



<b>TRANSPORTING PRISONERS</b>		
<b>new:</b> ✓ rescinds: 64.1 ✓ amends: all previous		<b>cross-reference:</b>
		<b>accreditation standards:</b> NYSLEAP Standard(s): 64.1
<b>effective date:</b> February, 2012	<b>updated date:</b> December 2024	

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the responsibilities of office personnel who provide a safe and secure transportation environment for sworn personnel and for in-custody individuals or individuals who are being transported to a detention facility, and to ensure that the community is safe while supervising individuals who are remanded to the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office custody.

**II. POLICY**

It is the policy of the office to transport incarcerated persons (prisoners) with the highest regard for the safety of the public, the transporting officer, and the incarcerated person. The transporting officer is legally responsible for the safety and custody of the incarcerated person being transported.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

*Contraband:* Articles or substances prohibited from the prisoner's possession.

*Prisoner:* For the purpose of this general order, a person who has been remanded to the custody of the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office.

*Prisoner Transport Van:* A specifically designed van with secured, compartmentalized seating for multiple prisoners.

*Restraint Equipment:* Office or medically approved equipment that is used to restrain the movement of the prisoner to include but is not limited to handcuffs, waist chain, restraint belt, and leg irons.

#### IV. GENERAL TRANSPORT PROCEDURES

- A. Corrections Division staff will prepare incarcerated individuals for transport and re-housing as outlined in Corrections Division general orders.
- B. Constant supervision of prisoners shall be provided by officers when such prisoners are being transported to or from any local correctional facility by officers.
- C. Officers assigned to transport prisoners shall be responsible for the safety and security of each prisoner until the trip is complete or a signed *Inmate/Prisoner Body Receipt is received*.
- D. Incarcerated individuals will be transported in a vehicle equipped with a safety partition between the front and rear passenger compartments.
- E. Officers responsible for the transportation of a prisoner to or from a local correctional facility shall, prior to beginning such transportation, obtain:
  - a. all necessary documents or other authorizations; and
  - b. any other necessary information relative to such transportation

#### F. Vehicle Inspections

- 1. At the beginning and end of each tour of duty, all assigned vehicles that are/were to be used for a prisoner transport will be inspected for operational readiness by the officer to whom the vehicle is assigned. The inspection will ensure the following at a minimum:
  - a. The safety screen will be securely in place and undamaged.
  - b. All windows will be intact and outer door latches in proper working order.
  - c. Rear seat door handles and window controls will be deactivated, and any rear door child locks will be activated.
  - d. The interior will be thoroughly searched to verify that no weapons or contraband have been left or hidden within the vehicle.
  - e. Any vehicle defect that compromises a vehicle's readiness for prisoner transport will be reported.
- 2. Prior to placing a prisoner in the vehicle for transport, the transporting officer will again inspect the interior for weapons or contraband. The vehicle will be searched again after the prisoner has been transported to the destination.
- 3. This procedure will be followed each and every time a prisoner is placed into or removed from a transport vehicle. This will ensure that any weapons or contraband that might be discovered within the vehicle can be linked to a specific prisoner.

## G. Restraining of Prisoners

1. The transportation of a prisoner shall be accomplished using that degree of restraint equipment deemed necessary by the officer(s) to safely complete the task. This shall include but is not limited to handcuffs, waist chain, restraint belt, and leg irons.
2. The officer may utilize other appropriate restraining devices if the prisoner:
  - a. Is handicapped.
  - b. Has injuries that could be aggravated by standard handcuffing procedures.
3. Inmates that are known to be pregnant or known to be less than eight weeks post partum and are in the custody of the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office are to be transported without restraints as per Correction Law 611. See *Corrections Division G.O. 10-06-01-Restraints For Pregnant Inmates Or Inmates In Labor* for further procedures. *Updated 12/2024*
4. Additional restraining devices may be used to secure a prisoner who is a security hazard or who may pose a threat to himself or herself, the officer, or the public.

## H. Transporting of Prisoners

1. Confirm with Corrections Division staff that the prisoner(s) has been properly searched.
2. When loading more than one individual, the second officer shall provide security for those individuals waiting to be loaded. The transporting officer(s) shall use reasonable care when assisting a prisoner into or out of a transport vehicle.
3. Each inmate shall be fastened with a seat belt or vehicle safety harness. Prisoners will not be handcuffed to any part of the vehicle during transport.
4. Prisoners will be transported in the following manner:
  - a. When transporting one incarcerated person, they shall be seated in the right rear passenger seat, so as to be more easily monitored by the vehicle operator.
  - b. If more than one incarcerated person is in a patrol car then the second officer shall be seated in the front seat and shall maintain constant surveillance of the incarcerated individuals.
  - c. Prisoners will be transported in patrol vehicles on a one-to-one ratio with officers.
  - d. Male incarcerated individuals will be physically separated from female incarcerated individuals at all times by a physical barrier.
5. When transporting prisoners in a prison transport van the following shall also apply:
  - a. Multiple prisoners may be transported. The one-to-one ratio does not apply.

