not become involved in a pursuit, roadblock, or other situation that might potentially cause harm to the prisoner.
  8. Transporting officers will be able to visually observe prisoners in their custody at all times. If prisoners are not viewed while using toilet facilities, they will be searched after leaving the restroom.
  9. Department vehicles used for transporting prisoners will have a safety barrier present that separates the driver from the prisoner. They will be modified to minimize opportunities for the prisoner to exit from the rear compartment without the aid of the transporting officer. This should be accomplished by making the windows inoperable from the rear seat and removing or disabling the door handles from the inside compartment.

1. Special Transportation Considerations
   1. When a meal is required during the transport of a prisoner (i.e., when transportation is from a long distance away and takes several hours) the eating place will be selected randomly so that predicted patterns of behavior by transporting officers may be avoided.
   2. When a prisoner is transported to a local hospital for any reason, the following applies:
      1. Extreme caution will be taken to isolate the prisoner from other patients and not leave the prisoner unattended or out of the immediate control of the transporting officer.
      2. The transporting officer will not leave the medical facility until relieved by another officer or instructed to do otherwise by a supervisor. Should the prisoner need to be admitted to the hospital, the transporting officer must notify a supervisor of the circumstances. The supervisor shall notify the chief of police or his designee, who will make the decision on whether the prisoner must be guarded or cited and released.
      3. The transporting officer will remove the restraints only when it is deemed necessary and when requested to do so by the medical staff.
      4. When the prisoner has been released by the hospital or medical facility, the detainee’s condition should be carefully recorded. All instructions for future treatment and medication should be obtained in writing and signed by the attending physician. The transporting officer shall search the detainee again prior to leaving the medical facility. The transporting officer shall give a complete review of the detainee’s condition, all medical paperwork, and any medications to the detention center officers or medical staff upon arrival at the detention center.
      5. If a prisoner who has been released from the hospital for incarceration but shows deterioration and symptoms of a serious medical need, the transport officer shall return to the hospital or call EMS.
   3. When transporting a prisoner of the opposite sex, the officer will call the communications center and advise of the current mileage and destination. Upon arrival, the officer will again contact the communications center and advise of the exact location and mileage. These items will be logged into the dispatch log.
   4. If the transport officer has a body-worn or in-car camera system, the recording system should remain active during the transport.
   5. Physically and mentally disabled prisoners present conditions for their transportation that dictate special care and attention. Officers will use their discretion in deciding the type of transportation and restraint for these prisoners.
   6. Any prisoner who is sick or injured shall be examined by medical personnel and offered treatment for their injury or illness prior to being transported to any jail or detention facility.
      1. If the prisoner refuses treatment, a copy of the "refusal form" from the hospital or life squad will be presented to the jailer upon admission to the detention facility.
      2. If the prisoner was injured incidental to arrest, a supervisor, when available, will respond to the hospital, take photos of the injury, and record statements from the prisoner. A response to resistance investigation shall be conducted. If no supervisor is available, the transport officer will be responsible for photographing the injuries. In cases of serious injury, a supervisor shall be notified.
      3. If necessary, officers should consider calling an ambulance for transportation to a medical facility. A police officer will accompany the ambulance, and the prisoner will remain under guard by the officer.
      4. While being transported, a sick or injured prisoner shall be restrained or handcuffed unless the handcuffs would further compound the injuries. A second officer will be called to assist in transporting an unrestrained prisoner.
      5. A pregnant prisoner will be restrained solely with handcuffs in front of the body unless further restraint is required to protect herself or others. Shackling is not permitted.
      6. Except in an extraordinary circumstance, no inmate who is known to be pregnant shall be restrained during labor, during transport to a medical facility or birthing center for delivery, or during postpartum recovery.
      7. When a prisoner is unconscious or becomes unconscious during transport, medical attention shall be sought at once through the most expedient means.

* 1. Police officers will not transport prisoners to hospitals to visit other persons, to funerals, etc. If prisoners make such requests, they will be referred to detention personnel or the county sheriff's office.
  2. Officers shall not knowingly handcuff juveniles to adults or males to females.
  3. When two prisoners are handcuffed together, they shall be handcuffed right hand to right hand or left hand to left hand.

1. Processing of prisoners into detention facilities

Adult prisoners will be transported to the county detention center for processing unless otherwise instructed by a supervisor or court of competence. Juvenile prisoners will be transported to the county region juvenile detention center for processing unless otherwise instructed by a supervisor or court of competence.

* 1. Transporting officers will follow detention facilities’ posted requirements pertaining to securing firearms.
  2. Upon arriving at the detention facility, the officer will escort the prisoner to the holding area of the detention facility. The prisoner will remain restrained until accepted by detention facility staff.
  3. Once in the detention facility receiving area, the detention officer will move the prisoner to the facility processing area and remove the restraints.
  4. The officer will give the receiving jail official the detention copy of the uniform citation and any other documentation.
  5. The detention facility personnel will be notified of any potential medical or security hazards the prisoner poses.
  6. If the detention facility refuses to accept the prisoner, the officer should call a supervisor for direction.

1. Escapes

Following the escape of a prisoner during transport, the transport officer must take actions that include the following:

* 1. Notification
     1. Give the dispatch center a description of the escapee
     2. The immediate and all surrounding police jurisdictions
     3. Police jurisdictions of the escapee's residence and jurisdictions of known associates
     4. Police supervisor
  2. Reports to be prepared
     1. Incident report (escape from custody) and synopsis
     2. Detailed report to a supervisor specifying the circumstances of the escape
     3. Any other reports deemed necessary by the supervisor
  3. Other actions to be taken
     1. Inform all jurisdictions in surrounding counties with additional messages directed to any agencies with a likelihood of coming in contact with the escapee.
     2. Sign additional charges and ensure warrants are entered into NCIC/LINK.