

PRISONER HANDLING AND TRANSPORTATION

This order outlines the responsibilities of members towards persons they arrest until the arrested person(s) is accepted for booking at either a district station or County Jail.

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the San Francisco Police Department to treat all persons taken into custody in a humane manner and with due regard for their physical safety and protection while in police custody.

II. PRISONER SECURITY

A. **PREVENTING ESCAPE.** Officers shall take all reasonable steps to minimize the possibility of prisoner escape by:

1. Properly handcuffing or otherwise restraining the prisoner;
2. Maintaining physical control of the prisoner at all times through appropriate holds or by confining the prisoner in a properly equipped police vehicle, having in mind that police vehicles shall not be used as holding facilities for prisoners for extended periods of time;
3. Not leaving the vehicle unattended, absent articulable exigent circumstances;
4. Taking the prisoner from the scene of the arrest to an appropriate police or medical facility as soon as practicable.

B. **San Francisco General Hospital (SFGH) responsibilities:** An officer transporting an arrestee to San Francisco General Hospital (SFGH) is responsible for the arrestee until that arrestee is:

1. Booked into a district station or the County Jail, or,
2. When all of the following conditions have taken place:
 - a. The arrestee is admitted by the “physician-in-charge”.

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- b. A completed Field Arrest Card (prisoner housing card) and any relevant prisoner property (including clothing and money) are delivered to County Jail #9.
- c. The arrestee is booked at the SFGH Jail Ward and the officer is formally relieved by a deputy sheriff.

III. SAFETY OF PRISONERS

Members shall take all reasonable steps, consistent with Department policy and training, to prevent injury to prisoners for which they are responsible. The following list contains examples of such reasonable steps but is not intended to exclude other steps that might be reasonable under the circumstances.

- A. Securing the prisoner in a way that prevents injury by or to any other person;
- B. While awaiting transportation from the arrest location, positioning the prisoner's body, in a manner that affords safety to the arresting officer, the prisoner and other persons who may be in close proximity. Prisoners in restraints shall not be left lying on their backs or stomachs, but shall be placed on their sides or in a sitting position as soon as their conduct allows the officer to place them;
- C. Transporting the prisoner from the place of the arrest as soon as practicable using department approved means of transportation, unless exigent circumstances require improvised procedures;
- D. Keeping the prisoner in view at all times to observe any change in the demeanor or consciousness of the prisoner or in the activities of others nearby. Continuous observation is required by Department policy after application of liquid chemical agents or carotid restraint (DGO 5.01, section I, I, 5);
- E. Staying with the prisoner until booking or until custody is properly relinquished to another officer, law enforcement agency or medical facility to guard against the possibility of injury, escape, rescue or lynching;
- F. Giving first aid for any apparent injury if the circumstances permit, or as required by Department policy (e.g., flushing the face of a person exposed to liquid chemical agents, DGO 5.01, section I, I.,.3);

- G. Obtaining, without unnecessary delay, the levels of medical attention required by the circumstances indicated below:
1. MEDICAL ASSESSMENT (i.e., examination of the prisoner by paramedics) shall be done if:
 - a. The prisoner has been sprayed with OC or Mace (DGO 5.01, Section III, B);
 - b. The prisoner bears any other visible injury or complains of an injury.
 2. MEDICAL EVALUATION (examination of the prisoner by a physician at a medical facility) shall be done if:
 - a. The prisoner has been subjected to carotid restraint (DGO 5.01 Section III, F.);
 - b. The prisoner exhibits an altered mental state, loss of consciousness, indications of mental disorder or extreme drug/alcohol intoxication;
 - c. The prisoner exhibits a noticeable change in demeanor, in the level of consciousness or responsiveness, or has difficulty breathing; or
 - d. The prisoner has been subjected to Extended Range Impact Weapon (ERIW).
 3. BOOKING AND DETENTION as dictated by the booking and detention medical screening

Members shall resolve any doubts about the level of medical attention needed by a prisoner in favor of obtaining a medical evaluation. If medical assessment indicates that a medical evaluation is necessary, the prisoner shall be transported to a medical facility either by ambulance or by police vehicle.