- b. Male incarcerated individuals will be physically separated from female incarcerated individuals at all times by a physical barrier.
  - c. When loading prisoners onto the prisoner transport van, they will be placed into the secured compartments from back to front.
  - d. When unloading prisoners from a prisoner transport van, the compartments will be opened and emptied from the front to the rear of the prisoner transport van.
  - e. Transport officers will be seated in the drivers' area. One officer will maintain visual surveillance on the prisoners for the duration of the trip.
6. Any wheelchairs, crutches, medication, or other personal property should be transported with, but not in the immediate possession or within reach of, the prisoner.
7. Under no circumstances will juveniles, regardless of status, be transported in the same vehicle as adult prisoners.
8. Prisoners will be advised not to speak to one another.
9. While engaged in the transportation process, a situation requiring police intervention or service may occur, e.g. motor vehicle accident or crime in progress. In most cases these situations will be legitimate; however, the possibility of a ruse to aid an escape always exists. In all cases, the risk to the prisoner and the possibility of escape must be weighed against the need to stop and render aid. Only when the risk to third parties is both clear and grave and the risk to the prisoner is minimal should the officer stop to render assistance
  - a. Unless approved by a supervisor, no stops other than those that are exigent in nature will be made while transporting prisoners.
  - b. Only under exigent circumstances should transporting personnel intervene in matters unrelated to the transport. When considering responding to a need for law enforcement services while transporting a prisoner, an assessment should first be made of the threat or emergency and the unavailability of other resources.
  - c. Officers stopping to render emergency assistance will immediately notify dispatch and request an additional unit to handle the call and clear as soon as possible to continue the transport.
  - d. Officers shall not engage in a vehicular pursuit when transporting a prisoner.
10. There will be no communication or contact between the inmate(s) and the public permitted during transport. It is permitted only between approved medical personnel and/or other professional personnel.

11. Any transport of more than one prisoner or a transport in excess of sixty (60) road miles will be done with two officers. *Updated 03/2023*
12. Transport of a female prisoner to another County Jail or for a Court Appearance does not require a female officer.
13. Transport of a female prisoner to a medical/physician appointment or for the purpose of a Trial will be done with at least one female officer or two male officers.
14. At least one officer accompanying a prisoner on a funeral or deathbed visit shall be the same sex as the prisoner. See *Corrections Division G.O. 8-23-01 Funeral and Deathbed Visits* for further procedures.
15. An incident number shall be generated for every transport. The following information should be included:
  - a. The destination; and
  - b. The number of incarcerated persons being transported and their gender; and
  - c. Any unusual incidents that occurred or other pertinent information.

#### I. Communication and Documentation of Transports

1. For transports of sixty (60) miles or more, the transport officer(s) will be equipped with a cell phone. *Updated 03/2023*
2. When officers are transporting a prisoner in a patrol vehicle, they shall remove their OBRD from their body-worn mount and secure the OBRD into the mount located in the vehicle. This shall be done after securing the incarcerated person (restraints and seat belted) in the backseat of the vehicle. When officers are transporting prisoners in the prisoner transport van, they shall keep their OBRD secure to their body-worn mount, as there is no vehicle mount. This is intended to capture audio and video recordings of the prisoner while in the backseat, during transportation. The audio function may be turned off if the transport is being conducted by more than one officer.
3. Upon arriving to the destination and before removing the individual from the vehicle, officers shall remove the OBRD from the vehicle mount and secure it back onto their body-worn mount. If the OBRD was muted during travel, unmute the OBRD upon arrival to the destination. Office personnel may cease recording upon entering their destination and securing the incarcerated person.
4. Prior to departure, the officer shall contact TCCC by radio and provide the following information:
  - a. Identify themselves;
  - b. The assisting officer (by badge number);
  - c. The vehicle number;
  - d. Starting mileage of the vehicle,

