

COVINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Subject: TRANSPORTATION OF DETAINEES

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I. Purpose

To ensure the safe and efficient transportation of detainees to the Newton County LEC or any other detention facility by officers of the Covington Police Department.

II. Statement of Policy

It shall be the policy of the Covington Police Department to provide for detainees' safety and their rights, while at the same time ensuring that they do not escape, that they are not injured or do not injure others and that the safety of the transporting officer is not compromised.

III. Search of Detainees and Transport Vehicles

- A. A police officer assigned to transporting a detainee from one destination to another is required to make a thorough search of the detainee for weapons or contraband before transporting. This includes transportation of a detainee to and from court appearances, holding facilities or other institutions.
- B. Police personnel who must transport detainees shall examine their patrol vehicle to make certain that no weapons or contraband are present prior to and after transporting detainees.
- C. Patrol officers will inspect their patrol vehicle at the beginning of and after each shift to ensure that the vehicles are in safe condition and no visible body damage. Officers should visually check fluid levels, inflation of tires, etc.

IV. Duties of Transport Officer

- A. Before transporting a detainee, the transport officer should make positive identification of the person to be transported. If the officer is unsure of the identity, he should check a photograph or check with the arresting officer. An officer may not transport until he or she is sure that the proper identity has been made and he or she has the proper documentation.
- B. A detainee should only be transported in a vehicle having a safety screen between the officer and the detainee. Vehicles used for transporting will also

have the door and window handles removed from the back seat or at the very least made inoperable.

- C. On occasion, detectives from CID will have to transport a detainee from another jurisdiction back to Covington or when a patrol unit with a cage is unavailable. In those situations, two detectives will make the transport. The detainee will be placed in the right hand front seat, handcuffed behind the back and secured with the seat belt and shoulder strap. The second detective will ride in the back seat directly behind the detainee. If more than one detainee must be transported, either a unit with a cage will be used or a second detective unit with two detectives will be used.
- D. All detainees shall be properly handcuffed and placed in the back seat of the patrol vehicle and secured with the seatbelt and shoulder harness, if at all possible. (See exception to handcuffing under Proper Detainee Restraint). No officer should ride in the back seat with a detainee, unless so directed by a supervisor.
- E. Officers transporting detainees are required to not lose sight of the detainee. Exceptions might be allowing the detainee the private use of toilet facilities or where the detainee is undergoing medical treatment.
- F. Once transportation has begun, it shall be the duty of the transporting officer to make sure that no one other than police officers are allowed to talk to the detainee.
- G. No more than two detainees will be transported at any time in one patrol unit.
- H. All officers transporting detainees must proceed directly to the proper designation and shall not, under most circumstances, be diverted from transporting. An exception would be in response to any emergency call from another officer, agency or a citizen. In such circumstances, the officer may stop and render assistance only if the risk to a third party is grave and the risk to the detainee is considered minimal.
- I. During long transports where it is necessary to provide a meal for the detainee, the transporting officer shall select the location at his discretion and shall obtain a receipt for the meal provided to the detainee. The receipt shall be turned into the Records Clerk.
- J. An officer transporting a detainee who is known to be a potential security or medical hazard shall be responsible for notifying the appropriate officials of such hazard and documenting that the notification was made.
- K. Any detainee transported to a hospital for treatment or examination must be accompanied by a police officer. If a detainee is admitted to a hospital or kept for treatment in the emergency room, the watch commander or patrol supervisor shall assign an officer for security and control.

V. Special Transport Situations

- A. In all instances where detainees are transported by officers of the opposite sex, the time of departure and beginning mileage shall be documented on the daily communication log. The time of arrival and ending mileage shall also be documented. If transportation is to another jurisdiction, then a female officer should be used in the transport of female detainees. If a female officer is not

available, then two male officers may transport, but proper documentation of time and mileage must be made.

