



Atlanta Police Department – Standard Operating Procedure			
	APD.SOP.3033 – Temporary Detention Cells Effective Date: September 23rd, 2025		
Chief Darin Schierbaum	Signature by: DS	Date Signed: 9/23/2025	Expires:2029

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

APD Staff,

The Policy and Standards Section is dedicated to providing the department, and its employees, with accurate, understandable and transparent policies. In order to publish policies that reflect the most up-to-date standards, the Policy and Standard Section regularly reviews all policies to ensure that they are reflective of the current mission and objectives of the Atlanta Police Department.

During the review and renewal of APD.SOP.3033 – Temporary Detention Cells, the following minor changes have been made:

- Officers will ensure all weapons are secured on their duty belt with Department-issued holsters with retention devices in place prior to entering a detention cell. If an officer is using an alternative holster without retention devices, the weapon will be secured in a locked compartment/room, prior to entering the detention cell. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.3.3a) – Section 4.3.1
- If the detainee is indicating self-harm or erratic behavior, the arresting/transporting officer will confiscate the detainee’s belt, tie, jacket, shoes, shoestrings, and/or any other object that could be used to cause harm. Section 4.3.6
- Restrictions preventing outside agencies from using the temporary detention cells have been removed, but limited to 6 hours. Section 4.8

Thank you and stay informed!

**Policy and Standards Section
 Planning, Research, and Accreditation Unit**



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1. PURPOSE

To establish policy and procedure for using temporary detention cells located at the Zone 3 Precinct and the Domestic and International Terminals.

2. POLICY

All sworn employees will ensure a safe and secure environment for detainees.

Temporary detention cells may be used when employees need to detain persons for a short period of time prior to transporting that person to the appropriate correctional facility. Temporary detention cells may be used to allow officers to separate or maintain control of arrested persons, complete necessary paperwork, interview detainees, or for other legitimate and necessary purposes. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.1.1)

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 All supervisors will be responsible for ensuring employees comply with this directive.

3.2 All employees will be responsible for complying with this directive.

4. ACTION

4.1 USE OF DETENTION CELLS

4.1.1 When not occupied, the light in the detention cells will be turned off and the door closed. At no time will the light be turned off when the detention cells are occupied.

4.1.2 The Watch Commander or his/her designee must be notified prior to placing anyone in the detention cells. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.3.3c)

4.1.3 Use of the detention cells will be limited to the processing, questioning, or testing of detainee(s). Only law enforcement officers and emergency response personnel are allowed in the detention cells with detainees. Under no circumstances will detainee friends, relatives or others be allowed within the detention cells. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.3.3c)

4.1.4 Cigarettes, matches, lighters and any flammable items or liquids are prohibited in the detention cells.

4.1.5 Whenever possible, at least two officers must be present when placing or removing detainees in a holding cell. A single officer will not enter a cell occupied by more than one detainee.

4.1.6 When detainees are placed in the detention cells, the cell lock will be fully locked, and the key removed. The key will be secured at the workstation outside the temporary detention cells.

4.1.7 Male, female and juvenile detainees will be kept separated when being held or detained in the detention cells. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.3.1e)

4.1.8 Detainees may be secured to an immovable object that is designed for such use. Examples include: a bench (fixed to the floor) with a bar or rings to which a handcuff may be secured; or a pole (fixed to the floor) with rings to which a handcuff may be secured. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.3.1d & 71.3.2)



4.2 DETAINEE NEEDS

- 4.2.1 Detainees being held in the detention cells will be provided access to water, restrooms, and other basic needs in a timely manner. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.4.1)
- 4.2.2 It is the responsibility of the arresting or transporting officer to check the detainee face-to-face every (30) thirty-minutes and record the checks on [Form APD 304 Detention Cell Detainee Form](#). (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.3.1b & 71.3.3f)

4.3 SECURITY

- 4.3.1 Officers will ensure all weapons are secured on their duty belt with Department-issued holsters with retention devices in place prior to entering a detention cell. If an officer is using an alternative holster without retention devices, the weapon must be secured in a locked compartment or room, prior to entering the detention cell. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.3.3a)
- 4.3.2 In the event that an emergency occurs in the temporary detention area, an officer will advise the dispatcher over the radio by using the appropriate signal or by pushing the panic/duress button on his/her radio. If emergency medical personnel are required, the officer will advise radio of the same. The watch commander will respond to the scene immediately. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.3.3b)
- 4.3.3 When detainees are moved outside the detention cells the detainees will be handcuffed and accompanied by a police officer. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.3.3d)
- 4.3.4 A security inspection of the detention cells will be conducted at the beginning of each watch by the oncoming watch commander or designee, as well as before and after each detainee is secured by the arresting or transporting officer. The arresting or transporting officer will search all detainees before placing them into the detention cells and again upon removal.
- 4.3.5 All property, including cellphones, must be removed from the detainee prior to being placed in the temporary cell.
- 4.3.6 If the detainee is indicating self-harm or erratic behavior, the arresting/transporting officer will confiscate the detainee's belt, tie, jacket, shoes, shoestrings, and/or any other object that could be used to cause harm.

