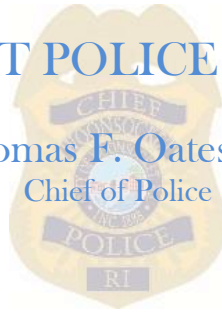


# WOONSOCKET POLICE DEPARTMENT

Thomas F. Oates, III  
Chief of Police



TYPE OF ORDER	NUMBER/SERIES	ISSUE DATE	EFFECTIVE DATE
General Order	370.02	10/12/2021	10/12/2021
SUBJECT		PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DATES	
Prisoner Transportation		4/26/2021, 10/31/2016, 7/22/2014	
ACCREDITATION		RE-EVALUATION DATE	
CALEA Standards: 70.1.1, 70.1.2, 70.1.3, 70.1.4, 70.1.5, 70.1.6, 70.1.7, 70.1.8, 70.2.1, 70.3.1, 70.3.2, 70.3.3, 70.4.1, 70.4.2, 70.5.1  RIPAC Standards: 12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 12.4, 12.5, 12.6, 12.7		10/12/2021, 4/20/2021, 11/16/2023	
INDEX		DISTRIBUTION	
Prisoner Handling		Sworn Personnel	

## PRISONER TRANSPORTATION

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the transportation of prisoners and the delivery of prisoners to and from police headquarters. The proper handling and transporting of prisoners are essential to ensure the safety of both the officer(s) and the prisoner(s) and to avoid injury, escape, or accusations of mistreatment.

### II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Woonsocket Police Department to take the precautions necessary while transporting prisoners to protect the lives and safety of the officers, the public, and the person in custody.

Safety is the most important concern when transporting prisoners. Officers must always keep in mind:

- The safety and well-being of themselves and others;
- The proper restraint of the prisoner to prevent escape or injuries; and
- The prisoner's safety and rights.

### III. PROCEDURE

RI 12.2

#### A. Vehicle Inspection

1. At the beginning of each tour of duty, officers will inspect their vehicles for readiness as follows:
  - a. The safety barrier will be securely in place and undamaged;
  - b. The rear seat door handles and window controls will be deactivated;
  - c. The interior will be thoroughly searched to ensure that no weapons or contraband have been left or hidden within the vehicle; and
  - d. Rear passenger door locks that cannot be unlocked from the rear passenger compartment.
2. Before placing a prisoner in the transport vehicle, the transporting officer will again inspect the rear of the vehicle for weapons and contraband. The vehicle will be searched again by the transporting officer after the prisoner has been delivered.

#### B. Searches

RI 12.1

1. Patrol vehicles shall be searched before and after transporting prisoners for contraband, weapons, fruit, or instrumentalities of a crime, or evidence.
2. All individuals in custody shall be searched for weapons and contraband before being placed into Woonsocket Police Department vehicles or otherwise transported.
3. In certain situations, it may be necessary for an officer to search a member of the opposite gender. Such a search shall be conducted professionally and be limited to the minimal invasion of privacy necessary. In other situations, it may be more prudent to request assistance from an officer of the same gender as the prisoner or conduct the search in the presence of others.
4. The transporting officer should search the prisoner regardless of searches that may or may not have been conducted by arresting officers.

RI 12.6

#### C. Prisoner Restraints

Unless extenuating circumstances dictate otherwise, all prisoners being transported shall be handcuffed, double-locked, with the hands behind the back. Officers should be prepared to articulate reasons for alternate methods of handcuffing prisoners.

1. When physically unable to handcuff a prisoner in a fore-referenced manner, alternate devices or methods shall be used.
2. Prisoners will be handcuffed before being transported. All handcuffing will be by General Order [310.03 Use of Handcuffs](#).

