I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to provide directives to help prevent suicides and to establish policy and procedures pertaining to suicide attempts within the Loudoun County Adult Detention Center.

II. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Corrections/Court Services Division to promote the safety and well-being of all inmates housed within the Adult Detention Center. This goal shall be met by developing procedures to help prevent suicides, to provide immediate aid for persons who have attempted or have thoughts of suicide, and to foster awareness to intercept any attempts. This General Order shall be reviewed and documented every twelve (12) months by all staff.

III. PROCEDURE

A. Circumstances That May Elicit Suicidal Tendencies

1. Circumstances which foster suicidal or self-destructive behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

   a. First hours and days of incarceration.

   b. Lack of experience with jail setting (first incarcerations are generally worse).

   c. Chronic incarceration (breeds frustrations that people often cannot deal with).

   d. Type of crime (passionate/violent/death related/family or sexual related).

   e. Perceived social or community outcast because of crimes.

   f. Unexpected results in court.
B. Behavior Which May Indicate Suicidal Tendencies

1. Some observations that indicate suicidal tendencies include, but are not limited to, the following:
   a. Loss of interest in activities or relationships which the inmate had previously enjoyed or engaged in.
   b. Depressed state indicated by withdrawal, periods of crying and insomnia.
   c. Extreme restlessness or pacing back and forth in a preoccupied manner.
   d. History of suicide attempts and/or self-destructive behavior.
   e. Active discussion of suicidal plans.
   f. Sudden drastic change in eating or sleeping habits or other behavioral reversals.
   g. History of mental illness or substance abuse problems.
   h. Intoxication (alcohol or drugs).
   i. Professed shame or feelings of guilt.
   j. Self-destructive behavior.

C. Attempted Suicide Response

1. A supervisor will be notified immediately and will request the immediate response of the medical staff and deputies to the area.

2. The location in which the suicide attempt was made will be secured and placed into maximum-security condition. In the event the incident takes place in a dormitory-style housing unit, the inmates will be relocated to a secure area, at the discretion of a supervisor.

3. Once two (2) or more deputies arrive on the scene, the senior deputy will make an initial assessment for safety and security reasons, prior to breaching security.

4. If necessary, first aid will be administered. Medical staff and a supervisor will assess if outside medical treatment is necessary.

5. The inmate will be placed in protective custody status, in a location with constant staff observation. Checks will be documented every fifteen (15)
minutes on the Special Observation Log. This observation will be continued by staff until the inmate is evaluated by a mental health counselor.

6. Checks will be documented twice per hour, at random intervals on the Special Observation Log by Medical Staff. The Medical Staff shall make notation, initial next to each entry, and sign the bottom of the form.

7. At the discretion of a supervisor, the inmate may be placed in a security gown.

8. At the discretion of the supervisor, the inmate may be placed into the emergency restraint chair to protect the inmate from further harming themselves in compliance with general order 403.10 Emergency Restraint Chair.

9. If the inmate has succeeded in taking his or her own life, refer to General Order # 503.5, *Death of an Inmate*.

10. Notifications and other actions:

   a. The responding supervisor will notify the Division Commander through the chain of command.

   b. Arrange for transportation to a local hospital, if necessary.

   c. The on-site mental health counselor will be contacted. If not on-site, contact the Loudoun County Mental Health Emergency Services and arrange to speak to the on-call staff.

   d. The responding supervisor will verify that an Incident Based Report (IBR) is completed prior to the end of shift.

11. Should an inmate make verbal threats of suicide, the deputy will:

   a. Notify a supervisor and medical staff.

   b. Place the inmate on protective custody status for observation and contact the on-site mental health counselor. If not on-site, contact the Loudoun County Mental Health Emergency Services and arrange to speak to the on-call staff.

   c. Prior to an inmate returning to general population, they must be cleared by a Loudoun County Mental Health counselor, medical staff and be approved by the shift supervisor.

   d. Complete an In-House Incident Report and submit to the Division Commander through the chain of command.
IV. **ACCREDITATION STANDARD #**

**6VAC15-40-450: Suicide Prevention and Intervention Plan**

There shall be a written suicide prevention and intervention plan. These procedures shall be reviewed and documented by an appropriate medical or mental health authority prior to implementation and reviewed every 12 months by all staff. These reviews shall be documented.

Compliance Documentation:
- Review written plan
- Review approval by medical or mental health authority
- Staff review documentation
- Interview staff

Statistics show that most suicides happen within the first 72 hours of arrest. The mental status of an inmate may vary greatly from day to day. Therefore, staff must employ good observational skills and be knowledgeable of signs and symptoms. Procedures should be in place for staff to notify the appropriate medical authority if concerns should arise.

**6VAC15-40-1010: Mental Health Inmates**

Written policy, procedure and practice shall specify the handling of mental health inmates to include an agreement to utilize mental health services from either a private party contractor or the community service board.

Compliance Documentation:
- Review written policy and procedures
- Review written agreement/contract
- Review inmate records (if applicable)
- Interview staff

This General Order becomes effective September 22, 2016 and rescinds all previous rules and regulations pertaining to the subject.