

Mechanical Restraints

304.1 USE OF RESTRAINTS

Only employees who have successfully completed department-approved training on the use of restraint devices described in these procedures are authorized to use these devices.

When deciding whether to use any restraint, officers should carefully balance officer safety concerns with factors that include, but are not limited to:

- The circumstances or crime leading to the detention, arrest or transportation.
- The demeanor and behavior of the detained, arrested or transported person.
- The age and health of the person.
- Whether the person is known to be pregnant.
- Whether the person has a hearing or speaking disability. In such cases, consideration should be given, safety permitting, to handcuffing to the front in order to allow the person to sign or write notes.
- Whether the person has any other apparent disability.

Officers should consider handcuffing any person they reasonably believe warrants that degree of restraint. However, officers should not conclude that, in order to avoid risk, every person should be handcuffed regardless of the circumstances. Authorized officers must follow the specific procedures listed herein regarding juveniles, pregnant individuals, and disabled persons.

304.2 APPLICATION OF HANDCUFFS OR PLASTIC CUFFS

Handcuffs, including temporary nylon or plastic cuffs, may be used to restrain a person's hands during detentions, arrests, and transportation. Nylon or plastic cuffs, also referred to as flexi-cuffs, should only be used when handcuffs are unavailable, not practical or already in use, such as in mass arrest situations.

Handcuffs should be applied with the hands behind the person's back. After handcuffs are applied, they should be adjusted to the proper size to prevent injury and escape. Handcuffs must be double-locked to prevent tightening, which may cause undue discomfort or injury to the hands or wrists. Officers must check the waistband of the restrained person for weapons immediately accessible to the person.

In situations where one pair of handcuffs does not appear sufficient to restrain the individual or may cause unreasonable discomfort due to the person's size, officers should consider alternatives, such as using an additional set of handcuffs, an oversized set of handcuffs or multiple plastic cuffs. Planning the form of restraint gear used is an important aspect of any arrest, detention or transport situation.

Handcuffs should be removed as soon as it is reasonable or after the person has been searched and is safely confined within a detention facility.

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304.3 APPLICATION OF AUXILIARY RESTRAINT DEVICES

Auxiliary restraint devices include transport belts, waist chains, transportation chains, leg shackles, leg chains, soft ties, hobble straps and other similar devices. Auxiliary restraint devices are intended for use during long-term restraint or transportation, during extraditions, or to provide added security and safety without impeding breathing, while permitting adequate movement, comfort and mobility. Only department-authorized devices may be used.

304.4 APPLICATION OF SPIT SOCKS

Spit socks are temporary protective devices designed to prevent the wearer from biting and transferring or transmitting fluids (saliva and mucous) to others.

Spit socks may be placed upon persons in custody when the officer reasonably believes the person will bite or spit either on a person or in an inappropriate place. They are generally used during application of a physical restraint, while the person is restrained, or during or after transport.

Officers utilizing spit socks should ensure that the spit sock is fastened properly to allow for adequate ventilation and that the restrained person can breathe normally. Officers should provide assistance during the movement of restrained individuals due to the potential for impaired or distorted vision on the part of the individual. Officers should avoid commingling individuals wearing spit socks with other detainees.

Spit socks should not be used in situations where the restrained person is bleeding profusely from the area around the mouth or nose, or if there are indications that the person has a medical condition, such as vomiting or difficulty breathing. In such cases, prompt medical care should be obtained. If the person vomits while wearing a spit sock, the spit sock should be removed and discarded as soon as possible. Persons who have been sprayed with oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray should be thoroughly decontaminated, including their hair, head and clothing, if possible, prior to application of a spit sock. Spit socks will be discarded after use.

304.5 TRANSPORT OF RESTRAINED PERSONS

Officers must search a detainee prior to transport to ensure the individual does not possess weapons, contraband, handcuff keys, or other devices capable of defeating restraint devices. Officers must also search the immediate area around a detainee, including the area inside a vehicle that will accommodate the detainee during transport. This is necessary to ensure that weapons and contraband, or other devices that may aid in the detainee's escape or cause harm to the detainee or others, are not accessible to the detainee.