3. The officer may handcuff the prisoner with their hands in the front, or utilize other restraining devices when the prisoner:
  - a. Is in an obvious state of pregnancy;
  - b. Has an obvious handicap; or
  - c. Has injuries that could be aggravated by standard handcuffing procedures.
4. Prisoners will not be handcuffed to any part of the vehicle during transport.
5. Officers will not utilize the technique referred to as “Hog Tying.” Transportation of prisoners restrained in a prone position is prohibited.
6. Additional restraint devices, approved by the Officer-in-Charge (OIC), may be used to secure a prisoner who violently resists arrest, is a security hazard, or manifests mental disorders that may pose a threat to themselves, the officer, or the public.

#### **D. Transporting of Prisoners**

##### **RI 12.7**

Officers shall ensure that prisoners being transported are visually observable at all times. An officer (operating a conventional patrol car) shall not transport more than two (2) prisoners at a time unless authorized by a supervisor. The standard patrol car is equipped with a safety barrier separating the prisoner area from the driver and front passenger area. The patrol car is further equipped with safety locks preventing anyone seated in the prisoner transport area from opening windows or opening the door without assistance from the transporting officer. Whenever possible, prisoners will be transported with a patrol unit so equipped.

1. If the transport vehicle has a safety barrier, unless circumstances dictate otherwise, prisoner(s) should be placed in the rear compartment, using the right seat first.
2. For one officer, one prisoner type of transport with no safety barrier, the prisoner will be seated in the right front seat.
3. One transporting officer should not attempt to transport more than one prisoner in a vehicle without a security barrier but should request transport assistance.
4. For two officers and one prisoner type of transport with no safety barrier, the prisoner will be seated in the right front seat with the second officer seated behind them.
5. Two officers, two prisoners, no safety barrier one in the right front, one in the right rear seat, with the other officer seated behind the driver.
6. All prisoners will be secured in the vehicle by proper use of a seat belt unless, because of officer safety conditions, it cannot be accomplished safely.
7. Prisoners will not be transported in a prone position. If it is impossible to keep the subject in an upright or seated position, the person should be placed on their side and continually monitored.
8. When transporting prisoners in a Prisoner Transport Van, the following shall apply:

##### **RI 12.6**

- a. When loading prisoners onto the Prisoner Transport Van, they will be placed into the secured compartments from back to front;
  - b. The Prisoner Transport Van is not equipped with safety belts in the prisoner compartments. Therefore, prisoners will be instructed to utilize the “grab straps” for their safety during transport;
  - c. 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;
  - d. Prisoners of the opposite sex shall be placed in separate compartments; and
  - e. Juvenile prisoners will not be transported with adults in the Prisoner Transport Van.
9. Any wheelchairs, crutches, and medication should be transported with, but not in the possession of the prisoner. Prosthetic devices should be searched before transport but should remain with the prisoner.
  10. Prisoners will not be left unattended during transport.

#### **E. Prisoners of the Opposite Gender**

1. Without exception, officers transporting prisoners of the opposite gender shall transmit a radio message to the station, and shall have a CAD entry made of the:
  - a. Location;
  - b. The number and gender of their prisoner(s);
  - c. Preliminary charges against the prisoner(s);
  - d. Intended destination; and
  - e. Beginning mileage, and upon arrival, the ending mileage.
2. Request for backup assistance, if necessary.
3. Request that an officer meet them to assist with moving the prisoner into the station.
4. Officers will not transport a male prisoner and a female prisoner in the same patrol vehicle.
5. Juveniles will not be transported in the same patrol vehicle as an adult.

#### **F. Juveniles**

Juveniles shall not be transported:

1. With adult prisoners; and
2. Juveniles shall be processed the same as adults regarding searches and handcuffing.

## **G. Transportation Route**

1. Whenever possible, officers transporting prisoners shall take the quickest route from the scene of the arrest to the booking facility/police station.
2. Since the department does not normally transport prisoners for long distances, prisoners will not be left unattended during transport and no stops will be made without permission of the Officer-in-Charge (OIC).
3. Officers may interrupt a transport to stop and render emergency assistance when the risk to the third parties is clear and grave and the risk to the prisoner is minimal.
  - a. Officers should be aware that diversionary incidents might divert the officer's attention and increase the opportunity for escape.
  - b. Officers stopping to render emergency assistance will immediately request additional units to handle the call and clear as soon as possible to continue the transport.