IV. TRANSPORTATION OF PRISONERS

Officers are responsible for the safe transportation of prisoners in their custody. Unless unusual circumstances exist, the following rules apply:

- A. MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION. The following vehicles are authorized for transporting prisoners:
 1. Patrol wagon. The preferred means of transporting prisoners is by patrol wagon since those vehicles are designed for this purpose.
 2. Screened police vehicles. Screened police cars, vans, station wagons are the next best method, since they are modified to safely isolate the prisoner(s);

- a. Absent clear circumstances requiring otherwise, screened police vehicles equipped with special restraint seats are the only vehicles that may be used to transport prisoners who have been sprayed with Mace or OC before medical assessment or evaluation.
 3. Unscreened police vehicles. An unscreened police vehicle, whether marked or not, may be used to transport a single prisoner but only if:
 - a. Two officers are physically in the vehicle during transportation; and
 - b. The prisoner is properly handcuffed and secured with the vehicle's seat belts in the passenger-side rear seat and,
 - c. The second officer is seated behind the vehicle operator and next to the prisoner.
 4. Other vehicles. In emergency situations [unusual circumstances], a supervisor may approve other means of prisoner transport (e.g., bus at mass arrest, private vehicle in an emergency). The fact of supervisory approval and a clear statement of the facts that made the alternate transportation necessary shall be set forth in the incident report for the arrest.
- B. PROMPT TRANSPORTATION.** Prisoners shall be transported from the place of their arrest and booked as soon as possible.
1. Transporting Arrested Persons. A person under arrest and being transported in a Department vehicle must be secured by a safety belt where provided by the vehicle manufacturer. Officers are exempt from this policy when:
 - a. The rear seat belts have been removed.
 - b. The prisoner is resisting or combative and the officer's safety would be jeopardized by attempting to secure a safety belt around the prisoner. If available, a wagon should be used to transport such prisoners.
 - c. The prisoner's size or build, coupled with the vehicle configuration, create a hardship to accomplish the securing of the safety belt around the prisoner.
- C. POSITION OF PRISONERS DURING TRANSPORTATION.** Prisoners shall be transported in an upright, sitting position and secured by approved restraints, unless the demeanor and physical characteristics of the prisoner, the exigencies of the arrest situation or the transportation equipment available require otherwise. Transportation of prisoners in a manner that would tend to compress the person's chest or upper body shall be avoided if possible.

- D. **SPECIAL CATEGORIES.** The following categories of prisoners shall be given special attention and handling according to their needs, except when to do so would compromise safety or the accomplishment of the police mission:
1. Juvenile prisoners shall not be transported in the same compartment of a police vehicle with adult prisoners. (DGO 7.01, section I, H, 2);
 2. Female prisoners shall not be transported in the same compartment of a police vehicle with male prisoners.(DGO 2.01,rule 36);
 3. Contagious prisoners who have reported that they suffer from a contagious disease or whom the arresting/transporting officers know to be suffering from a contagious disease or parasitic infestation (e.g., body lice , external parasites) shall be transported separately from other prisoners. Refer to DM 12 for special booking procedures for this category of prisoners.
 4. Mentally disabled prisoners who are in custody for evaluation under WIC §5150 or who, although under arrest for a crime, are unable to resist victimization by other prisoners, shall be transported individually and separately from other prisoners.
 5. Prisoners who have attempted or expressed a desire to commit suicide during the current incident or since being taken into custody shall be transported separately and shall be kept under continuous observation until accepted for booking or medical evaluation.
 6. Prisoners or escapees who have violently resisted arrest, been arrested for a crime of great violence to another, or who have escaped and been retaken shall be transported separately and by the most secure means available. Patrol wagon is considered the most secure vehicle.
 7. Disabled Prisoners: Mobility impaired prisoners must be transported in the appropriate vehicle. A prisoner using a wheelchair, who cannot transfer on their own, should be transported in a wheelchair lift equipped vehicle.
 8. Transgender prisoners or prisoners whose gender is undetermined, are to be transported according to the provisions regarding transporting female detainees. (DGO 2.01, Rule 36)
- E. **TRANSPORTING PROPERTY AND/OR EQUIPMEN.** Officers shall not transport any prisoner in a compartment of a vehicle containing property or equipment, or place property or equipment in a compartment of a vehicle occupied by prisoners.

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- V. AIRPORT BUREAU.** Airport Bureau members and other members of the San Francisco Police Department providing services at the Airport will adhere to Airport Bureau policies. The general provisions of this order apply to all Airport Bureau members. References to specific facilities (i.e.; SFGH) shall be governed by the protocols of its San Mateo County counterpart (i.e., San Mateo County General Hospital).
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