

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT
POLICY AND PROCEDURES

No. 500

Supercedes: NA

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Page: NA Section: NA

Page: 1 OF 6

Dated: March 22, 2002

PRISONER TRANSPORT AND RESTRAINT

I. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for searching, restraining and transporting prisoners in the custody of Upper Merion police officers, and to provide for the safety of officers, prisoners and the general public, and to provide for the collection of evidence and contraband.

II. **POLICY:** It shall be the policy of the Upper Merion Police Department that all prisoners be searched by the transporting officer prior to transport, and that all prisoners be restrained during transport. Vehicles used for prisoner transport shall be searched at the beginning of each shift and before and after each prisoner transport. Notifications about unusual security risks shall be made, and written documentation shall be obtained when transferring prisoners to another agency.

III. **PROCEDURE:**

A. **VEHICLE INSPECTION:** At the beginning of each shift, the officer operating a vehicle equipped for prisoner transport shall inspect the transport area for any damage or unsafe condition, as well as for weapons, evidence or contraband. Any irregularities shall be reported to the shift supervisor.

Prior to placing a prisoner in the vehicle, the transport area shall be checked. After transporting the prisoner, the transport area should be searched as soon as practical.

B. **RESTRAINTS:** All prisoners being transported should be handcuffed behind the back with the handcuffs double locked. Only Department approved handcuffs and restraints may be used. The department shall conduct periodic training on handcuffing procedures during range days. The transport officer should use appropriate restraint devices and techniques that will not aggravate any physical conditions, disabilities or injuries that the prisoner may have. The officer may handcuff the prisoner with his/her hands in the front, or use other approved restraint devices (restraint belt, leg shackles and/or flexi-cuffs) where the prisoner:

1. Is in an obvious state of pregnancy.
2. Has a physical handicap.
3. Has injuries that could be aggravated by standard handcuffing procedures.

Restraints shall be removed prior to placing a prisoner in a cell unless the prisoner is unruly or exhibits behavior detrimental to his/her well-being (see Policy #530, TREATMENT OF SICK/INJURED DETAINEES, Section IV-B-2)

C. SPIT HOOD: The spit hood is a nylon mesh device designed to fit over the head and face of a prisoner to prevent him/her from projecting spit, saliva, or blood onto department employees. The spit hood is to be used only for health and safety purposes when encountering unruly, violent or intoxicated, in-custody persons who are spitting, threatening to spit or who are bleeding from the head / face area. The spit hood can also be used in situations where the officer reasonably believes that the person will spit at personnel. The following guidelines apply to the use of spit hoods:

1. Only department issued spit hoods will be used to protect against spitting.
2. A minimum of two officers will be present when a spit hood is applied. The spit hood is a safe and humane form of restraint that allows unrestricted breathing.
3. Once the spit hood is placed on the person they will require constant monitoring. At no time should a person wearing the spit hood be left unattended.
4. The use of the spit hood will be discontinued immediately if the person displays any signs of medical complications, such as but not limited to vomiting, bleeding from the mouth, difficulty breathing or respiratory distress.
5. As soon as it is deemed safe to do so, or at the direction of a supervisor, the spit hood will be removed. Once removed the spit hood will be disposed of in a biohazard bag and placed in the bin in room #162 in the cellblock. The spit hood is a one-time-only use item and shall not be reused or laundered under any circumstance.
6. Every use of a spit hood will be documented in an incident report.

D. TRANSPORT:

1. Prior to transport, all prisoners and their possessions shall be thoroughly searched for weapons, evidence and contraband in accordance with Upper Merion Township Police Department policy # 430, SEARCHES OF ARRESTED PERSONS. Property removed from the possession of the prisoner shall be inventoried on the Upper Merion Police Department Prisoner Property Report unless the property is evidence, in which case it will be inventoried on a Upper Merion Township Police Department Property Report. This shall be accomplished in accordance with Policy #600, EVIDENCE AND PROPERTY CONTROL.

2. Any time the prisoner changes custody the receiving officer should do another search.
3. All prisoners being transported to or from the Upper Merion Police Department will be dropped off or picked up in the garage near the double entry door.
4. The transporting officer shall notify the Communications Center of the identity of the prisoner, start location, destination and beginning mileage of the transport. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] -Upon arrival at the destination, the Communication Center will be notified of the ending mileage.

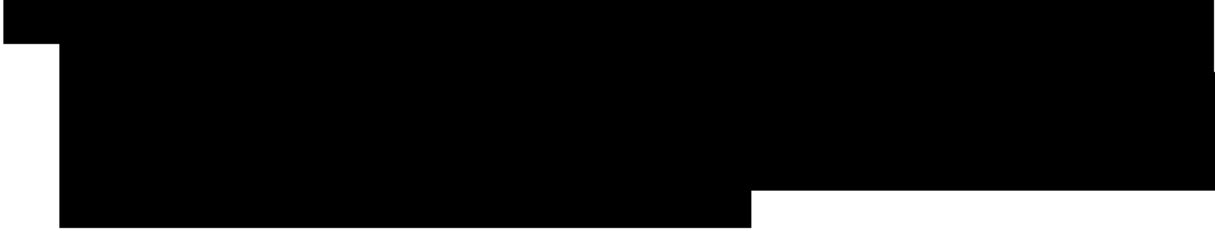
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

