

# Rockville City Police Department

## GENERAL ORDER



<b>Subject</b> <b>PRISONER TRANSPORT</b>	<b>Procedure</b> <b>G.O. # 4 - 22</b>	
<b>Authorizing Signature</b> 	<b>Effective:</b> 05-25-10 <b>Revised:</b> 01-12-26	<b>Total Pages</b> <b>10</b>

### I. POLICY

- A. Proper security measures in transporting prisoners are of paramount concern with regard to the personal safety of the transporting officer(s), the security and welfare of the prisoner(s) and mental patient(s), as well as the safety of the public.
- B. It is the policy of the Rockville City Police Department to ensure that all persons arrested will be properly and safely transported, detained and processed.

### II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to establish procedures to ensure that prisoners are searched and transported in a manner that will maximize their safety, as well as the transporting officer's safety.

### III. PROCEDURES

- A. Search of prisoner
  1. The transporting officer is legally responsible for the safety and custody of the prisoner being transported. The transporting officer should never assume that someone else has searched the prisoner. The officer who is assigned to transport a prisoner will search the prisoner before transporting.
  2. Prisoners should be searched by officers of the same gender
    - a. When the circumstances do not allow this, the officer should, whenever possible, secure the presence of another officer to witness the search process and ensure that all BWC's are recording.
    - b. In those instances where the officer must search a member of the opposite sex, searches will be conducted following established professional standards, with the primary importance being the protection of the officer.
  3. Searching Prisoners of the opposite gender
    - a. Maintain professional, neutral demeanor at all times.

- b. Avoid unnecessary physical contact or actions.
- c. Use a systematic search technique per training.
- d. Complete the search in a reasonable amount of time.

4. Positioning and Visibility

- a. Conduct searches on camera while safeguarding privacy.
- b. Maintain a proper camera angle and verbalize actions being taken.

B. Search of the transport vehicle

- 1. The Rockville City Police Department does not have a designated transport vehicle. Therefore, in accordance with General Order # 4-6 (Operation of Patrol Vehicles), every officer is required to inspect their assigned patrol vehicle at the beginning of their shift.
- 2. During the shift, any vehicle that is used to transport a prisoner, will be searched before and immediately after the transport by the transporting officer. It is important to check the area where the seat separates and the prisoner's hands were during transport. This search will be conducted to ensure that no contraband is in the vehicle before the prisoner is transported and that the prisoner has not left any property or contraband in the vehicle.

C. Placement of officers

- 1. For safety reasons, the prisoner must be under observation at all times. Opportunities for escape or attack on the transporting officers must be reduced as much as possible. The prisoner should be made as comfortable as possible, given the length of trip being made, and yet secured to the maximum degree.
- 2. The seating configuration of officers in the transporting vehicle will be determined by the number of officers and the number of prisoners to be transported.

a. One officer vehicle

- (1) If one officer transports one prisoner in a vehicle with a security cage, the prisoner will be placed in the rear, with the security cage window closed. The prisoner will be handcuffed behind his/her back and seated on the right rear passenger side with the seat belt secured and the window closed and in locked position. The leg restraints may be used as an option of a prisoner who is kicking or a police fighter. The

officer should maintain observation of the prisoner with the rear-view mirror.

- (2) At no time will a single officer transport two prisoners in a vehicle.
- (3) If one officer transports a prisoner in a non-caged vehicle, the prisoner will be placed in the front passenger seat with his hands handcuffed behind his back, the seat belt secured, and leg restraint may be used as an option.
- (4) In special circumstances a waist chain may be utilized. Size of the prisoner and length of the transport should be some considering factors.

b. Two-officer vehicle

- (1) In a two-officer vehicle, without a cage, the prisoner will be placed in the front seat. In special circumstances a waist chain may be utilized. Size of the prisoner and length of the transport should be some considering factors. The second officer will sit in the back seat behind the prisoner.
- (2) In a two-officer transport, the officer in the back seat has the responsibility of observing the prisoner(s).

c. Juveniles should be transported separately from adults, whenever possible.

d. The above guidelines can be modified with supervisory approval at the time of transport.

