Warrant Arrests

The intent of this order is to provide guidelines for conducting arrest warrant checks including mandatory circumstances, detentions, identifying the subject of the warrant(s), confirming the warrant(s), and completing the incident report.

6.18.01 POLICY

A. Warrant Checks

1. Mandatory Warrant Checks. Members shall run a warrant check in the following instances:

   a. Prior to booking any person (custodial arrest).
   b. Prior to completing a citation for a misdemeanor.
   c. Prior to completing an infraction citation provided that the warrant check can be completed in the time reasonably necessary to issue the citation (See DGO 5.03, Investigative Detentions).
   d. Prior to issuing a vehicle release (See DGO 9.06, Vehicle Tows).
   e. Prior to releasing a youth to a responsible adult, members shall run a warrant check of the responsible adult. (See DGO 7.01, Juvenile Policies and Procedures and 7.04, Children of Arrested Parents).

2. If an outstanding warrant is discovered while conducting the mandatory warrant check process, members shall comply with identity verification, warrant confirmation, and incident report requirements.

3. Detentions. In some instances, outstanding arrest warrants are discovered when a member has affected a lawful detention on an individual in the field. Members may run a detained individual through SFPD dispatch or via mobile data terminal (MDT), and any existing arrest warrant information will be discovered (See DGO 5.03). Members shall verify the identity of the detained individual and then confirm the warrant as described below, prior to booking.

B. Verifying Identity

Whenever a detained individual is the subject of an outstanding arrest warrant, members shall attempt to verify the identity the person through available means. For example, positive identifications can be established by use of SFPD Mug Shot photographs, other Law Enforcement Mug Shot photographs, Cal Photo/DMV photographs, the Positive
Identification fingerprint machine (PID), or any other government issued identification.

C. Confirming Warrants

All warrants shall be confirmed with the Central Warrants Bureau (CWB) of the San Francisco Sheriff’s Department. Members shall inform CWB personnel how the individual was positively identified.

In cases where a warrant is listed in CLETS but CWB is unable to confirm the validity of the warrant, members shall consult a supervisor. If CWB reports the warrant as no longer valid, members shall release the individual per 849(b) PC, absent additional charges, and then author an incident report (See DGO 5.03).

D. Adults Arrested on Juvenile Warrants:

If an individual, over 18 years of age and under 25 years of age, is arrested solely for a juvenile warrant, members shall book the individual at the Juvenile Justice Center (JJC). Members shall notify the on-duty Juvenile Probation Officer at the JJC prior to booking.

If an individual, over 18 years of age and under 25 years of age, has a juvenile warrant and new charges, or an adult warrant, members shall notify the on-duty Juvenile Probation Officer at the JJC of the arrest and book the individual at the County Jail. Members are to ensure the juvenile warrant information is included on the arrest card.

E. Incident Reports – local and outside jurisdiction warrants

1. For misdemeanor and felony warrants, issued by the San Francisco Superior Court, where there are no additional new criminal charges, members should write a supplemental report using the original SFPD case number, if it is available.
2. For any incident involving new criminal charges where the person has an outstanding warrant, members should use a new case number. Members can list the original SFPD case number associated with the warrant offense in the “Related Case” box on the face page of the incident report.
3. For misdemeanor and felony warrants issued by outside jurisdictions, whether or not there are additional new criminal charges, members shall use a new SFPD case number and include the warrant information in the incident report.
4. Members shall record the name of the individual from CWB who confirmed the criminal warrant in the incident report.

F. Immigration Warrants (See DGO 5.15, Enforcement of Immigration Laws)
G. Hospital Considerations

When individuals with confirmed warrants are transported to the hospital for medical purposes, members shall promptly notify CWB to advise of this circumstance (CWB will not clear the warrant). When the individual is cleared from the hospital, members shall contact CWB and advise the individual is ready to be booked.

H. Exceptional Circumstances

If a warrant check or booking process cannot be completed because of exceptional circumstances, members shall contact a supervisor as soon as practical. The circumstances and subsequent action shall be documented in the incident report. Members are also reminded that if a warrant is confirmed by CWB and the subject individual is not booked, the member shall contact CWB to reactivate the warrant.

References:
DGO 5.03, Investigative Detentions
DGO 5.06, Citation Release
DGO 5.15, Enforcement of Immigration Laws
DGO 7.01, Juvenile Policies and Procedures
DGO 7.04, Children of Arrested Parents
DGO 9.06, Vehicle Tows