

# UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT

## POLICY AND PROCEDURE

No. 540

Supersedes: NA

Effective: May 11, 2014

Page: NA Section: NA

Page: 1 OF 4

Dated: January 8, 2003

---

### **DETENTION AREA MANAGEMENT**

---

- I. **PURPOSE:** To establish guidelines for the operation of the department's Detention Area to include the physical plant, safety and sanitation, and training.
- II. **POLICY:** It is the policy of the Upper Merion Township Police department to provide secure, temporary holding cells for prisoners awaiting interrogation, arrest processing, transfer to the county prison or other administrative procedures, and to maintain these facilities in a safe and sanitary manner. As such, personnel involved in the operation of the Detention Area shall adhere to the following procedures and shall be alert to any problems or conditions that may compromise security, safety or the well being of department personnel or prisoners.
- III. **CROSS-REF:** Policy #510, DETENTION AREA SECURITY  
Policy #520, EVACUATION OF HOLDING CELLS
- IV. **RESPONSIBILITIES:**
1. Detention Area operation is the responsibility of the Patrol Division Commander.
  2. Direct supervision of the Detention Area is the responsibility of the shift supervisor.
- V. **PROCEDURES:**
- A. PHYSICAL PLANT: The following minimum conditions will be provided in the Detention Area:
1. Adequate lighting, which will remain on at all times.

2. The ventilation system will be in operation at all times in any occupied area of the Detention Area.
3. Access to a flush toilet and drinking water.
4. Access to a wash basin for prisoners held in excess of eight (8) hours.
5. A bed will provided for each prisoner held in excess of eight (8) hours. Bedding will also be provided upon request. Bedding will not be provided for prisoners deemed to be a suicide risk.
6. Any standards required under the laws and regulations of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

**B. SAFETY AND SANITATION:**

1. The Detention Area shall be equipped with the following fire detection/suppression systems approved by the Upper Merion Township Fire Marshal:
  - a. Overhead sprinkler system.
  - b. Fire fighting equipment.
  - c. Automatic fire alarm.
  - d. Heat and smoke detection system.
  - e. Carbon monoxide detector.
2. Fire equipment and detection devices, including the fire extinguisher, sprinklers, and smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, shall be visually inspected by the dayshift supervisor daily during the Detention Area check. The inspection will verify the presence of this equipment and check for possible damage. The inspection and its results shall be documented in the Remarks Section on the back of the Sergeant's Daily Report. Any deficiencies shall be brought to the attention of the Patrol Division Commander.
3. Fire equipment shall be tested annually by the Fire Marshal or his/her designee to ensure it is in proper operating condition. Each test shall be documented as to the date, time, condition of the equipment, and who conducted the test. The Fire Marshall, or his/her designee, in accordance with the law and local fire regulations shall test automatic fire detection devices and alarm systems.
4. No smoking shall be allowed in the Detention Area. Officers shall ensure that prisoners do not possess matches, lighters or other incendiary devices prior to placing them in a holding cell.

5. In the event of a fire or fire alarm, the Communication Center shall immediately notify the Montgomery County Fire Board to dispatch the appropriate fire companies. Personnel may try to extinguish a fire if it can be done so safely.
  6. If evacuation of the Detention Area is necessary it shall be accomplished in accordance with Policy #520, EVACUATION OF HOLDING CELLS.
  7. The Detention Area shall be cleaned on a daily basis by a contract cleaning service, unless the area is occupied by a detainee. In that case, building maintenance will be notified to check the area once it becomes unoccupied. The shift supervisor shall check the sanitary condition of the facility during his/her daily Detention Area inspection.
  8. If insects, rodents or other vermin are found, maintenance personnel shall attempt to correct the problem. If necessary, pest control professionals shall be utilized.
  9. Access to the Detention Area, when occupied, is restricted to authorized department personnel, and law enforcement officers or other authorized personnel from outside criminal justice agencies. Visits to prisoners in the Detention Area are governed by policy #510, DETENTION AREA SECURITY.
- C. TRAINING: All department personnel involved in the operation of the Detention Area shall receive training, to include entry level training, in the following areas:
1. Safety and security procedures.
  2. Detention Area operations.
  3. Supervision and physical restraint of prisoners.
  4. Fire suppression equipment including heat and smoke detectors.
  5. Other areas consistent with assigned duties, such as fingerprinting and photographing, or as deemed necessary by the Chief of Police.

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Thomas M. Nolan

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Captain John C. Hellebush

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

TO BE REVIEWED: ANNUALLY

DISTRIBUTION: All police officers  
All police dispatchers  
All special officers  
Township Manager  
File