

Handcuffing and Restraints

302.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for the use of handcuffs and other restraints during detentions and arrests.

302.2 POLICY

The Santa Monica Police Department authorizes the use of restraint devices in accordance with this policy, the Use of Force Policy, and Department training. Restraint devices shall not be used to punish, to display authority, or as a show of force.

302.3 USE OF RESTRAINTS

Only members who have successfully completed Santa Monica Police Department-approved training on the use of restraint devices described in this policy are authorized to use these devices.

Restraint devices include handcuffs, temporary nylon or plastic cuffs, the soft restraints on an ambulance gurney, the WRAP by Safe Restraints and the RIPP hobble. Auxiliary restraint devices include transport belts (waist or belly chains) and transport chains (leg devices).

When deciding whether to use any restraint, officers should carefully balance officer safety concerns with factors that include, but are not limited to:

- The circumstances or crime leading to the arrest.
- The demeanor and behavior of the arrested person.
- The age and health of the person.
- Whether the person is known to be pregnant.
- Whether the person has a hearing or speaking disability. In such cases, consideration should be given, safety permitting, to handcuffing to the front in order to allow the person to sign or write notes.
- Whether the person has any other apparent disability (i.e. Prosthetic device or is an amputee).

302.3.1 RESTRAINT OF DETAINEES

Situations may arise where it may be reasonable to restrain a person who may, after brief investigation, be released without arrest. Unless arrested, the use of restraints on detainees should continue only for as long as is reasonably necessary to ensure the safety of officers and others. When deciding whether to remove restraints from a detainee, officers should continuously weigh the safety interests at hand against the continuing intrusion upon the detainee.

302.3.2 RESTRAINT OF PREGNANT PERSONS

Persons who are known to be pregnant should be restrained in the least restrictive manner that is effective for officer safety. Leg irons, waist chains, or handcuffs behind the body should not be

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used unless the officer has a reasonable suspicion that the person may resist, attempt escape, injure self or others, or damage property.

No person who is in labor, delivery, or recovery after delivery shall be handcuffed or restrained except in extraordinary circumstances and only when a supervisor makes an individualized determination that such restraints are necessary for the safety of the arrestee, officers, or others (Penal Code § 3407; Penal Code § 6030).

302.3.3 RESTRAINT OF JUVENILES

A juvenile under 14 years of age should not be restrained unless he/she is suspected of a dangerous felony or when the officer has a reasonable suspicion that the juvenile may resist, attempt escape, injure him/herself, injure the officer, or damage property.

302.3.4 NOTIFICATIONS

Whenever a sworn officer transports a person with the use of restraints other than handcuffs, the officer shall inform the jail staff upon arrival at the jail that restraints were used. This notification should include information regarding any other circumstances the officer reasonably believes would be potential safety concerns or medical risks to the person (e.g., prolonged struggle, extreme agitation, impaired respiration) that may have occurred prior to, or during, transportation to the jail.

302.4 APPLICATION OF HANDCUFFS OR PLASTIC CUFFS

Handcuffs, including temporary nylon or plastic cuffs, may be used only to restrain a person's hands to ensure officer safety.

Although recommended for most arrest situations, handcuffing is discretionary and not an absolute requirement of the Department. Officers should consider handcuffing any person they reasonably believe warrants that degree of restraint. However, officers should not conclude that in order to avoid risk every person should be handcuffed, regardless of the circumstances.

In most situations handcuffs should be applied with the hands behind the person's back. Officers should evaluate the need to loosen, tighten, or otherwise adjust the handcuffs in order to provide a more secure restraint of the person's hands and to avoid injury. When feasible, handcuffs shall be double-locked to prevent tightening, which may cause undue discomfort or injury to the hands or wrists.

In situations where one pair of handcuffs does not appear sufficient to restrain the person or may cause unreasonable discomfort due to the person's size, officers should consider alternatives, such as using an additional set of handcuffs or multiple plastic cuffs.

Handcuffs should be removed as soon as it is reasonable or after the person has been searched and is safely confined within a detention facility.

In situations where nylon or plastic handcuffs are used to restrain a persons' hands, officers shall evaluate the need to reposition or reapply the handcuffs in order to avoid injury to the person.

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Temporary nylon or plastic cuffs shall be removed using Department-approved removal snips. Officers shall not use knives, scissors or other edged instruments to remove the cuffs.

