

YORK-POQUOSON SHERIFF'S OFFICE	GENERAL ORDERS
SUBJECT: Prisoner Transport	NUMBER: GO 2-8
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1 **INDEX WORDS**

- 2
- 3 Positional asphyxia
- 4 Prisoners
- 5 Prisoners with disabilities
- 6 Transportation of juveniles
- 7 Transportation of prisoners
- 8

9 **POLICY**

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11 Transportation of persons in custody is a constant requirement and a frequent activity.

12 Transportation usually occurs in two instances: (1) after an arrest – when the arrestee is taken by

13 the arresting deputy for booking and holding, and (2) transfer to another facility. The second

14 activity concerns the movement of prisoners from one facility to another, such as, to a hospital,

15 doctor, court, or another detention facility. In all instances involving the transfer of persons in

16 custody, deputies shall take care not to endanger themselves while also ensuring the prisoner's

17 safety, thus limiting opportunities for escape.

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19 **PURPOSE**

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21 The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures to ensure that prisoners are transported

22 safely and securely.

23

24 **PROCEDURES**

- 25
- 26 • Security
 - 27 ○ Whenever possible and practicable, all prisoners shall be transported in secure, caged
 - 28 vehicles.
 - 29 ○ Juveniles shall not be transported with adults.
 - 30 ○ When picking up a prisoner from any facility:
 - 31 ▪ The deputy shall verify the identity of the prisoner.
 - 32 ▪ The transporting deputy shall obtain from the custodian of the prisoner any
 - 33 paperwork, property, or medical records that should accompany the transfer of the
 - 34 prisoner.
 - 35 ▪ Searching the prisoner
 - 36 ❖ The transporting deputy shall always search a prisoner before placing him or
 - 37 her into the vehicle.

- 38 ❖ Deputies must never assume that a prisoner does not possess a weapon or
39 contraband, or that someone else has already searched the prisoner.
40 ❖ The transporting deputy shall conduct a search of the prisoner each time the
41 prisoner enters custody of the deputy.
42 ❖ When handling and searching prisoners, deputies shall remain mindful of the
43 Sheriff's Office communicable disease exposure control plan. See [GO 2-34,](#)
44 [Communicable Disease](#), and shall use personal protective equipment when
45 necessary.
46 ❖ Additional information on search procedures can be found in GO [2-5, Search](#)
47 [Incident to Arrest](#).
48
- 49 • Searching Sheriff's Office vehicles
 - 50 ○ The transporting deputy shall search the vehicle before each prisoner transport to
51 ensure that no weapons or contraband is available to the prisoner.
 - 52 ○ After delivering the prisoner to his or her destination, deputies shall again search
53 Sheriff's Office vehicles to ensure that the prisoner did not hide contraband or other
54 evidence.
 - 55
 - 56 • Transport equipment
 - 57 ○ Most marked vehicles are equipped with a prisoner shield separating the front and
58 rear compartments.
 - 59 ○ Normally, these vehicles will be used in all prisoner transports in order to prevent
60 prisoner access to the driver's compartment.
 - 61 ○ All vehicles equipped with prisoner shields and used in transporting prisoners shall
62 have the rear interior door and window controls made inoperative in order to
63 minimize the risk of escape by prisoners during transport.
64
 - 65 • Positioning of prisoners in the transport vehicle
 - 66 ○ When a deputy transports a prisoner in a caged vehicle, the prisoner shall be
67 positioned in the rear seat and secured with seat belts.
 - 68 ○ Prisoners shall be handcuffed with their hands behind their backs, palms outward,
69 except for pregnant, handicapped, or injured prisoners, as detailed in [GO 2-7,](#)
70 [Prisoner Restraints](#).
 - 71 ○ When a deputy transports a prisoner in a non-caged vehicle:
 - 72 ▪ The prisoner shall be placed in the right front seat and secured with a seat belt.
 - 73 ▪ The prisoner shall be handcuffed with his or her hands behind the back, palms
74 outward.
 - 75 ▪ A lone deputy shall never transport two or more suspects unless directed by the
76 on-duty supervisor.
 - 77 ▪ If more than one deputy transports prisoners in a non-caged vehicle, the following
78 procedures shall be observed:
 - 79 ❖ One deputy shall position himself or herself in the rear of the transporting
80 vehicle behind the driver's seat with the prisoner (seat belted) on the opposite
81 side behind the front passenger seat.
 - 82 ❖ In a situation where more than one prisoner is transported by two deputies in
83 the same vehicle, the prisoners shall be positioned on the rear seat (seat

84 belted) and the assisting deputy should position himself in the front seat in
85 order to observe the prisoners.
86

- 87 ○ Deputies shall not transport prisoners who are restrained in a prone position.
- 88 ○ Transporting prisoners in the prone position increases the risk of positional asphyxia,
89 a form of suffocation that may cause death.