7. Prisoners shall be seatbelted unless they are violently resisting to the point where they are seriously jeopardizing the safety of the transporting officer(s).
8. Prisoners shall not be handcuffed to any part of the vehicle during transport.
9. Transporting officers should not become involved in any other law enforcement activity while transporting a prisoner unless failure to act would result in death or serious bodily injury to another.
10. The rear doors shall be locked when a prisoner is inside.
11. The decision to transport juveniles with adults should be made on an individual basis with regard to the potential risks involved.
12. Officers transporting prisoners with bodily fluids on their persons shall comply with the applicable provisions of the Upper Merion Police Department policy on INFECTIOUS MATERIALS AND DISEASE CONTROL.

E. TRANSPORTING SICK, INJURED OR DISABLED DETAINEES:

1. Prisoners who report or display symptoms of illness, disability or injury and request or require treatment shall be handled in accordance with the provisions of Upper Merion Police Department Policy #530, TREATMENT OF SICK AND/OR INJURED DETAINEES.

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3. Any medication, wheelchairs, crutches, and/or prosthetic devices should be transported with, but not in the possession of the prisoner.
 4. The shift supervisor is responsible for providing sufficient security during transportation and at the treatment facility.
 5. The medical or mental health facility to which the prisoner is to be transported should be notified. Escorting officer(s) shall remain with the prisoner at all times unless relieved by authorized personnel.
 6. Upon completion of the evaluation and treatment, the escorting officer(s) shall obtain a written report from the examining physician that includes, if appropriate, an authorization for incarceration. A copy shall be attached to the original report. The escorting officer(s) will resecure and again search the prisoner prior to leaving the medical or mental health facility.
 7. Whenever a prisoner will be admitted to the hospital, the escorting officer(s) will notify the shift supervisor who will make arrangements for continuing security. If a person is arrested, a bedside arraignment may be appropriate. Security assistance shall be requested from the Montgomery County Sheriff's Department if the prisoner has been arraigned. Montgomery County Juvenile Probation or Children Youth Services may be able to provide some custodial assistance if the prisoner is a juvenile.

F. TRANSFER OF CUSTODY TO OR FROM ANOTHER AGENCY:

1. Transporting officers will comply with the receiving agency's regulations regarding the securing of weapons at their facility before transferring custody of the prisoner.
2. Any restraining devices being used will only be removed when custody is transferred to the receiving agency, and at the direction of the receiving official.
3. All written documentation including, but not limited to commitments, detainers and warrants shall be delivered to the receiving official who shall sign for the acceptance of the prisoner on the Upper Merion Police Department Transfer of Custody Form. A copy of this signed document will be attached to the arrest report. It is the responsibility of the transporting officer to advise the receiving official of any potential medical or security concerns, or hazards posed by the prisoner being transferred.

G. UNUSUAL SECURITY RISKS:

1. Any time a prisoner that is considered an unusual security risk is taken for a proceeding or is being transferred to another agency, notifications shall be made detailing those risks. Unusual security risks include, but are not limited to propensity for violence, medical or mental conditions, suicidal tendencies and risk of escape.
2. When this Department receives a prisoner who presents an unusual security risk, it shall be the responsibility of the receiving officer to notify the shift supervisor and the Communications Center.

H. PRISONER ESCAPE DURING TRANSPORT:

1. Should a prisoner escape during transport, the transporting officers shall immediately notify, by radio, the police agency covering the jurisdiction where the escape occurred. The transporting officers shall broadcast the following information to that jurisdiction over Channel Emergency One: the location where the escape occurred, mode and direction of travel, a complete physical description including clothing, possession of any weapons or police equipment, propensity for violence and charges against the escapee.
2. The transporting officers shall then notify the Communications Center, which in turn shall notify the shift supervisor, and jurisdictions in the surrounding area and supply those jurisdictions with the same information as outlined in Section III, H-1 above. The Communications Center will also send a CLEAN/NCIC wanted persons message covering the tri-state area as soon as possible.
3. The shift supervisor will ensure that the following notifications have been made:
 - a. An on duty Command Officer, or if not available, the on-call Command Officer.
 - b. The jurisdiction that covers the last known address of the escapee.
 - c. Local medical facilities if the escapee was injured.
 - d. Any agency from which the prisoner was being transported.
 - e. The victim(s) of the escapee's criminal acts within an appropriate time frame as determined by the circumstances. Crimes of violence may require immediate notification, whereas less serious crimes may allow for notification during normal business hours.

- f. The jurisdiction where the victim resides, works or attends school if applicable.
- 4. The transporting officers shall make every reasonable attempt to capture the escapee.
- 5. The transporting officers shall meet with the shift supervisor in the jurisdiction where the escape occurred, if requested, to provide complete details of the incident.
- 6. The transporting officers shall submit a complete written report, on the appropriate departmental form, explaining the details of the escape.

APPROVED: _____

DATE: _____

APPROVED: _____

DATE: _____

TO BE REVIEWED : ANNUALLY

DISTRIBUTION: All Police Personnel
All Police Dispatchers
All Civilian Police Employees
Township Manager
File