302.5 APPLICATION OF SPIT HOODS

Spit hoods/masks/socks are temporary protective devices designed to prevent the wearer from biting and/or transferring or transmitting fluids (saliva and mucous) to others.

Spit hoods may be placed upon persons in custody when the officer reasonably believes the person will bite or spit on a person. They are generally used during application of a physical restraint, while the person is restrained, or during or after transport.

Officers utilizing spit hoods should ensure that the spit hood is fastened properly to allow for adequate ventilation and so that the restrained person can breathe normally. Officers should provide assistance during the movement of restrained person due to the potential for impairing or distorting that person's vision. Officers should avoid comingling those wearing spit hoods with other detainees.

Spit hoods shall not be used in situations where the restrained person is bleeding profusely from the area around the mouth or nose, or if there are indications that the person has a medical condition, such as difficulty breathing or vomiting. In such cases, prompt medical care shall be obtained. If the person vomits while wearing a spit hood, the spit hood shall be promptly removed and discarded. Persons who have been sprayed with oleoresin capicum (OC) spray should be thoroughly decontaminated including hair, head and clothing prior to application of a spit hood.

Those who have been placed in a spit hood shall be continually monitored and shall not be left unattended until the spit hood is removed. Spit hoods shall be discarded after each use.

302.6 APPLICATION OF AUXILIARY RESTRAINT DEVICES

Auxiliary restraint devices include transport belts, waist or belly chains, transportation chains, leg irons and other similar devices. Auxiliary restraint devices are intended for use during long-term restraint or transportation. They provide additional security and safety without impeding breathing, while permitting adequate movement, comfort and mobility.

Officers may only use Department-authorized devices. Any person in auxiliary restraints should be monitored as reasonably appears necessary.

302.7 APPLICATION OF SOFT RESTRAINTS FROM GURNEY

Suspects transported by ambulance should be restrained using the soft restraints from the gurney and any additional Department-issued or authorized restraints deemed necessary by the officer to keep the suspect controlled during transportation. Suspects transported by ambulance shall be accompanied by an officer

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302.8 APPLICATION OF RESTRAINT DEVICES

When an officer deems it reasonable to restrain the leg and/or torso of a violent or potentially violent person during the course of detention, arrest and/or transportation, only restraint devices approved by the Department shall be used, and only in the departmentally approved manner for such temporary immobilization of the legs and/or torso.

The RIPP Hobble (manufactured by RIPP Restraints, Inc., Orange City, Florida) and the WRAP (manufactured by Safe Restraints, Inc., Walnut Creek, CA) are restraints authorized by this Department for temporary immobilization of the legs and/or torso. Officers shall only use the RIPP Hobble and the WRAP supplied by the Department.

In determining whether to use the restraint, officers should consider:

- (a) Whether the officer or others could be exposed to injury due to the assaultive or resistant behavior of a persons.
- (b) Whether it is reasonably necessary to protect the person from his/her own actions (e.g., hitting his/her head against the interior of the patrol vehicle, running away from the arresting officer while handcuffed, kicking at objects or officers).
- (c) Whether it is reasonably necessary to avoid damage to property (e.g., kicking at windows of the patrol vehicle).
- (d) The restraint shall be used only after a person has been handcuffed.

302.8.1 GUIDELINES FOR USE OF RESTRAINTS

When applying the RIPP Hobble or Wrap restraint devices, the following guidelines should be followed:

- (a) If practicable, officers should notify a supervisor of the intent to apply the restraint device. In all cases, a supervisor shall be notified as soon as practicable after the application of the restraint device.
- (b) Once the person's legs have been bound, an officer should maintain a grip of the long end of the hobble restraint strap (with safety clip) until the subject/suspect is placed in a transportation vehicle. Officer(s) shall not connect the safety clip of the hobble restraint to the hands/handcuffs. The connection of the hobble restraint from the person's feet to his/her hands (or handcuffs) is strictly prohibited.
- (c) Once applied, absent a medical or other emergency, restraints should remain in place until the officer arrives at the jail or other facility or the person no longer reasonably appears to pose a threat.
- (d) Once secured, the person shall be placed in a seated or upright position and shall not be placed on his/her stomach for an extended period, as this could reduce the person's ability to breathe.
- (e) The restrained person should be continually monitored by a sworn officer while in the restraint. The person should never be left unattended. The officer should ensure that the person does not roll onto and remain on his/her stomach.