- e. The destination; and
  - f. The number of incarcerated persons being transported and their gender.
5. Upon arrival to destination, the officer will again contact dispatch by radio and identify themselves, state location, and state ending mileage.
  6. While at court or transport destination, the transport officer will obtain all securing or commitment orders from the court or all paperwork from the proper persons.
  7. If a court proceeding results in the incarcerated person(s) being released from the custody of the Sheriff, they will be transported back to the PSB to be processed out by the Corrections Division.
  8. If the custody of a prisoner needs to temporarily be turned over to another law enforcement agency, the transport officer shall complete an *Inmate/Prisoner Body Receipt*. The receiving agency will be advised that they are responsible to transport the prisoner back to the jail. The transport officer will provide the body receipt to the Corrections Division upon return to the PSB.
  9. If the custody of a prisoner is arranged to be turned over to a medical, mental health or rehabilitation facility, the transport officer shall complete an *Inmate/Prisoner Body Receipt*. The transport officer will provide the body receipt to the Corrections Division upon return to the PSB.
  10. Upon preparing to return to the PSB or other destination the officer will again contact dispatch by radio and provide the following information:
    - a. Identify themselves;
    - b. The assisting officer (by badge number);
    - c. The vehicle number;
    - d. Starting mileage of the vehicle,
    - e. the destination; and
    - f. the number of incarcerated persons being transported and their gender.
  11. Upon arrival at the PSB, the officer will contact dispatch by radio and state the ending mileage.
  12. The transport officer(s) will deliver or cause to be delivered to the Sergeant and on-duty Jail Sergeant all paperwork generated from the transport upon their return. ***If an incarcerated person is returning from a medical or mental health facility the transporting officer will personally deliver all paperwork to the on-duty Jail Sergeant.***

J. Transporting Injured or Sick Incarcerated Individuals

1. When an incarcerated individual being transported complains of being injured or sick, the following steps will be adhered to:

- a. The Dispatch Center (TCCC) will be notified and provided pertinent information regarding the injury and/or illness.
- b. The transporting officer shall notify the Sergeant as to what action needs to be taken for the care of the incarcerated person. The Sergeant in consultation with jail staff (including medical staff when on duty) will advise as the appropriate course of action. The incarcerated person may be transported back to the PSB for treatment by jail medical staff or transported to an authorized medical facility.
- c. The Sergeant shall ensure chain of command notifications are made concerning the incident.

K. Transport to Other Facilities

1. The transporting officer(s) should be aware of and follow the procedures at the different state institutions, forensic hospitals and mental health units, county jails, Judges' offices or Courtrooms. The following procedures will apply to all facilities to which a prisoner is transported.
2. The transporting officer(s) will at no time enter a secure area or receiving area of a prison or other area of a facility which prohibit weapons, as permitted by law, with their firearm or other restricted weapon(s). The transporting officer(s) shall follow the direction of the court facility and/or Judge when a prisoner has been transported to court.
3. Restraints will only be removed from the prisoner upon the instructions of the receiving officer at an institution or facility. In the case of court transports, the restraints shall not be removed until advised to do so by the court officer or ordered to do so by the Judge.
4. The transporting officer(s) will be responsible to make sure all the necessary documentation is properly exchanged with regard to the transfer of the prisoner and delivered to the receiving officer.
5. The transporting officer(s) shall document in CAD that the prisoner has been transferred to the custody of an officer at the receiving facility.
6. The transporting officer will ensure that all necessary documentations is turned-over to the receiving facility and notify the receiving agency when a prisoner being transported has any potential medical or security hazards, or if the prisoner is considered an unusual security risk.

L. Transport to a Medical Care Facility:

1. When a prisoner is transported to a local hospital for any reason, the following will apply:
  - a. Dispatch shall notify the medical facility that the officer and prisoner are on their way and the nature of the injury. Extreme caution will be taken to ensure the prisoner is isolated from other patients and is not left unattended, or permitted to escape the immediate control of the transporting officer. If the officer must leave the prisoner for

evidentiary purposes or other reasons, another officer shall be requested to remain with the prisoner.

