

**GENERAL ORDER**

April 2016

Immediately

**III-10**

Distribution: All Employees

Subject: **TRANSPORTING AND BOOKING PRISONERS**

Index as:	Booking Procedure	Prisoner
	Detainee	Prisoners, Transporting and Booking
	Escape During Transport	Service Animal
	Interview of Detainees	Spit Hood
	Medical Aid	Transporting Detainees (Prisoners)
	Medical Distress	

Accreditation Standards: 1.2.6, 1.2.7, 4.1.5, 70.1.1, 70.1.2, 70.1.3, 70.1.4, 70.1.5, 70.1.6, 70.1.7, 70.2.1, 70.3.1, 70.4.1, 70.4.2, 71.3.1 CFA 21.01, 29.01

Cross Reference: G.O. II-44, Taser Energy Weapon  
G.O. III-06, Juvenile Procedures  
G.O. III-14, Property and Evidence  
G.O. III-20, Hospital Procedures  
G.O. III-25, Search of Persons  
G.O. III-28, Use of Interview and Interrogation Rooms  
G.O. III-40 Mobile Video Recording Systems (MVRS)  
I.O. V.5:01, Persons Suffering from Mental Illness  
I.O. V.5:22, Infectious Diseases and Exposure Control Plan  
§§ 901.22, 985.101, Florida Statutes

Replaces: G.O. III-10, Transporting and Booking Prisoners (July 21, 2023)

This Order consists of the following sections:

- I. [Policy](#)
- II. [Definitions](#)
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I. POLICY

Transporting prisoners is a potentially dangerous function. Therefore, it is the policy of the St. Petersburg Police Department to take all necessary precautions, while transporting prisoners, to protect the lives and safety of officers, the public, and the person(s) in custody.

## II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Detainee – A person who is in the custody of agency personnel and whose freedom of movement is at the will of agency personnel.
- B. Prisoner – A detainee who is physically under arrest.
- C. Spit Hood – A protective device that fits over the head of an individual to help prevent the transfer of spittle from one person to another.

## III. SEARCHING AND SECURING PRISONERS FOR TRANSPORT

### A. Vehicles

1. All police vehicles (marked, unmarked, and the prisoner transport vans [PTV]), which may be used to transport arrested persons, will be inspected at the beginning of the shift for weapons, contraband, etc., prior to use, to ensure nothing has been hidden or left behind.
2. Whenever possible and with due regard for officer safety, the vehicle operator will also conduct a search prior to placing a prisoner in the vehicle to ensure nothing has been placed in the vehicle when it was out of the immediate control of the operator.
3. In all cases, the officer will search the prisoner area of the transporting vehicle as soon as possible following every transport, after removing the person, but prior to moving the vehicle.
  - a. The search should include, when possible, the removal of the rear seat, and inspection of any other area where a person may have had access.
  - b. Officers who find contraband or narcotics upon checking the vehicle will determine:
    - 1) If the prisoner had possession while within the City. If so, the officer should charge the person with the appropriate violation; or
    - 2) If the items can be attributed to a specific prisoner. If they cannot, the items will be turned into the Property and Evidence Unit along with the appropriate report, designating the item for destruction.

### B. Contact with Prisoners

1. Officers should consider universal precautions during contact with prisoners. Extreme caution should be used during searches to prevent exposure to infectious diseases. (See I.O. V5-22, Infectious Diseases and Exposure Control Plan).
2. Incident to arrest, the officer taking the person into custody will, as soon as possible, conduct a thorough search of the person for weapons or other items which may be dangerous or offer a security threat (handcuff keys, etc.), paying particular attention to pockets, cuffs, collars, and any other place a weapon may be concealed.
  - a. If custody and control of the prisoner are turned over to another officer, the second officer will assume responsibility to ensure a search of the prisoner is conducted prior to transport.
  - b. Officers conducting a search, upon arrest or transfer of custody and control, will include details of the search and list any items found in their report.
3. Prisoner searches will be conducted in accordance with G.O. III-25, Search of a Person.
4. Once the person is in custody, the officer in charge of the prisoner will maintain actual physical control of the person, unless the prisoner is in a secure area.
5. When using a PTV to transport a prisoner, the PTV operator, along with the arresting officer, will search and remove all property and monies from the prisoner, including any belt being worn, prior to placing the prisoner in the appropriate gender-designated compartment.
  - a. The monies will be put into an envelope, and both officers will list the amount enclosed and sign the envelope. The envelope and all other property will be placed in a paper bag.
  - b. Monies in excess of \$300 will be counted and verified by a supervisor.