90

- 91 ● Control of prisoners while transporting

- 92 ○ Observation

- 93 ■ During transportation, deputies shall continually observe the prisoner, even when
94 it becomes necessary to allow the prisoner the use of a toilet.
- 95 ■ In a situation where observation is not possible (woman prisoner needing toilet
96 facilities and male transporting deputy or vice versa), the deputy shall exercise as
97 much control of the situation as possible.
- 98 ■ The prisoner shall not be allowed in the facility with another person and the
99 deputy shall ensure that there are no escape routes within the facility and no
100 weapons available to the prisoner.
- 101 ■ If a prisoner appears lethargic, particularly after an active confrontation with
102 deputies, or appears unresponsive, consider the possibility that immediate medical
103 help may be necessary.
- 104 ■ Observe the suspect carefully and if the deputy is in any doubt about the
105 prisoner's health, summon medical assistance immediately.
- 106 ■ Deputies should ask an apparently sick prisoner if he or she wishes medical
107 assistance.
- 108 ■ The transporting deputy shall advise the receiving officer or deputy of any
109 medical conditions of the prisoner, or any suspicions or concerns about the
110 prisoner's medical state.

- 111
- 112 ● Meals

- 113 ○ Prisoners should be fed at the correctional facility prior to transport, if possible.
- 114 ○ During extraditions or overland transports, if the transporting deputy must stop for a
115 meal, he or she should choose a safe and visible location.
- 116 ○ Meals should be purchased at drive-in type establishments.

- 117
- 118 ● Stopping to provide law enforcement services while transporting

- 119 ○ When transporting a prisoner, the transporting deputy shall provide law-enforcement
120 services only when:
 - 121 ■ A need exists for the transporting deputy to act immediately in order stop or
122 prevent a violent act and prevent further harm to a victim.
 - 123 ■ A person has been injured and immediate assistance is required.
 - 124 ■ A Felony violent crime is in progress, thus creating an immediate need to
125 apprehend the suspect.
- 126
- 127 ○ In all of the above situations, the transporting deputy shall ensure at all times that the
128 prisoner is secured and protected.
- 129 ○ Under no circumstances shall a deputy transporting a prisoner engage in a pursuit.

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- Escape
 - If a prisoner escapes while being transported, the transporting deputy shall observe the following procedures:
 - Request assistance immediately from the jurisdiction the deputy is in at the time of the escape.
 - The transporting deputy shall immediately provide the local Emergency Communications or 911 Dispatch Center with the following information:
 - ❖ Specific location where the escape occurred,
 - ❖ Direction and method of travel, and means of escape,
 - ❖ Name, physical description of escapee,
 - ❖ Possible weapons possessed by the escapee,
 - ❖ Pending charges,
 - Begin pursuit and attempt immediate recapture of the escapee. See, [RR 1-17, Jurisdiction-Mutual Aid](#). Section [19.2-77](#), Code of Virginia, which authorizes a deputy to pursue and arrest the escaped prisoner anywhere in the Commonwealth Virginia if in close pursuit.
 - The transporting deputy shall submit a written report to the Sheriff prior to the end of the shift, explaining the circumstances of the escape.
- Prisoner communication
 - The transporting deputy shall not allow prisoners to communicate with other people while in transit unless the situation requires it.
 - The deputy shall use his or her judgment when deciding whether to allow a conversation to take place between the transported prisoner and another party.
- Arrival at destination
 - When transporting prisoners from one facility to another, upon arriving at the destination, the transporting deputy shall observe the following procedures:
 - Firearms shall be secured in the designated place at the facility being entered.
 - If there is no designated place, secure firearms inside the locked trunk of Sheriff's Office vehicles.
 - Restraining devices shall be removed only when directed to do so by the receiving facility or when the deputy is sure that the prisoner is properly controlled and secure.
 - The proper paperwork (jail committal, property form, etc.) shall be submitted to the proper person at the receiving facility and, in situations that require it, the deputy shall ensure that proper signatures are obtained on paperwork to be returned to the Sheriff's Office.
- Physically ill /injured prisoners and medical facilities
 - At any time before, during, or after the arrest that the prisoner is injured or becomes physically ill, the deputy shall seek medical attention immediately.