- B. If a detainee becomes sick or injured incidental to his arrest, the arresting officer or transport officer should seek medical attention at that time. The officer may transport the detainee to a medical facility or have the detainee transported by ambulance. An officer shall accompany any detainees transported by ambulance.
- C. A detainee booked on city charges who becomes sick or injured after incarceration may be transported either by ambulance or by police vehicle only after emergency medical personnel have informed the patrol supervisor of the need of advanced medical attention. Detainees booked on state charges who become sick or injured after incarceration are the responsibility of the Sheriff's Office.
- D. Physically handicapped detainees may be transported in the right front seat of the patrol vehicle provided they are strapped in with seat belts.
- E. Mentally handicapped detainees shall be transported in the back seat of a screened patrol vehicle and shall be handcuffed with arms behind the back.
- F. Whenever a detainee makes a request for transport to a special event such as funeral, visit to a critically ill person, attending the reading of a will, etc., the Chief of Police has the authority to approve the transport. In such cases, two officers shall accompany the detainee and shall be responsible for detainee's return.

VI. Proper Detainee Restraint

- A. All persons arrested and transported to a jail shall be handcuffed with arms behind the back and should be secured with the seatbelt and shoulder harness, if at all possible.
- B. Detainees transported from the Newton County LEC for an appearance in municipal court will be secured with waist chains and hands handcuffed in the front.
- C. If ankle chains are used, the detainee's hands will be handcuffed in the front.
- D. No detainee is to be handcuffed to any part of the transporting vehicle, or to any person or officer during transport.
- E. A detainee who exhibits violent or erratic behavior that would commonly be associated with a mental disorder may be restrained by a straitjacket if there is reason to believe the detainee may cause serious injury to himself or others. Straitjackets may be obtained from Newton County E.M.S.
- F. Restraining devices such as handcuffs shall not be used on physically handicapped detainees or on sick or injured detainees unless there exists a possibility of escape or violent behavior.

VII. Arrival at Destination

- A. When transporting officers arrive with detainees at the Newton County LEC, he or she shall secure their firearm either in the patrol car or in a gun locker before entering the facility.

- B. The officer shall complete the proper paper work (reports, forms, etc.).
- C. When arriving at another facility with a detainee the officer shall remove his or her firearm for safekeeping according to that agency's policy and procedure. Removal of restraints shall also be in accordance with that agency's policy. The officer shall deliver all proper documentation to the receiving officer and shall obtain the receiving officer's signature on the Arrest/Booking report or written documentation detailing the transfer of custody.
- D. The transport officer shall advise the receiving agency personnel of any potential medical or security risks associated with the detainee.

VIII. Escape of a Detainee

- A. If any time during transportation of a detainee within our jurisdiction, the detainee escapes from custody, the transporting officer shall notify immediately the Communications Center and the patrol supervisor. The officer will request assistance from other officers and a search of the area will be conducted.
- B. A report stating the circumstances surrounding the escape is to be submitted to the patrol supervisor within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident.
- C. The officer who was responsible for the detainee will take warrants as soon as possible.
- D. If an escape occurs in another jurisdiction, the transporting officer shall take appropriate action to notify the law enforcement agencies in the area of the escape.
- E. An officer may receive disciplinary action if it is discovered that the escape was due to carelessness or neglect on the officer's part.

IX. Documentation for the Detainee

- A. Whenever a detainee is charged with a violation where a state warrant has been issued, the detainee will become an inmate of the Newton County LEC and will become the responsibility of the Newton County LEC.
- B. If a warrant is obtained and the offense occurred in the corporate limits of Covington, the Newton County LEC shall be responsible for the processing of the detainees. If a person is arrested for an offense occurring outside the city limits, the person will be transported to the LEC and held until the proper authorities are notified. No reports are necessary, but a written confirmation from the agency, including a warrant number, must be obtained by GCIC message.

- C. If a person has exhibited behavior which might indicate the potential for suicide or escape, a written statement should be attached to the A/B report before it is given to a receiving officer at the detention facility.

This SOP supersedes any SOP previously issued.

BY ORDER OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE:

Stacey L. Cotton

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Chief of Police