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- (f) The officer should look for signs of labored breathing and take appropriate steps to relieve and minimize any obvious factors contributing to this condition.
- (g) When the WRAP is applied, officers should check the ankle straps, leg straps, and harness for tightness and make adjustments as necessary until the WRAP has been removed by officers, jailers, or medical personnel.

302.8.2 TRANSPORTING RESTRAINED PERSONS

When transporting a person who has been restrained, officers shall observe the following procedures:

- (a) Restrained suspects may be transported in a patrol unit. They should be seated in an upright position and secured by a seat belt. The long lead of the restraint should be placed outside the rear door and wrapped around the door pillar bringing it up through the passenger front door to prevent the lead from dragging on the ground. When the person cannot be transported in a seated position, he/she should be taken by ambulance/paramedic unit.
- (b) When taken by ambulance/paramedic unit, the restrained person shall be accompanied by an officer. The transporting officer should describe to medical personnel any unusual behaviors or other circumstances the officer reasonably believes would be potential safety or medical risks to the subject (e.g. prolonged struggle, extreme agitation, impaired respiration).
- (c) The transporting officer should also inform medical personnel that positional asphyxia is a concern and that the person should remain in an upright position where practicable. If medical personnel determine that it is in the best interest of the restrained person to be transported while lying down, the person should be kept on his/her side or back with appropriate adjustments to the restraints so that the person's arms are not pinned beneath them.
- (d) Officers shall inform the jail staff that a restraint device was used on the arrestee prior to arrival at the jail.

302.8.3 CARE AND MAINTENANCE

The restraints should be inspected after each use for signs of wear and/or fatigue. The restraints should be free from tears, fraying, worn or damaged fasteners, or damaged stitching. If cleaning is necessary after use, use a mild soapy solution or disinfectant for use on vinyl and nylon materials. Following cleaning, the restraints should be allowed to thoroughly air dry.

302.9 MEDICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to booking or release, medical assistance shall be obtained for any person who has sustained visible injury, expressed a complaint of an injury or continuing pain, or who has been rendered unconscious. Based upon the officer's initial assessment of the nature and extent of the subject's injuries, medical assistance may consist of examination by paramedics, hospital staff, or contracted medical staff on-site at SMPD Jail.

Persons who exhibit extreme agitation, violent irrational behavior accompanied by profuse sweating, extraordinary strength beyond physical characteristics and imperiousness to

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pain (sometimes called "extreme delirium"), or who require protracted physical encounter with multiple officers to be brought under control, may be at an increased risk of sudden death and shall be examined by qualified medical personnel as soon as practicable. Any individual exhibiting signs of distress after such an encounter shall be medically cleared prior to booking.

If any individual refused medical attention, such a refusal shall be documented in related reports and a supervisor should be notified. Whenever practical, the refusal should be witnessed by another officer and/or medical personnel. If an audio recording is made of the contact or an interview with the individual, any refusal should be included in the report.

302.10 REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

If a person is restrained and released without an arrest, the officer shall document the details of the detention and the need for handcuffs or other restraints.. At minimum, the officer shall complete a Field Identification Card or enter "Disposition Comments," via the MDC to document the incident.

Officers shall document the following information in reports, as appropriate, when restraints other than handcuffs are used on a person:

- (a) The factors that led to the decision to use restraints
- (b) Supervisor notification
- (c) The type of restraint used
- (d) The amount of time the person was restrained.
- (e) How the suspect was transported and the position of the person during transport.
- (f) Observations of the suspect's behavior and any signs of physiological problems.
- (g) Any known or suspected drug use or other medical problems.

302.11 TRAINING

Subject to available resources, the Training Sergeant shall ensure that officers receive periodic training on the proper use of handcuffs and other restraints, including:

- (a) Proper placement and fit of handcuffs and other restraint devices approved for use by the Department.
- (b) Response to complaints of pain by restrained persons.
- (c) Options for restraining those who may be pregnant without the use of leg irons, waist chains, or handcuffs behind the body.
- (d) Options for restraining amputees or those with medical conditions or other physical conditions that may be aggravated by being restrained.