6. Any detainees placed in the PTV will be handcuffed. The manner in which the prisoner is handcuffed, front or back, is at the discretion of the PTV officer. Prisoners who are handcuffed in the front will have their handcuffs secured to a waist chain.
7. The Department does not accept court-imposed fines for traffic offenses in lieu of arrest, or bond for parking warrants.
  - a. Officers encountering a person named on an arrest warrant for a parking offense may make a custodial arrest, or exercise discretion and refer the person to the Traffic Court.
  - b. All other criminal and traffic warrants must be processed at the Pinellas County Jail.

#### IV. TRANSPORTING PRISONERS

- A. Detainees transported in a patrol vehicle will be secured with a seatbelt whenever practical. If a seat belt is not utilized, the officer will document the justification in the incident report.
- B. All prisoners will be handcuffed with their hands behind their backs, palms outward, when transported in any police vehicle, unless they are being transported long distances or are disabled.
  1. A PTV operator may handcuff prisoners in the front when transporting to the County Jail. If an injury or medical condition prohibits this procedure, the person will be handcuffed accordingly.
  2. Prisoners being transported long distances, in a vehicle other than the PTV, may be cuffed in front with the cuffs secured to their belt, which will be worn reversed with the buckle in the back. If no belt is worn, leg restraints and flex-cuffs can be obtained from the PTV, Equipment Room or a supervisor.
- C. If a leg restraining device (hobble) is used to minimize resistance, the officer will place the prisoner in an upright position or on their back to avoid breathing complications.
- D. Prisoners will always be transported in the secure, partitioned area of the vehicle. However, when in a vehicle not equipped with a partition, a seat belt will be secured around the arrested person(s) and:
  1. A solo officer will place the prisoner in the right front seat of the cruiser.
  2. Two (2) officers transporting a prisoner will place the person in the right rear seat of the cruiser, and one officer will ride in the left rear seat behind the driver.
  3. Two (2) officers transporting two (2) prisoners, will place one (1) person in the right front seat next to the driver; the second prisoner will be placed in the right rear seat, and one (1) officer will ride in the left rear seat behind the driver.
  4. Only in the most unusual circumstances, in a vehicle without a security partition, will one (1) officer transport more than one (1) prisoner. If this becomes necessary, all prisoners will have their hands cuffed securely behind their backs, and they will be positioned in the cruiser at the discretion of the officer.
- E. The officer will keep the dispatcher advised of any change in their status, electronically or verbally.
  1. For electronic notification, the officer will utilize the transport function in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System by using a destination shortcut key or by entering their destination address and current mileage immediately preceding the transport. The officer will utilize the transport arrival function in the CAD System upon completion of the transport.
  2. For verbal notification of the transport of a prisoner, the officer will radio their location, unit identification, current mileage, and prisoner gender immediately preceding the transport, and will radio the same information upon completion of the transport.
  3. The transporting officer will not allow the prisoner out of their sight, from the time they are taken into custody until the person is delivered to a facility intake officer, except when the prisoner is in the presence of another officer, or if the transporting officer must respond to a life-threatening situation.

4. During transport, a prisoner will not be allowed to communicate with anyone other than the officer(s) involved in the case.
5. The officer will activate the camera system equipped in the vehicle while transporting an individual or prisoner as required by G.O. III-40 Mobile Video Recording Systems (MVRS).

#### F. Juvenile Prisoners

1. Officers may use discretion in handcuffing small juveniles but will use authorized restraint devices to control unruly or potentially violent juveniles of any age. (See G.O. III-06, Juvenile Procedures, regarding specific procedures when the child is under the age of twelve [12] years).
  2. Juveniles will not be transported in the same vehicle as adult offenders, except when they are involved in the same criminal incident as the adult, or emergency circumstances dictate otherwise.
  3. Juveniles will be processed and transported to the designated facilities defined in G.O. III-06, Juvenile Procedures.
- G. No person other than police officers and approved ride-alongs will accompany a prisoner, unless authorized by a sergeant or higher authority.
- H. All vehicles equipped with a security partition will have the rear doors modified, so exit from the rear seat cannot be made without assistance.
- I. Should a situation arise while transporting a prisoner that requires law enforcement services, the transporting officer will report the need to the Emergency Communications Division so another officer may be dispatched to handle the situation.
1. When the risk to a third person is clear and grave, and the risk to the prisoner and officer is minimal, the officer may stop and render assistance, but only until other help can be obtained.
  2. Officers will not operate a vehicle in emergency mode when transporting a prisoner.
- J. At no time will any unhandcuffed person, other than a sworn law enforcement officer, ride in the back seat with a prisoner.