## **H. Police Activity**

While transporting prisoners, officers are prohibited from engaging in any activity that would or could endanger the prisoner's safety.

Officers should only engage in police activities that pose a serious risk to others, and only if this activity can be accomplished without undue risk of injury to the prisoner.

## **I. Communication**

Conversation with prisoners shall be professional and kept to a minimum.

The transporting officer, for safety reasons, may limit conversations between prisoners. Officers should not allow prisoners to use communication equipment (cellular telephones, etc.) while in transport, nor stop to allow a prisoner to access communication equipment.

## **J. Use of Toilet Facilities during Transport**

Prisoners requiring the use of a toilet facility during extended transport shall be brought to the nearest police station along the travel route.

## **K. Special Situations**

Prisoners who need to be transported to an outside location for special circumstances will require the authorization of the OIC. Special security measures including additional officers will be provided on a case-by-case basis.

## **L. Medical Considerations**

If, in the officer's opinion, or when notified by the prisoner, an illness or injury exists, the officer shall have the prisoner transported to the nearest medical facility for an examination.

1. The transporting officer should notify the station and request medical transport.
2. Contact the medical facility to be notified of the particulars before arrival. If a prisoner is admitted to a medical facility, the department shall provide or assure proper security arrangements, if necessary, or arrange for the prisoner to be bailed.
3. If released by the medical facility, the prisoner should be transported to the police station, or court of jurisdiction as appropriate.

If transporting a physically or mentally handicapped prisoner, special care and attention may be necessary. It is up to the transporting officer's discretion as to the type of restraints to be used. The police supervisor may authorize the use of an ambulance for such transports.

The prisoner shall remain in the custody and presence of the officer during examination and treatment, unless emergency or medical circumstances prevent it, until the prisoner's release from the treatment facility or custody.

## **M. Transporting Sick/Injured/Disabled Prisoners**

1. With the safety of the officer and others in mind, officers should use discretion in handcuffing and transporting the sick, injured, and disabled.
2. When emergency care is required for a prisoner the rescue will be called to evaluate the prisoner.
3. When emergency medical care is required for a prisoner at least one (1) officer will ride in the rescue with the prisoner. Prisoners requiring non-emergency medical care may be transported in a patrol car to the facility under this policy.
4. The officer will remain with the prisoner unless prevented by emergency circumstances until the prisoner is released from custody or appropriate security can be arranged.

## **N. Security and control of prisoners in a medical facility**

Officers having custody of prisoners transported to a medical facility will adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Maintain a constant view of the prisoner;
2. Use restraints unless medical staff needs them removed for treatment;
3. Guard against injury to the officer and medical staff;

4. Search the prisoner before transport to and from the facility;
5. Ensure the prisoner does not have contact with visitors; and
6. If the prisoner is admitted, the officer should contact the OIC to arrange for continuous coverage.
  - a. Normally, one (1) officer is sufficient to guard prisoners while being treated at a medical facility. However, additional officers may be authorized at the discretion of the OIC when officer safety is a concern. In determining the number of officers to assign to this duty, the OIC shall consider several factors to include but are not limited to:
    - 1) Nature of the offense;
    - 2) History of the prisoner;
    - 3) Known risk factors; and
    - 4) Other safety concerns.
  - b. The OIC will determine if the prisoner can be released with a summons or arraigned at the hospital.
  - c. If arraigned, the RI State Marshalls can assume custody of the prisoner after proper arrangements have been made.

## RI 12.5

### O. Suicidal, Violent, and Escape-prone Prisoners

1. A copy of the Prisoner Transaction form documenting the security risk shall be left with the receiving agency and a signed copy should be brought back to the department.
2. Officers shall also verbally advise receiving officers/agencies of these facts and shall cause an appropriate (e.g. Q5) message to be broadcast via the CJIS system as required by Rhode Island General Laws.

