



Seattle Police Department Policy Manual



6.280 – Warrant Arrests and Pre-Planned Arrest Operations

Effective Date: 12/15/2020

6.280-POL

This policy applies to warrant arrests and pre-planned arrest operations.

1. Only Sworn Police Officers Will Serve Arrest Warrants

2. Defining the Types of Warrant Arrests and Pre-Planned Arrest Operations

Administrative Arrest Warrant – A warrant that is served in a police-controlled environment, (e.g., a police precinct) or is otherwise low-risk.

Dynamic Arrest Warrant – A warrant that is served where officers expect forced entry and it is unknown if persons present are armed. Though higher risk than an administrative warrant, it does not rise to the level of a high-risk warrant.

High-Risk Arrest Warrant – A warrant that is served where there are known armed persons at the location, or the location is barricaded.

High-Risk Operation – A police operation in which the circumstances indicate the potential for violence directed towards officers and/or involved persons is higher than normal.

High-Risk Police Tactics – Police tactics, which by nature, have a higher potential of injury than conventional police tactics.

3. Sergeants or Above Must Approve Arrest Warrants and Pre-Planned Arrest Operations

A sergeant or above approves administrative arrest warrant service.

A lieutenant or above approves dynamic and high-risk arrest warrant service and high-risk operations. If any high-risk factors are present, the lieutenant will consult with SWAT.

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SWAT will be consulted for all pre-planned arrests outside the City of Seattle. If SWAT is unable to conduct the arrest, and it is not high-risk, then a captain or above may approve the arrest to be served outside the city.

4. Dynamic and High-Risk Warrants and Arrests Require the SWAT Risk Assessment

When evaluating a dynamic or high-risk warrant, the sergeant or above will complete the [SWAT Risk Assessment \(form 12.2\)](#).

5. SPD SWAT is the Designated Unit to Serve High-Risk Warrants and Conduct High-Risk Arrests

This policy does not prohibit officers from arresting violent offenders during in-progress events or on-view incidents.

6. Officers Will Verify Warrants Prior to Booking

Upon determining that a subject has an unverified warrant, officers are permitted to handcuff the subject. After verifying a warrant, the officer will transport the subject to a police facility or directly to the King County Jail (KCJ).

See 6.280-TSK-1 Officer Verifying SMC Misdemeanor Warrant Via Computer.

In the event the electronic verification system is not functioning, officers may call SPD Data Center to verify Seattle Municipal Court (SMC) warrants.

Officers may verify felony warrants via Communications or by telephoning the Data Center.

7. Officers Must Advise Arrestee of the Warrant and Bail

After placing the person under arrest, officers will advise the arrestee that:

- The arrest falls under the authority of a warrant,
- The nature of the warrant,
- The amount of bail, if any.

If at any point prior to being booked into KCJ the arrestee indicates they have the ability to post bail on a bailable warrant or charge, officers will give the arrestee an opportunity to do so.

See 6.280-TSK-2 – Officer Allowing Arrestee to Post Bail.

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8. KCJ Receives a Copy of Verified Warrants

Upon arrival at KCJ, officers will confirm that the jail has received a copy of the warrant from the issuing agency.

If the warrant has not yet arrived at the jail, officers will ask Communications to contact the agency to request that they send a copy of the warrant.

Occasionally, an agency will request that the warrant be located in WACIC before they will send the warrant to the jail. Officers may resolve this by contacting the Data Center.

9. Sergeants Approve Direct Transfers of Arrestees to and from Other Agencies

A patrol sergeant makes the final decision on requests for SPD to directly transfer an arrestee to or from an outside agency.

Whenever possible, sergeants will honor requests to transfer a prisoner with an SMC warrant to Seattle Police custody.

Sergeants may decline transfers if assigning personnel would adversely impact patrol response times or officer safety.

See 6.280-PRO-1 Arranging Arrestee Transfer with an Outside Agency.

If the transferring agency takes the arrestee directly to a Seattle Police precinct, an officer will process the transfer at the precinct.

10. Officers Will Not Accept Evidence from the Outside Agency Arresting Officer

11. Officers Will Not Accept Injured or Combative Arrestees from Other Agencies

For safety, officers will take any arrestee that becomes combative directly to KCJ.

12. Officers Will Not Delay Medical Treatment for an Arrestee to Accommodate a Transfer

13. Officers Will Screen Arrestee's Pre-Existing Health Conditions

If the officer responding to a transfer discovers that the arrestee is injured, ill, or has a medical condition, the officer will contact a sergeant before accepting the transfer.

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Before agreeing to the transfer, officers will contact the KCJ Nurse for arrestees who have a questionable preexisting health condition (including pregnancy).

Under [RCW 70.24](#), information regarding sexually transmitted disease, including HIV/AIDS, may not be discussed with another person without the permission of the person with the infection.

Other contagious diseases may be discussed with those persons who have a need to know. Officers will consider patient confidentiality.

14. Warrant Arrests Require Specific Documentation

In addition to all other arrest procedure requirements, warrant arrests have specific documentation requirements.

For arrests on outside agency warrants, officers will complete an arrest report with a new SPD case number.

Out of state fugitive warrant arrests require their own case number separate from any related incident.