#### V. INTERVIEWING PRISONERS AT HEADQUARTERS

The security and control of detainees in interviews rooms will be conducted in accordance with G.O. III-28, Use of Interview and Polygraph Rooms.

#### VI. SPECIAL TRANSPORT SITUATIONS

##### A. Disabled Prisoners

1. Extra care should be taken when a prisoner with an apparent physical or mental disability is transported. Officers should consider the type of vehicle necessary to safely transport such individuals, without creating an undue hardship on the prisoner or an unsafe condition. Should a prisoner need medicines, medical supplies, walking aids and/or prosthetic appliances, such items should normally be transported to ensure their availability at the jail. Any item or device transported with a prisoner will be turned over to the receiving facility.
2. Officers will use handcuffs and restraints on disabled prisoners, except when the nature of the disability makes the use of standard restraints impossible or impractical. In such cases, the transporting officer will use whatever means necessary to ensure the security of the prisoner and the safety of all persons. In all cases, the officer will use the minimum restraints necessary to accomplish the objective, with consideration for the dignity of the person in custody.

## B. Persons with Service Animals

In the case that a person is arrested and has a service animal with them, the officer will:

1. Ask the arrestee if they have made emergency arrangements for the animal. This could be a family member, friend, or veterinarian.
2. Obtain the emergency contact information from the arrestee.
  - a. If provided, the officer will call the emergency contact.
  - b. The officer will not utilize emergency contact information retrieved from a driver's license or motor vehicle record.
3. Transport the animal to the jail for pick up by the emergency contact. If the arrestee does not have an emergency contact for the animal, or refuses to provide one, the officer may attempt to make alternative arrangements to board the animal with a safe and licensed boarding facility. However, the arrestee will be responsible for the cost of boarding the animal.
4. Communicate the location where the arrestee's animal is being boarded including the name and contact information to the arrestee and to the jail social worker.
5. Document in the report:
  - a. The location where the arrestee's animal is being boarded, including the name and contact information;
  - b. The officer's communication of this information to the arrestee and the jail social worker.

## C. Sick or Injured Prisoners

1. Any person who is sick, injured, unconscious, experiencing medical distress, or otherwise in need of medical care or treatment will be provided with medical aid as quickly as reasonably possible.
  - a. The transporting officer will monitor the prisoner either directly if transporting in a cruiser, or by an activated video system in the prisoner transport van. If the officer witnesses the prisoner sustain an injury or observes the prisoner to be in a position of potential medical distress (face down, slumped over, not moving, etc.) they will stop the vehicle as soon as it is safe to do so and render aid to the prisoner.
  - b. If the illness/injury appears to be minor, the officer will transport the prisoner to the nearest medical facility for evaluation/treatment.
  - c. If the prisoner appears to be more seriously ill or injured, the officer will summon EMS to the location to render aid.
    - 1) If necessary, the prisoner can then be transported to a hospital, via ambulance or by the officer, depending on the seriousness of the illness/injury.
    - 2) If the prisoner is transported via ambulance, an officer will accompany the prisoner in the ambulance.
2. If the person to be arrested is obviously sick or injured, the officer will attempt to consult with a supervisor concerning the necessity/advisability of placing the person under arrest.
3. If the person to be arrested is under the influence of alcohol or another substance to such an extent that they cannot walk safely under their own power, they will be immediately transported to the PCSO jail by the arresting officer and not transferred to the Prisoner Transport Van (PTV).
4. Persons who have been taken into custody, after resistance, with the aid of a less-lethal device will be monitored closely for medical problems during transport.
  - a. Persons sprayed with Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) may be subject to positional asphyxia if transported face down, therefore the prisoner will be placed in an upright position or on their back to avoid breathing complications.
  - b. Persons taken into custody with the aid of a Taser Energy Weapon may experience medical distress. (See G.O. II-44, Taser Energy Weapon).
5. G.O. III-20, Hospital Procedures describes procedures when a prisoner is taken to a medical facility.

