

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Examination Following Use of Force

Policy Number: 507.04.35

Effective Date: 02/02/2022

Page Number: 1 of 4

Authority:
Commissioner

Originating Division:
Health Services Division
(Physical Health)

Access Listing:
Level II: Required Offender
Access

I. Introduction and Summary:

A physical evaluation of the offender will be performed and documented following any Use of Force, except the routine use of handcuffs during transport. Offenders placed in restraints will be monitored for medical or mental health conditions requiring treatment or which would contraindicate continuation of such measures. This procedure is applicable at all facilities that house Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) offenders including private and county prisons.

II. Authority:

- A. Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. R.: 125-4-4-.05(d), 125-3-2-.12;
- B. GDC Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): 209.04 Use of Force and Restraint for Offender Control, 508.27 Time Out, Seclusion, and Physical Restraints, 507.04.48 Physical Restraints, and 209.05 Stripped Cells and Temporary Confiscation of Personal Property, 507.04.33 Health Evaluation of Offenders in Restrictive Housing, and 508.26 Involuntary Medication Administration;
- C. ACA 5th Edition Standards: 5-ACI-3A-18 (ref. 4-4191, Mandatory), 5-ACI-3A-32 (ref. 4-4203, Mandatory), and 5-ACI-6C-13 (ref. 4-4405 Mandatory); and
- D. NCCHC 2018 Adult Standard: P-I-01.

III. Definitions:

- A. **Licensed Health Care Provider** - MD, DO, NP, PA, RN, LPN, LVN.
- B. **Stripped Cell** - A Stripped Cell is any cell from which the staff have removed any one of the following items: serviceable bed, fire-retardant mattress, hot and cold running water, working toilet, proper bedding (i.e., one pillow, one pillowcase, one blanket (seasonal), two sheets).
- C. **Use of Force** - Physical force used to compel an offender to take action against his or her will, or to prevent an offender from taking an action that would be damaging

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Examination Following Use of Force

Policy Number: 507.04.35

Effective Date: 02/02/2022

Page Number: 2 of 4

Authority:
Commissioner

Originating Division:
Health Services Division
(Physical Health)

Access Listing:
Level II: Required Offender
Access

to him/herself, other persons, or property. This does not include the routine use of handcuffs during transport.

IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:

A. Health Examination after Use of Force:

1. After any Use of Force, a Licensed Health Care Provider will be notified immediately and examine the offender. If at all possible, the examination should be performed at the medical unit before the offender is placed in Restrictive Housing status in accordance with SOP 507.04.33.
2. In facilities with less than 24 hours of medical coverage per day, the on-call provider will be immediately notified by security staff if the Use of Force occurs after hours and will decide whether to send the offender to the Emergency Room (ER) for examination or a catchment facility.
3. If the offender is violent or combative and has been placed in restrictive housing, a Licensed Health Care Provider will go to the unit and at a minimum perform a visual inspection of the offender.
4. The Licensed Health Care Provider will exercise utmost care during such limited assessment in order to rule out mental health disorders as the main reason for violent or combative behavior, and the possibility that the unruly offender may be suicidal. If unsure about the extent of mental health involvement, the offender should be referred for a mental health evaluation as soon as possible.
5. If an offender is uncooperative during an examination, a physical assessment will be made to the extent permitted under the circumstances, and the findings (including the offender's statement) thoroughly documented.
6. With the offender's consent, the offender's clothes will be removed and a description of any noticeable injury or trauma will be documented.

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Examination Following Use of Force

Policy Number: 507.04.35

Effective Date: 02/02/2022

Page Number: 3 of 4

Authority:
Commissioner

Originating Division:
Health Services Division
(Physical Health)

Access Listing:
Level II: Required Offender
Access

7. The physical exam should be a complete head to toe exam, including a complete set of vital signs. The exam should be focused, based on the history taken from the offender.

B. Documentation of Use of Force:

1. The Examination after Use of Force Form (P-30-0011-01) will be filled out completely and a copy filed in the Progress Notes Section of the health record. Only Page 2 (Anatomical Person) of the Use of Force Form will be provided to the custody staff for use in preparation of their report. The date and time of the Use of Force and the time of the exam must be included. Extreme care should be taken to ensure that all injuries are accurately documented on the anatomical person diagram.
2. A brief progress note will be made in the health record with reference to the completed Examination after Use of Force form. The progress note will state the assessment of injury and any follow-up indicated. The progress note will also include the date and time of the entry as well as the legible signature of the Licensed Health Care Provider.
3. Videotaping of the examination and nursing staff is prohibited. It is not permissible due to medical confidentiality to film the actual medical exam. However, the video recording device will not be turned off but will be pointed in another direction allowing for the audit to be captured (See SOP 209.04).

C. Mental Health Considerations Following Use of Force:

1. Offenders without a history of mental health disorders who exhibit signs and symptoms of a mental health disorder will be referred to a facility with mental health evaluation capability in accordance with SOP 507.04.33.
2. Procedures for use of restraints, use of seclusion cells, Stripped Cells, and temporary confiscation of personal property on mental health offenders to control violent behavior or self-mutilation are defined in SOP 508.27

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Examination Following Use of Force

Policy Number: 507.04.35

Effective Date: 02/02/2022

Page Number: 4 of 4

Authority:
Commissioner

Originating Division:
Health Services Division
(Physical Health)

Access Listing:
Level II: Required Offender
Access

(Timeout, Seclusion and Physical Restraints), and 508.26 (Involuntary Medication Administration).

V. **Attachments:** None.

IV. **Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:** None.