



SYKESVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Transportation of Prisoners

General Order 6-35 Effective: 10/05/17

Authorized by: *Michael A. Spaulding* Chief of Police

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for safely and securely transporting prisoners.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Sykesville Police Department to treat all prisoners in a humane manner and with due regard for their physical safety and protection consistent with sound principles of prisoner security. Officers shall take the precautions necessary while transporting prisoners to protect the lives and safety of officers, the public, and the person in custody.

III. DEFINITION

Prisoner: For the purposes of this policy, any individual who is in custody of law enforcement.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Vehicle Inspection

1. At the beginning and end of each tour of duty, all vehicles that may be used for prisoner transport shall be inspected for readiness as follows:
 - a. The safety screen shall be securely in place and undamaged (if applicable).
 - b. All windows shall be intact, and outer door latches in proper working order.
 - c. Rear-seat door handles and window controls shall be deactivated.
 - d. The interior shall be thoroughly searched to ensure that no weapons or contraband have been left behind or hidden.
2. Prior to placing a prisoner in the vehicle for transport, the transporting officer shall inspect the interior for weapons or contraband. The vehicle shall be searched again after the prisoner has been delivered to the detention facility or other destination.

B. Restraints

1. All restraint equipment will be inspected at the beginning of each tour of duty to ensure it is operational and free from defects.
2. Officers shall handcuff (double-locked) all prisoners with their hands behind their back and palms facing outward.
3. The officer may handcuff the prisoner with his or her hands in front, or use other appropriate and approved restraining device(s) where the prisoner:
 - a. is in an obvious state of pregnancy,
 - b. has a physical handicap,
 - c. displays behaviors consistent with mental illness or an intellectual/developmental disability, or
 - d. has injuries that could be aggravated by standard handcuffing procedures.
4. In general, prisoners should not be handcuffed to any part of the vehicle during transport.
5. Additional approved restraint devices, such as leg restraints, may be used to secure a prisoner who violently resists arrest or who acts in a manner that indicates he or she poses a threat to himself or herself or to the public.
6. Special precautions shall be employed when transporting high-risk prisoners. In particular, waist chains should be used in addition to handcuffs.
7. All prisoners shall be secured in the vehicle by proper use of a seat belt.
8. Officers are prohibited from transporting prisoners who are restrained in a prone position.

C. Searches

Prior to transport, all prisoners shall be thoroughly searched for any weapons or contraband.

1. A protective search should be conducted by an officer of the same sex as the prisoner. Where this is not practical, officers shall strictly adhere to this agency's policy on searching prisoners of the opposite sex.

2. The transporting officer should search the prisoner regardless of searches that may or may not have been conducted by arresting officers.

D. Transport

1. Whenever possible, males and females should be transported separately.
2. Juveniles shall not be transported in the same vehicle with adult prisoners.
3. Prior to initiating the transport, the officer shall provide communications with the following information when possible:
 - a. Arrest location;
 - b. Number of prisoners;
 - c. Destination of transport; and
 - d. Time and mileage readings before and after transport.
4. The officer should use care when assisting a prisoner into and out of the vehicle.
5. Prisoners shall be transported in a manner that allows for constant visual observation. Where available, rear-facing in-car video systems should be activated and remain in use at all times until the prisoner is removed from the vehicle.
6. One transporting officer should not attempt to transport more than one prisoner in a vehicle without a security barrier, but should request transport assistance.
7. Any wheelchairs, crutches, and medication should be transported with, but not in the possession of, the prisoner. Prosthetic devices should be searched prior to transportation, but should remain with the prisoner.
8. When multiple prisoners must be transported, additional units will be requested to assist.
 - a. Prisoners shall be restrained per section B of this policy, as well as secured using a seat belt.
 - b. Prisoners shall be constantly monitored either by direct observation or via in-car camera system.

c. Only vehicles that allow for the preceding directives should be used for prisoner transport.

9. Prisoners shall not be left unattended during transport.

10. Officers shall not engage in any unrelated enforcement activities while transporting prisoners unless failure to act would risk death or serious bodily injury to another. In non-life-threatening yet serious situations, officers should call for back-up assistance and may remain on-hand until such assistance has arrived.

11. Any escape shall be immediately reported to the communications center together with a complete description of the fugitive, mode and direction of travel, crime, and propensity for violence if known.

E. Hospital/Clinical Transportation

1. Escorting officers shall remain with the patient at all times unless relieved by other authorized personnel.

2. Prisoners shall be restrained at all times in the treatment facility unless such restraint would interfere with essential treatment.

F. Prisoner Well-Being

The physical well-being of prisoners shall be monitored at all times.

1. Particular attention shall be directed to persons reported or suspected of being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, those with mental illness or an intellectual/developmental disability, or who have a history or propensity for violence.

2. Prisoners who are visibly injured or report/display symptoms of injury or illness shall be provided emergency medical attention.

V. CANCELLATIONS

This General Order cancels and replaces the following policies: General Orders 71.1-71.4, entitled Transport Operations, Special Transport Situations, Restraining Devices, and Transport Equipment, dated December 27 & 28, 2001.