


Fort Collins Police Services

Policy Manual

 FORT COLLINS POLICE	POLICY	1022
	TITLE	Seat Belts and Transporting Prisoners

1022.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The use of seat belts and other safety restraints significantly reduces the chance of death or injury in case of a traffic collision. This policy establishes guidelines for seatbelt and child safety seat use to promote maximum operator and passenger safety, thus reducing the possibility of death or injury as the result of a motor vehicle collision. This policy will apply to all employees operating or riding in City vehicles.

This policy also provides specific guidelines for officers who transport prisoners in their police vehicle.

1022.2 WEARING OF SAFETY RESTRAINTS

All employees shall wear properly adjusted safety restraints when operating or riding in Agency-owned, leased, or rented vehicles and while operating or riding in privately owned vehicles while on-duty. Drivers are responsible for ensuring all occupants, including non-employees, are in compliance with this policy (CRS § 42-4-237). The consequences of not utilizing a seat belt could be serious injury, the refusal of the City insurance carrier to cover injuries, and/or possible disciplinary action in accordance with City personal regulations.

1022.2.1 TRANSPORTING CHILDREN

- (a) An approved child restraint system should be used for all children younger than eight years of age (CRS § 42-4-236(2)).
- (b) Rear seat passengers in a cage-equipped vehicle may have reduced clearance that requires careful seating and position of seat belts. Due to this reduced clearance, children and the child restraint system may be secured properly in the front seat of these vehicles; provided this positioning meets the vehicle and the child passenger safety seat system manufacturer's design and use recommendations. In the event that a child is transported in the front seat of a vehicle, the passenger side air bag should be deactivated. If this is not possible, officers should consider arranging alternative transportation.

1022.3 TRANSPORTING PRISONERS

- (a) Safety belts or another Agency-approved prisoner restraint system in the rear seat of the patrol vehicle are required unless the prisoner is uncooperative with the procedure. When possible, the prisoner should be in a seating position for which seat belts have been provided by the vehicle manufacturer. The seat belt or prisoner restraint system are not intended to be a substitute for handcuffs or other appendage restraints.
- (b) Prisoners are not to be secured to a fixed object or piece of equipment while being transported.

POLICY	1022
TITLE	Seat Belts and Transporting Prisoners

- (c) Officers should not generally transport more than one person at a time in a police vehicle; however, situations may arise where it may be necessary to transport more than one person. In these cases, officers should separately restrain each person consistent with Policy 306 – Restraint Devices.
- (d) Officers must take a prisoner's physical condition into consideration before transporting. Precautions must be taken to avoid positional asphyxia.
- (e) Officers will be vigilant in observation and/or contact of the arrestee at all times with any arrestee that is transported to a hospital, psychiatric institution, or location other than a detention facility. Officers will be cognizant of potential escape and infliction of injury to self or others and will prohibit contact from any unamortized person(s).

1022.3.1 PRISONER ESCAPE PROCEDURES

In the event of an attempted or actual escape from a transport vehicle, the following measures shall be taken:

- (a) If an escape attempt is underway, with or without an officer present, Dispatch shall be immediately notified and should perform the following actions in sequential order:
 1. Broadcast an immediate alarm over the radio system.
 2. Notify the watch commander, other supervisors, and other resources as directed by supervisors, to immediately respond to the officer's location to prevent the escape and/or assist the officer involved.
 3. Alert administrative personnel of the attempted or actual escape using appropriate communication systems.
- (b) All available police officers are to respond to aid in the prevention of an escape or to locate the prisoner if the escape was successful.
- (c) If the escape is successful, Dispatch will complete a National Criminal Information Center (NCIC) teletype broadcast to surrounding agencies.

1022.3.2 USE OF FORCE TO PREVENT ESCAPE OR CAPTURE ESCAPEES

Officers attempting to prevent the escape of a prisoner shall use only that amount of force that reasonably appears necessary, given the facts and circumstances perceived by the officer at the time of the event, to accomplish a legitimate law enforcement purpose.

1022.3.3 TRANSPORTING PRISONERS – TIME RECORDING

Any officer transporting a prisoner shall record the time of departure and arrival of the transport. If the officer's body worn camera is active for the entire transport, recording vehicle mileage is not necessary. If the transport is done without a body worn camera, officers shall document the mileage of the transport vehicle at both the beginning and end of the transport.

1022.3.4 SEARCH OF TRANSPORTATION VEHICLES

Vehicles used for transportation of prisoners shall be searched at the beginning of each shift and prior to and after anyone has been transported in the vehicle.

1022.4 INOPERABLE SEAT BELTS

POLICY	1022
TITLE	Seat Belts and Transporting Prisoners

- (a) No Agency vehicle shall be operated if the seat belt in the driver's position is inoperable. No person shall be transported in a seating position in which the seat belt is inoperable.
- (b) No person shall modify, remove, deactivate, or otherwise tamper with the vehicle safety belt system, except for vehicle maintenance and repair staff, who may do so only with the express authorization of the Chief of Police.
- (c) Employees who discover an inoperable restraint system shall promptly report the defect to the appropriate supervisor. Prompt action will be taken to replace or repair the system.

1022.5 VEHICLES MANUFACTURED WITHOUT SEAT BELTS

Vehicles manufactured and certified for use without seat belts or other restraint systems may be operated without seatbelts.