D. Visual/Video observation

1. Transporting officers shall activate their in-car video system as well as their BWC to record all transports prior to placing the prisoner in their cruiser. Officers are reminded that the in-car camera system does not pre-record.
2. Transporting officers shall maintain a visual and video observations of prisoners during the transport. Officers without an in-car camera system shall ensure their BWC is activate at all times during transport.
3. If transportation is over a long distance or time period (out-of-town prisoner transport) and the prisoner must use the rest room, the prisoner will be allowed to use the facilities but must be kept under continuous observation.
  - a. If feasible, every effort should be made by the transporting officer to stop at a police station to provide this opportunity.

- b. If the prisoner is of the opposite sex, an officer of that sex should accompany the prisoner. If one is unavailable, the transporting officer(s) will stand in close proximity of the prisoner while they are in the rest room facility.

E. Meals

When the transportation of a prisoner entails a long distance trip that requires stopping for meals, the transporting officer(s) will choose the location at random. The transporting officer should be aware that the prisoner might be preparing to attempt to escape. The eating establishment chosen by the officer should not be one used by the officer regularly.

F. Response to police service

The primary duty of the transporting officer is the safe delivery of the prisoner to a detention facility, medical facility or to other law enforcement. Officers shall not make any unnecessary stops except for life-threatening situations. Only where the risk to third parties is both clear and grave, and the risk to the prisoner is minimal, should the officer stop to render assistance or become involved in a request for law enforcement service.

IV. **PRISONER ESCAPE**

- A. In the event a prisoner escapes from an officer during the transportation process, the following procedures are to be followed:
  1. The officer will notify the communications center of the following:
    - a. The location of the escape
    - b. Advise if there are any injuries
    - c. The direction of travel
    - d. The prisoner's physical and clothing description
    - e. If the prisoner is armed
    - f. Any other pertinent information which would assist in the recapture of the prisoner.
  2. A lookout will be broadcast to all units, as well as notifying Montgomery County Police.
  3. The on-duty watch commander will be notified and will make any notifications necessary.
- B. If an escape occurs outside the jurisdiction of the agency, the transporting officer will follow the aforementioned guidelines as they apply.

1. The transporting officer will assist the agency of jurisdiction in the apprehension of the escapee according to this agency's directives and current local, state, and federal laws where the escape occurred as they apply. Officers will notify the agency of jurisdiction that in-car and BWC footage is available.
2. If the prisoner is not apprehended while outside their jurisdiction, the officer will assist local authorities in securing a warrant and/or comply with any other reasonable request they may make concerning the escape.

C. Upon return to the department the senior officer involved in the transport will, complete an event report and a separate memorandum to the Chief of Police via the chain of command, detailing the escape and any other pertinent actions taken by officers involved in the search for and/or apprehension of the prisoner prior to the end of the shift.

**V. PRISONER COMMUNICATION**

During transport, the prisoner shall not communicate with anyone outside law enforcement personnel. If the prisoner's attorney is present, the attorney will be advised to speak to the prisoner at the appropriate holding facility.

**VI. AT DESTINATION PROCEDURES**

When transporting prisoners from one facility to another, the transporting officer, upon arriving at his destination with the prisoner, will follow these procedures:

- A. Firearms will be secured in the designated place at the direction of the facility being entered or in the officer's vehicle safe.
- B. Restraining devices will be removed only when directed to do so by the receiving facility or when the officer is sure that the prisoner is properly controlled and secure.
- C. The appropriate paperwork (commitment papers, etc.) will be submitted to the proper person at the receiving facility, and in situations that require it, the office will ensure that proper signatures are obtained on paperwork to be returned to the Police Department.

**VII. SECURITY AND CONTROL OF PRISONERS AT MEDICAL FACILITIES**

When a prisoner is transported to a medical facility for any reason, the following will apply:

- A. Extreme caution will be taken to ensure the prisoner is isolated from other patients and is not left unattended or permitted to escape the immediate control of the transporting officer.
- B. Should the prisoner need to be admitted, the transporting officer will notify the shift supervisor of the circumstances.