Officers should transport detainees in caged vehicles, when possible, to add a layer of security. Officers should consider the use of an auxiliary restraint device, such as leg shackles, when transporting handcuffed detainees in an uncaged vehicle, especially when the detainee has a history of escape, violent behavior or resisting arrest.

Officers must ensure the detainee is positioned in a way that does not obstruct breathing and must not place detainees face down on their stomachs in the maximum restraint position without supervisor authorization and even then, only in extreme situations.

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304.6 MONITORING THE RESTRAINED PERSON

Except in exigent circumstances, all restrained persons must be continuously monitored to prevent escape or harm to themselves or others. Restraint gear alone does not provide adequate security and is designed only as a temporary means of security until the person is either released or safely confined within a detention facility. It is the responsibility of the officer to ensure the restrained person does not harm themselves or others or escape from detention. Officers are responsible for monitoring the restrained person throughout the booking process in the case of arrest until the transference of custody to a detention facility is complete. Restrained persons must not be attached to fixed objects except in exigent circumstances or as required as part of the booking process.

Officers will also monitor the restrained person for any medical distress, such as difficulty breathing, restricted blood flow, and fainting. Should such a situation arise, officers will request immediate medical attention for any person experiencing a loss of consciousness or difficulty breathing.

304.7 EQUIPMENT

Officers must inspect their restraint gear prior to use to ensure it is present and functional. Officers should have a back-up set of restraint gear available to use in the event the individual escapes from the initial restraints or for use on other persons. Officers must have a handcuff key available when using restraints and are encouraged to carry a backup key on their person. Using layers of security provides greater safety and protection for all.

304.8 RESTRAINING OF INDIVIDUALS BEING DETAINED

Situations may arise where it may be reasonable to restrain an individual who may, after brief investigation, be released without arrest. Unless arrested, the use of restraints on an individual being detained should continue only for as long as is reasonably necessary to ensure the safety of officers and others. When deciding whether to remove restraints from an individual being detained, officers should continuously weigh the safety interests at hand against the continuing intrusion upon the individual being detained.

304.9 RESTRAINT OF PREGNANT PERSONS

Persons who are known to be pregnant or in recovery after delivery should be restrained in the least restrictive manner that is effective for officer safety and the safety of the individual being restrained.

304.10 RESTRAINT OF JUVENILES

Officers should carefully consider all options before determining that it is necessary to restrain a juvenile in the field. Factors to be considered include the juvenile's age, size, demeanor, supervision status, whether the juvenile is suspected of a dangerous felony, and whether the

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officer has a reasonable suspicion that the juvenile may resist, attempt escape, inflict harm to the juvenile or others, or damage property.

304.11 NOTIFICATIONS

Whenever an officer transports a person from the field using restraints other than handcuffs, the officer shall inform the detention facility staff upon arrival to the detention facility that an alternative form of restraint is being used. This notification should include circumstances that may have occurred prior to or during transportation to the detention facility the officer reasonably believes are potential safety concerns or medical risks to the person detained (e.g., prolonged struggle, extreme agitation, impaired respiration).

304.12 REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

If a youth or adult under the supervision of our department or collateral individual is restrained and released with or without an arrest, the officer must document in PCMS (or in an incident report if the individual is not associated with any PCMS profile) the details of the detention and the need for handcuffs or other restraints.

304.13 DOCUMENTATION FOR YOUTHS

Whenever an officer uses mechanical restraints other than handcuffs when transporting a youth, the reasons for the use of mechanical restraints must be documented. For a field officer, the documentation will be in PCMS. For a transportation officer, the documentation will be in both the transportation log and the restraint log.

The use of mechanical restraints during a juvenile court proceeding may be allowed only if the court determines that the individual youth's behavior in custody or in court establishes a manifest need to use mechanical restraints to prevent physical harm to the youth or another person or due to a substantial risk of flight. The court in this instance would be required to document the reason for the use of mechanical restraints in the youth's court record. (Welfare and Institutions Code 210.6(b)(1)).

304.14 REFERENCES

Refer to Institutional Services Policy Manual—Restraints for guidance regarding the use of mechanical restraints in juvenile institutions.