6. Officers will follow the same guidelines and use the same discretion in the use of restraining devices for sick/injured prisoners as with disabled prisoners.
7. Mentally ill detainees will be transported in accordance with I.O. V5-01, Persons Suffering From Mental Illness.

#### D. Spitting Prisoners

1. Officers are authorized to place a spit hood over the head of a prisoner who actually spits on, attempts to spit on, or threatens to spit on police personnel, emergency personnel, or any other individual who must have contact with the prisoner. Spit hoods are available in the Equipment Room.
  - a. A prisoner who has had a spit hood placed over their head will not be transported in the transport van.
  - b. A prisoner who has had a spit hood placed over their head may be subject to positional asphyxia if placed face down, therefore, the prisoner will be placed in an upright position to avoid breathing complications.
  - c. Once a spit hood has been placed over the head of the prisoner, the prisoner will be monitored closely during staging and transport.
  - d. The spit hood will remain in place until the prisoner has been transported to the jail or a medical facility where the hood will be removed by jail or medical personnel.
  - e. If a situation arises where an officer must remove a spit hood, a used spit hood will be treated as a bio-hazard per I.O. V5-22, Infectious Diseases and Exposure Control Plan.
  - f. Other than as stated above, any other use of the spit hood is unauthorized.
2. The use of a spit hood will be documented in the narrative of the incident report of the officer who placed the spit hood over the prisoner's head.

#### VII. DELIVERY OF PRISONERS TO THE RECEIVING FACILITY

- A. Upon arrival at the receiving facility, the transporting officer(s) must properly secure in either their police vehicle or in the sally-port lock boxes provided:
  1. All of their weapons and ammunition.
  2. All cell phones, whether personal or Department issued.
- B. The prisoner will be taken into the booking/intake area of the where the intake personnel will remove the restraints and return them to the officer.
- C. The officer will:
  1. Advise the intake officer of any known medical conditions, security concerns, and if the subject has been taken into custody with the use of a less-lethal weapon.
  2. If a sick/injured prisoner has been treated at a medical facility prior to arrival at the facility, a medical clearance form or doctor's release must be submitted to the intake personnel.
  3. Ensure the clearance/release form shows the name the prisoner was treated under, the name of the attending physician, and the medical chart number, if any.
    - a. The officer will turn all of the prisoner's property over to the receiving facility. No prisoner's property will be destroyed or thrown away. However, open bottles and perishables, which would attract vermin or create sanitary problems, may be disposed of but must be documented in the Officer's report.
- D. The transporting officer will complete an *Inmate Non-Evidence Bulk Property Form* on each person booked into the PCSO Jail, if that person has property to be stored. This form is available in the Equipment Room and at the PCSO Intake.
  1. Have the prisoner sign where indicated or mark the form indicating the person refused to sign.

2. The booking officer will make three copies of the completed form for the transporting officer.
  - a. A copy will be given to the prisoner;
  - b. A copy will be taken with the prisoner's property to the PCSO Technical Services Building; and
  - c. The final copy will be submitted to Receiving and Intake (R&I) with the Offense Report.
3. Property or contraband discovered on the arrested person, which is to be used as evidence, will be retained and submitted to the SPPD Property and Evidence unit per established guidelines.

#### VIII. ESCAPES/CRIMINAL ACTS DURING TRANSPORT

- A. Should a prisoner escape while being transported, the officer will immediately notify the Emergency Communications Center of the situation and attempt to apprehend the escapee.
  1. The Emergency Communications Center will notify the officer's supervisor, and the Watch Commander, and broadcast the incident on the channel of the district where the incident occurred.
  2. If an escape occurs while transporting a prisoner to a place of confinement outside the City limits, the transporting officer has a statutory duty (§ 901.22, Florida Statutes) to immediately pursue and retake the person into custody without a warrant.  
Emergency Communications Center personnel will notify:
    - a. The officer's supervisor and the Watch Commander; and
    - b. The agency having jurisdiction where the escape occurred.
  3. A supplemental report will be completed documenting the escape.
- B. Any and all criminal acts which occur during transport, such as an assault on a police officer(s), destruction of City property, etc., should be reported to the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction where the incident occurred.
- C. Follow-up investigations to incidents occurring during transport will be carried out by the agency having jurisdiction where the event occurred.

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Anthony Holloway  
Chief of Police