- b. Should the prisoner need to be admitted, the transporting officer will notify his/her supervisor of the circumstances.
  - c. The transporting officer will not leave the medical facility until he/she is relieved by another officer or is instructed by the supervisor to do otherwise.
  - d. The transporting officer will remove the restraints only when it is deemed necessary and he/she is requested to do so by the medical staff. The medical staff may be advised of the charge, if the offense charged is of a violent nature.
  - e. Upon admission of a prisoner into the hospital, long term guarding of a prisoner shall be determined by command staff. See *Corrections Division G.O. -9-03-01 Hospitalized Inmates* for further procedures.
  - f. When deemed necessary that a prisoner must be guarded at a hospital, the totality of the circumstances will dictate the degree of security and action taken. A shift supervisor will develop a course of action dealing with use of restraints, visitors, relief officers, etc. along with the policies of the treatment facility.
  - g. If the prisoner is released and is to be transported to a holding facility, the transporting officer(s) shall take a copy of the medical release and provide it to the Corrections Division.
2. When a prisoner is transported to a medical appointment for any reason, the following will apply:
- a. Take the prisoner to registration and check in. Once that is complete, see if there is a private area in which to wait to see the doctor. If the officer must sit in the public waiting area, they should pick a secluded spot away from other people. Officers must remain alert at all times, watching to make sure the inmate doesn't grab something they are not allowed to have.
  - b. Once escorted to an examination room, the officer and inmate will wait for the doctor. Officers must stay with the inmate at all times and never leave them alone. Stay in the room the entire time the doctor and nurses are there. If for some reason the doctor needs privacy, officers can leave the room but must remain right outside the door. Once the doctor is finished, the officer should go back in the room. If the doctor needs one of the restraints removed for some type of procedure, officers can comply, but they should make it clear that they must stay in the room from that point on. When the doctor has completed their task, re-apply the shackles
  - c. Be aware that even with a jail facility's best efforts, friends and family members might still show up during the appointment. They are not allowed to make contact with the prisoner for any reason and are not allowed in the room.



- d. Information about future appointments should not be shared with the prisoner.

#### M. Sergeant Responsibilities

1. The Sergeant assigned to managing office transports shall coordinate with the Corrections Division to:
  - a. Obtain all necessary Securing Records and Documents, and other pertinent information.
  - b. Coordinate with Medical Staff regarding any special medical needs for transport.
  - c. Provide the transport officer(s) with:
    - All appropriate paperwork relating to the transport.
    - Special plans or precautions which may be deemed essential to provide the degree of custody required.
    - Known or observed emotional, physical, behavioral, medical or mental peculiarities of the incarcerated person to be transported.
  - d. Assign a vehicle for transport as appropriate.
  - e. Notify the Lieutenant of any unscheduled or emergency transports as soon as practical.
2. The Sergeant has the discretion to determine the number of transporting officer's needed. Consideration of the following should be considered:
  - a. Incarcerated person's sex/gender;
  - b. Incarcerated person's behavior;
  - c. Transport distance;
  - d. Time at destination;
  - e. Transport type; and
  - f. Past history of false accusations and/or violence.

#### V. **ESCAPE OF AN INCARCERTAED INDIVIDUAL**

- A. If an incarcerated person escapes the custody of a transporting officer(s) inside the jurisdiction of Tompkins County, the following will be done immediately:
  - a. The Dispatch Center (TCCC) will be notified and provided pertinent information to include:
    - Location;
    - Direction of travel;
    - Pedigree information;
    - Charges for which the individual was being held if known at the time; and
    - Potential destinations/associated persons of the escapee.

- B. The on-duty Sergeant will be notified and they will ensure the chain of command notifications are made.
- C. The on-duty Sergeant will be tasked with coordinating the immediate law enforcement response until relieved by a higher authority.
- D. If the incarcerated person escapes the custody of a transporting officer(s) outside the jurisdiction of Tompkins County, the following will be done immediately:
  - 1. Notify the local authorities, furnishing the information in 1-a above.
  - 2. Request that local authority's contact the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office as soon as possible, or if available, use a cellular phone to notify the on-duty Sergeant.
  - 3. Stay with the transport vehicle and await the arrival of local authorities; and
  - 4. Await further instructions from the authority in charge of the incident at the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office.
- E. If the officers are transporting more than one prisoner, the officer will not give chase to the one who is attempting to escape. The officers should secure the area, any incarcerated persons remaining and wait for additional instructions.
- F. The transporting officer(s) must complete all required paperwork and reports before being released from duty.
- G. A complete administrative review and investigation will be conducted of the incident to determine the cause and identify:
  - 1. Deficiencies in Policy and Procedure and corrective action needed;
  - 2. Deficiencies in training and corrective action needed;
  - 3. Need of remedial or additional officer training; and
  - 4. Officer(s) failure to follow / adhere to policies and procedures as written.

Attachments:

- A. *Inmate/Prisoner Body Receipt*
- B. *Corrections Division G.O. 8-23-01 Funeral and Deathbed Visits*
- C. *Corrections Division G.O. 9-03-01 Hospitalized Inmates*
- D. *Corrections Division G.O. 10-06-01-Restraints For Pregnant Inmates Or Inmates In Labor*

By Order Of



Derek Osborne  
Sheriff