- C. The transporting officer will not leave the medical facility until he is relieved by another officer or is instructed by a supervisor to do so.
- D. The transporting officer will remove the restraints only when it is deemed necessary, and he is requested to do so by the medical staff.
- E. Upon admission of a prisoner into the hospital, the decision on whether a patrol officer will guard the prisoner will be made by the Watch Commander.

**VIII. TRANSPORTING TO COURT**

The Montgomery County Sheriffs Department has the sole responsibility of transporting prisoners to court in Montgomery County.

**IX. TRANSPORTATION OF OPPOSITE-SEX PRISONERS**

- A. When transporting a prisoner of the opposite gender, an additional officer will be requested to accompany/follow the transport, whenever possible.
- B. When it is impractical to use a second officer, the transporting officer will, at a minimum:
  1. Contact the communication center by radio and request that the time and odometer mileage be recorded in CAD.
  2. The transporting officer should proceed directly to the destination by using the shortest route practical.
  3. Upon arrival at the destination, the transporting officer will contact the communication center by radio and request that the time and odometer mileage be recorded in CAD.
- C. Whenever officers are going to transport prisoners over a long distance or a long period of time (out-of-town transport), an all-male officer team will not be used to transport a female prisoner, nor will an all-female officer team be used to transport a male prisoner.
- D. Male and female prisoners may be transported to the holding facility in the same vehicle after being arrested as participants in the same offense with supervisory approval.
- E. Male and female prisoners may be transported to the holding facility in the same vehicle following an arrest incident if they are married, or if they are of a consanguineous relationship.
- F. Male and female prisoners, who have been arrested in separate incidents, shall be transported to the holding facility in separate vehicles.

**X. PRISONERS WITH DISABILITIES**

- A. When prisoners require special care and attention to accommodate physical or mental disabilities during the transport process, the transporting officer or a supervisor shall arrange for the required special equipment or any special vehicle to affect the transport in a safe and secure manner. Special vehicles, such as an ambulance, shall be used when safe transportation cannot be accomplished in a police vehicle.
- B. When a prisoner is being transported in an ambulance, at least one officer shall ride in the ambulance, and another should follow the ambulance to the destination. The number of officers shall be determined by safety and security needs.
- C. The transporting officer must use common sense while transporting individuals with disabilities. When the disability is such that there is no danger of escape or injury to the prisoner or officer, then restraining devices may be inappropriate. The officer must decide at the time of the transport what, if any, device will be used with these special situations.
- D. Any medication or walking appliances will be kept in control of the transporting officer. Officers will not disperse medications to the prisoner.

**XI. SICK OR INJURED PRISONERS**

- A. Prior to transporting a prisoner who is sick or claims injury, medical attention must be provided via Emergency Medical Services.
- B. If the prisoner is injured at any time while in the custody of any member of the department, immediate medical attention shall be provided, a supervisor will respond, and the Watch Commander will be notified. The injury will be documented in a police report explaining the circumstances. Preexisting injuries will also be documented in the police report.
- C. The transporting officer must use the same discretion in utilizing restraining devices on sick or injured prisoners as on disabled prisoners. If the prisoner is sick or injured to the point of incapacitation, they will be transported by ambulance to the nearest medical facility as determined by EMS. It is left to the officer's discretion as to when to use devices in these particular situations.
- D. Whatever type of device or method is used to restrain a prisoner, the use should be monitored so that the use does not interfere with the prisoner's treatment or aggravate their medical condition.

**XII. SPECIAL SITUATIONS**

- A. This agency will not provide transportation of prisoners for special situations, such as visiting the critically ill, funerals, etc.
- B. The Sheriff's Department of Montgomery County will handle all special situations.

**XIII. RESTRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

- A. Handcuffs

Handcuffs shall be of the type approved and issued by the Rockville City Police Department.

1. Officers shall be responsible for the efficient operation of their handcuffs. They should be checked frequently, and cleaned and lubricated to prevent malfunction.
2. Handcuffs should be applied with the keyholes to the outside and double-locked. The keyhole should be on the back of the wrist.
3. The handcuff key shall be kept on the officer's person at all times while the officer is on duty.