See 6.280-PRO-2 Documenting Out-of-State Fugitive Warrant Arrests.

For arrests solely on SPD warrants, officers will use the original case number from the warrant and complete a linked arrest report. The officers will not draw a new case number.

Arrests on SPD warrants with new charges require a new report listing both the new charges and the warrants. Officers will link this report to the warrant's original report and reference it in the narrative of the new report.

On all warrant arrests, officers will include "Warrant-Misdemeanor" or "Warrant-Felony" in the offense section of the report or supplement. Officers will also list all verified warrants on the arrestee's eSuperform.

6.280-PRO-1 Arranging Arrestee Transfer with an Outside Agency

Communications Section

1. **Obtains** arrestee's full name and date of birth, location and time of the requested transfer, and phone number of the agency or dispatch center requesting transfer.
2. **Runs** the arrestee's name and determines if the warrant is valid.

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3. **Advises** the nearest patrol sector sergeant of the transfer request.

Patrol Sergeant

4. May **contact** the requesting agency by phone.
- 5a. If the transfer is acceptable, **advises** Communications to dispatch an appropriate number of officers for the transfer.
- or
- 5b. If the transfer is denied, **notifies** the watch lieutenant and Communications of the denial.

Communications

6. **Dispatches** officers for the transfer.

Officer

7. **Responds** to the transfer location.
8. **Checks** for and asks the arrestee about any injuries, illness, or other medical conditions, such as pregnancy.
 - If the arrestee is injured, ill, or has a medical condition **contacts** a sergeant.
9. **Obtains** information about the circumstances of the arrest, including the transferring officer's name, and the agency's case number, if any.
10. **Transports** the arrestee to screen the arrest with a sergeant then to the precinct or KCJ.
11. **Completes** the appropriate paperwork.

6.280-PRO-2 Documenting Out-of-State Fugitive Warrant Arrests

Officer

1. **Completes** an arrest report for the warrant arrest.
2. **Completes** a second report under a separate number for any related incident/offense/arrest.

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3. **Uses** the narrative of all associated incidents to reference the other related case numbers.
4. **Completes** an eSuperform for the warrant arrest under the new charge of "INV Fugitive" with the statement of probable cause to include:
 - The jurisdiction issuing the warrant,
 - Date the warrant was issued,
 - Warrant number,
 - Name of the person verifying the warrant,
 - Charges, and bond information (if known).
5. **Completes** a second eSuperform if booking the arrestee for any additional charges.
6. **Completes** an officer statement.
7. **Submits** the report(s) to a sergeant for approval and notifies the sergeant directly.
8. **Scans** and **Sends** any paper documents in an Alert Email to the Fugitive Warrant Squad.

Sergeant

9. **Reviews** the report(s).
10. **Applies** a label for the Fugitive Warrants Squad.
11. **Sends** an Alert email to the Fugitive Warrants Squad. The email will contain the report number(s).

Warrant Verifier

12. **Forwards** the NCIC hit to the Fugitive Warrants Squad and the Data Center.

6.280-TSK-1 Officer Verifying an SMC Misdemeanor Warrant Via Computer

In order to verify an outstanding SMC Misdemeanor arrest warrant using an in-car or precinct computer, the **officer**:

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1. **Records** the warrant number listed on the warrant hit.
- 2a. **Clicks** the "SMC Orders & Warrants Verification" link on the SPD Wireless Links page.
- or
- 2b. **Accesses** the SPD In-Web home page and
 - **Clicks** on the "Warrant Verification" link located in the left margin, under the "Crime Information" category.
 - **Clicks** on the link "Verify a Misdemeanor Warrant".
3. **Enters** the warrant number in the box provided and clicks "search".
4. **Reviews** the SMC Database information for the requested warrant number and also any other warrants that match the suspect's name and description.
5. **Confirms** the suspect matches the details on the warrant.
6. **Verifies** that the charge box lists an actual criminal charge for which a suspect can be arrested.
7. **Verifies** that the bail amount is greater than \$0. (Warrants with a \$0 bail amount indicate problem warrants which will not be verified.)
8. **Clicks** on the "View all Warrants" link to review the warrant(s).
- 9a. **Clicks** on the "Yes, print all warrants to King County Jail" button to verify a warrant and book the person into jail.
- or
- 9b. **Clicks** "No, return to Warrant Search results" button.

6.280-TSK-2 Officer Allowing Arrestee to Post Bail

To give an arrestee the opportunity to post bail, the **officer**:

For SMC warrants:

- 1a. Between the hours of 0800-1700, **takes** persons arrested on SMC misdemeanor warrants to the Seattle Municipal Court first floor payment window.
- or

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- 1b. Between 1700-2230, **takes** persons arrested on SMC misdemeanor warrants to the bail window inside the King County Jail main entrance. (These arrestees do not go to the pre-book or booking areas.)

For other agency warrants:

- 1c. Between 0630-2230 **takes** persons arrested on other agency warrants to the bail window inside the main entrance of the King County Jail.

King County will accept bail on all warrants except Enumclaw, Black Diamond, and Kent. When arresting a suspect from one of these three agencies, the officer **arranges** a transfer to the agency.

Note: KCJ's bail window is not open for business between 2230-0630; officers' options during these hours are to either book or release the arrestee.