4.4 DETAINEE MONITORING

- 4.4.1 Whether an Officer has direct visual contact with the detainee or not, the detention cell camera monitoring system must be activated whenever a detainee is placed inside. Officers will use the camera monitoring system virtually to observe detainees whenever they are not in direct visual contact.
- 4.4.2 If there are no cameras, or the camera monitoring system is down, an officer must be physically present with constant observation over the individual.
- 4.4.3 If unfamiliar with its operation, Officers must request a supervisor's assistance. Monitoring ensures the detainee's safety and allows staff to respond to any needs. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.3.1c & 71.3.3g)
- 4.4.4 In the event a detainee is not being held in a temporary detention cell, the detainee will be under the constant and continuous supervision and control of a sworn employee. (CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.3.3e)



4.5 FIRE OR EVACUATION

(CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.4.2)

- 4.5.1 In the event of a fire in the detention cells, the arresting or transporting officer will immediately secure the detainees, remove them from the detention cell and activate the fire alarm located closest to the detention cell.
- 4.5.2 In the event of evacuation of the police precinct, the arresting or transporting officer will immediately secure the detainees, remove them from the detention cells and follow the Precinct Evacuation Plan.

4.6 DETENTION CELL FORM

(CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.3.1a)

- 4.6.1 The Detention Cell Detainee Form ([Form APD 304](#)) will document the identity of the detainee, reason for detention, date and time in and out of the facility, physical condition of the detainee, and any meals, if any, that were provided during the detention.
- 4.6.2 Detention Cell Detainee Forms will be kept in a binder located near the detention cells and completed on all detainee(s) placed into the detention cells. This form is designed to capture all pertinent information, as well as provide a record of detainee(s) being detained.
- 4.6.3 The officer who actually makes the arrest and places the detainee in the detention cell will sign the form. The approving officer will sign the form, or it can be signed by a supervisor in his/her absence.
- 4.6.4 All Detention Forms will be reviewed by the administrative supervisor daily and stored in a binder located at the detention cells for the mandated retention period.

4.7 DETENTION CELL CLEANLINESS

(CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.4.3)

- 4.7.1 Detention cells will be cleaned daily. If a cell becomes dirty or unsanitary, it will not be used until cleaned by the contracted service.
- 4.7.2 Supervisors will complete Detention Cell Inspection Log ([Form APD 303](#)) during each watch change. The Detention Cell Inspection Log will be kept in a binder located near the detention cells.

4.8 USE BY OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

- 4.8.1 Outside law enforcement agencies requesting to utilize APD temporary detention cells for their detainee(s) may do so, so long as the detainee does not require more than 6 hours of confinement.
- 4.8.2 The procedures established in this directive must be followed by the outside agency, which retains full responsibility for the supervision and monitoring of its detainee(s). Employees will not take charge of any detainee from other law enforcement agencies.

4.9 TRAINING IN USE OF DETENTION CELLS

(CALEA 6th ed. Standard 71.2.1)

- 4.9.1 It is the responsibility of each watch supervisor to ensure that each newly assigned sworn personnel receive detention cell training during their first day at the worksite. A Roll Call Training Attendance Sheet ([Form APD 253](#)) will be completed. Watch supervisors will ensure sworn personnel are trained on the operation of the detention cell locking mechanism and the detention cell monitoring system.



- 4.9.2 Refresher training will be completed at least once every four years. Work sites with temporary detention cells will review the policy with personnel at roll call and complete a Roll Call Training Attendance Sheet ([Form APD 253](#)).

5. DEFINITIONS

Temporary Detention Cell: A temporary detention cell is a designated room, space, or area used for processing, questioning, or testing detainees who may not be under continuous control or direct supervision of a sworn employee.

6. CANCELLATIONS

APD.SOP.3033 – Temporary Detention Cells 2019

7. REFERENCES

Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA), 6th Edition, Chapter 71

[Form APD 303 Detention Cell Inspection Log](#)

[Form APD 304 Detention Cell Detainee Form](#)