B. Handcuff procedure

Before being transported by the Rockville City Police Department, prisoners shall be handcuffed with their hands behind their back.

1. A prisoner may be suffering from a deformity or other disability, handicap, sickness, or injury making it necessary to handcuff him with hands in front. In this situation, it is advisable to place the handcuffs through the belt, (preferably after reversing the belt) and buckling it from the rear. In some cases, at the supervisor's discretion, it may be advisable to refrain from using restraining devices.
2. Restraining devices sometimes may not be used in connection with the non-criminal mentally ill except for the protection of the subject or others. If used, the selected restraining device(s) should restrain the prisoner securely without causing injury.
3. A female prisoner shall not be handcuffed to a male prisoner except in an emergency.
4. A juvenile shall not be handcuffed to an adult except in an emergency.
5. Officer will not handcuff themselves to prisoners nor use a single cuff as a "come-along".
6. Prisoners shall not be handcuffed to a fixed object while being transported, except in an emergency.
7. Officer shall maintain physical control over the prisoner by holding securely onto the subject while he is being transported on foot.
8. Prisoners shall remain handcuffed until delivery inside the jail or holding facility, or until the official assuming custody requires otherwise.
9. Prisoners shall not be physically secured to the interior of a vehicle while in transit, except when, in the judgement of the transporting officer, the prisoner represents a danger to himself or others.

10. Two prisoners will not be handcuffed with one pair of handcuffs, except under exigent circumstances.

C. Flex-cuffs

Flex-cuffs are pieces of nylon strapping with a built-in one-time locking device.

1. They must be cut off the prisoner after use.
2. Flex-cuffs are handy for prisoners with wrists too large or too small for regular handcuffs, or for securing a prisoner's legs.
3. Flex-cuffs are easily concealed and are preferred in mass arrest situations.

D. Other physical restraints

In some circumstances, it may be necessary to use more secure types of restraining devices such as leather body straps, belly chains, or ankle chains. If needed, these may be borrowed from the Montgomery County Sheriff's Department.

Use of any technique that can cause "positional asphyxia" (i.e. hogtying) is expressly prohibited.

**XIV. INTERIOR VEHICLE SAFETY**

The Rockville City Police have marked police vehicles equipped with protective cages and/or special rear seats for transporting prisoners. These vehicles have been modified to minimize opportunities for the prisoner to exit from the rear compartment of the vehicle without the aid of the transporting officer. The inside rear door handles have been disabled. The rear door locks can only be controlled from the front compartment. These vehicles are to be the primary vehicles for use in transporting prisoners.

**XV. PRISONER IDENTIFICATION**

- A. When picking a prisoner up for transport at a detention facility, the transporting officer should ensure that he has the correct person. This can be accomplished in the following manner:
  1. The officer's personal knowledge of the prisoner.
  2. Requesting verification by the facility custodian of the prisoner's identity.
- B. When transporting a prisoner from one facility to another, the transporting officer will be aware of and follow the procedures at the different institutions, hospitals, mental health units, and detention center.

- C. When transporting prisoners from one detention center to another facility, the officer shall obtain the following information on the prisoner before departure from the holding facility:
  - 1. Positive identification of persons to be moved will be verified by using booking records, numbers, and pictures made at booking.
  - 2. Confirmation will be made of the receiving facility.
  - 3. The facility prisoner number or docket number will be verified.
  - 4. Documents regarding sentences imposed and the prisoner's personal property will be obtained, as well as documents on illness, medical records, escape/suicide documentation, and commitment papers.
  - 5. Arrest affidavits shall be completed before delivering the prisoner to the custody of any other official.
  - 6. The transporting officer will be responsible for delivering the necessary paperwork to the receiving official and obtaining the signature of the receiving official, if necessary.
  - 7. In the case of interstate transports, a properly executed governor's warrant or a properly executed waiver will be obtained.
- D. Information relating to the prisoner's escape, or suicide potential, or other personal traits of a security or medical nature, will be included in the documentation that accompanies the prisoner during transport.