### P. Transporting to the station

The Sally Port will be utilized in transporting prisoners to and from the station. To ensure separation from adult prisoners, juvenile prisoners shall not be brought into the Sally Port or Processing areas when adult prisoners are present. If the Sally Port is occupied, juvenile prisoners may be escorted into headquarters via the door adjacent to the garage (side door). Officers will adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Upon arrival at the rear of the station, the transporting officer will request that the Sally Port door be opened;
2. The dispatcher will notify the supervisor that a prisoner is entering the sally port;
3. The OIC, or designee, should meet the transporting officer in the Sally Port and assist with the delivery of the prisoner to the booking/cell block area;
4. The transporting officer will close the Sally Port door and secure their weapon in the gun box before removing the prisoner from the vehicle;

5. If more than one cruiser has a prisoner, at the discretion of the OIC, the prisoner can be escorted into the headquarters via the “side door”;
6. Officers should remove their vehicles from the Sally Port without delay after booking, processing, and securing prisoners to maximize the availability of the Sally Port;
7. The Sally Port will be used when prisoners are transported from the station to court or other facilities, etc.; and
8. Outside agencies picking up prisoners at the station will be directed to the Sally Port and advised of the procedures.

#### **Q. Transfer of Prisoners**

When transporting a prisoner to or from another agency’s or court’s detention facility, officers shall:

1. Two (2) officers should be utilized for the transport; both officers will be seated in the front seats. One officer may be used for transportation to court for non-violent offenders providing the transport vehicle has a divider between the front and rear compartments.
- RI 12.3.a 2. Officers will secure weapons in gun lockers provided by the agency or as directed by the other agency.
- RI 12.3.b 3. Restraining devices should be removed or placed on the prisoner in the area designated by the facility before placing or removing the prisoner from the holding facility.
- RI 12.3.c 4. The transporting officer(s) must have the personal effects and all required documents, (ex. warrant printout, arraignment paperwork), to commit the prisoner. The prisoner, personnel effects, and necessary documents will be turned over to the receiving officer.
- RI 12.3.d 5. If the history indicates the prisoner has suicidal tendencies, an unusual illness, or  
RI 12.5 is an escape risk, this information will be included on the Prisoner Transaction Form and the receiving court or agency will be advised of such risks. When possible, the receiving agency should be notified before the transportation of high-risk prisoners, so that they may prepare for their arrival.
- RI 12.3.c 6. In all cases of prisoner transfer, a Prisoner Transaction Form will be completed and placed in the case file.

#### **R. Prisoner Escapes**

RI 12.4.a The transporting officer will immediately notify the dispatcher of:

1. Their badge number;
2. Exact location;
3. Prisoner method of escape, escape route, and means of transportation;

4. Name and aliases of escapee and a physical description including clothing description; and
5. Criminal history and safety risk of the escapee, and the pending charges. The officer will immediately make every attempt to recapture the escapee and if unable to do so, preserve the scene for tracking dogs and investigators.

The Dispatcher will:

RI 12.4.c

1. Immediately notify a supervisor;
2. Notify area patrols, nearby officers, and state and local departments of the escape;
3. Make the appropriate CAD entries;
4. Dispatch a police supervisor to the scene to assume control of the recapture operation, investigate the circumstances of the escape, and prepare a report with findings and recommendations; and
5. The OIC will take further action(s), (ex. alerting the media, issuing a BOLO, applying for a warrant) based on the circumstances (prior record of the prisoner, the time elapsed since the escape, etc.).

RI 12.4.b

Upon completion of the search or apprehension of the prisoner, a detailed report will be submitted to the OIC and will include all information on the events before, during, and after the escape. All reports will be forwarded through the chain of command to the Chief of Police.

Per order,

*Thomas F. Oates, III*

Chief of Police

*Written directives published within PowerDMS are in full force and effect on the referenced dates and have been approved by the Chief of Police*