- 175 ○ Medical attention shall be obtained before transporting the prisoner to the jail if the
176 injury/illness occurs before arrival.
177 ○ A supervisor must be notified in these instances.
178 ○ The transporting deputy shall use discretion in applying restraining devices on
179 physically ill or injured prisoners. Obviously, if a prisoner is injured or physically ill
180 enough to be incapacitated, restraining devices may not be appropriate.
181 ○ As a rule, do not remove a prisoner's handcuffs at the hospital unless ordered to do so
182 by the attending physician or emergency medical services personnel.
183 ○ If the prisoner refuses treatment, the prisoner shall be asked to sign a hospital or an
184 EMS informed consent to refusal form.
185 ○ Deputies shall have the attending physician or nurse sign the form as a witness.
186 ○ If the prisoner refuses to sign the form, obtain two witnesses to the refusal (hospital
187 staff, another law enforcement officer, or fire/rescue personnel).
188 ○ A copy of the form must be given to the jail during booking and the original attached
189 to the incident report.
190 ○ If the prisoner must be admitted to the hospital, the deputy shall release the prisoner
191 only after consulting the on-duty supervisor.
192 ○ The supervisor shall examine all of the facts and determine if custodial supervision is
193 required.
194 ▪ For lesser offenses, the prisoner may be released on a summons, or
195 ▪ Warrant service may be delayed until the prisoner is released from the hospital.
196
197 ○ If custodial supervision is required, the supervisor shall consider the following
198 requirements:
199 ▪ Severity of the offense
200 ▪ Need for guards from the appropriate agency.
201 ▪ Availability of a room in the regional jail or correctional facility medical ward.
202
203 ○ Until relieved, the supervisor shall brief deputies on their guard duties and shall
204 ensure that deputies remain in radio contact.
205 ○ The supervisor shall ensure that deputies are checked-on periodically and relieved as
206 necessary.
207 ○ The prisoner shall be kept under observation at all times and, normally, restraining
208 devices shall be used.
209 ○ Deputies shall consult with medical personnel concerning the use of restraining
210 devices.
211
212 ● Prisoners/ Patients suspected of carrying a communicable disease.
213 ○ When dealing with prisoners/ patients suspected of carrying a communicable disease
214 such as AIDS or hepatitis, deputies shall take all precautions and shall utilize the
215 proper issued protective clothing/equipment. See [GO 2-34, Communicable Diseases](#).
216 ○ All employees shall as soon as practicable, document any exposure or possible
217 exposure to infectious fluids or materials.
218 ○ In all cases, employees shall immediately notify their supervisor of possible exposure
219 in accordance with [GO 2-34, Communicable Diseases](#).
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- Special transport problems
 - Transport of prisoner by deputy of different sex.
 - When transporting a prisoner of a given sex by a deputy of another sex, an additional deputy may be requested to accompany the transport.
 - If using a second deputy is impractical, at a minimum the transporting deputy shall:
 - ❖ Contact the dispatcher by radio and request that the time and odometer mileage be logged.
 - ❖ Go directly to the destination by using the shortest practical route.
 - ❖ Upon arrival at the destination, contact the dispatcher by radio and request that the time and the odometer reading be logged.
 - Transport of Arrestees and Prisoners who are obviously injured or ill.
 - Arrestees and/or prisoners who are obviously suffering from an illness or injury shall normally be transported by an ambulance to a medical facility.
 - ❖ A deputy shall ride in the ambulance with the arrestee or prisoner for all in custody ambulance transportations.
 - ❖ The On-Duty supervisor shall determine if a deputy is needed to ride in the ambulance for other transports when the person being transported is not under arrest or in custody.
 - ❖ Arrestees or prisoners being transported by a deputy who become injured or physically ill during the transport shall either:
 - Be transported to the nearest medical facility by the deputy, or
 - An ambulance summoned to transport the arrestee or prisoner to the nearest medical facility.
 - ❖ The arresting deputy shall transport arrestees to the nearest medical facility for medical clearance if the Jail facility refuses to accept an arrestee due to a physical injury or illness.
 - Prisoner with disabilities
 - When transporting a prisoner with disabilities, the transporting deputy shall request help when needed to complete the transport conveniently, comfortably, and safely for both the prisoner and the deputy.
 - The deputy may request the dispatcher to contact emergency medical services for additional assistance, if needed.
 - The transporting deputy shall take whatever special equipment or medicine is necessary for the prisoner.
 - With a disabled person in custody, the transporting deputy must use common sense.
 - When the disability is such that no danger of escape or injury to the prisoner or deputy exists, then restraining devices may be inappropriate.
 - Any wheelchairs, crutches, prosthetic devices, and medication shall be transported with, but not in the possession of, the prisoner.
 - Transportation of dangerous/security-risk prisoners from one facility to another.
 - Transportation to court:

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- When a prisoner is considered dangerous or is identified as a security risk, courtroom security personnel shall be notified prior to arrival to plan how best to minimize any chance of escape, or injury to the prisoner or others.
 - Other medical, mental, and Handicapped considerations
 - Deputies should ascertain if the suspect has used alcohol or drugs recently or suffers from any cardiac, respiratory problem, or other medical condition.
 - Deputies shall monitor the suspect and obtain medical treatment if necessary.
 - Deputies shall, especially during long transports, check restraining devices to insure that no impairment to breathing or circulation exists.
 - Physically or mentally handicapped, frail, and/ or elderly prisoners may require some additional considerations such as:
 - Restraining devices may not be applicable because of the handicap.
 - Prosthetic devices should be examined for hidden weapons.
 - Equipment such as wheelchairs and crutches might require transportation.
 - Alternative transportation vehicles may be required.
 - Severely impaired mental patients may require a full-body wrap or a vehicle equipped with specialized restraints, such as a holding chair.
 - Any unusual circumstances regarding the transportation of mentally ill or handicapped individuals require that a supervisor be notified and proper documentation of the circumstances and the actions taken.
 - Restraining devices
 - See [GO 2-7, Prisoner Restraints](#), for guidance.
 - Prisoners shall be restrained during transport in accordance with [GO 2-7, Prisoner Restraints](#). The following procedures shall be followed unless circumstances require an alternate method.
 - Prisoners shall be handcuffed with both hands behind their backs. See [GO 2-7, Prisoner Restraints](#).
 - In situations where more than one prisoner is transported in a patrol vehicle, two deputies shall be present in that vehicle.
 - No more than two prisoners shall be transported in any patrol vehicle at one time.
 - Both prisoners shall be positioned on the rear seat (seat belted) and the assisting deputy should position himself in the front seat in order to observe them.
 - Prisoners shall be restrained as identified above in accordance with [GO 2-7, Prisoner Restraints](#).
 - Leg and waist belt restraints may also be used in order to minimize the risk of injury or escape, especially when transporting more than one prisoner.
 - Under no circumstances shall a prisoner be handcuffed to a part of the transport vehicle itself, such as the floor post, protective screen barrier, etc.
 - Deputies shall use ankle shackles or plastic handcuffs to immobilize legs when transporting any prisoner that might pose an escape risk.
 - Mentally disabled prisoners

- 312 ○ The use of a body wrap may be an option when transporting a mentally disturbed
313 prisoner.
- 314 ○ Prior to using this device, deputies will consult with mental health personnel.
- 315 ○ At no time will a body wrap be used to restrain prisoners who do not require it.
316
- 317 ● Documentation
- 318 ○ Deputies shall document any unusual circumstances or events occurring during
319 prisoner transports, including:
 - 320 ■ Circumstances involving anyone that is physically ill, injured, handicapped,
 - 321 ■ Unusual circumstances involving a mentally ill subject,
 - 322 ■ Any information in dealing with medical personnel, hospital protocol, and
323 treatment received such as:
 - 324 ❖ Orders by medical personnel to remove restraining devices,
 - 325 ❖ Orders by medical personnel to limit the use of restraining devices, due to a
326 medical issue, upon release of the prisoner from medical care.
 - 327 ❖ Injuries documented by medical personnel caused by the restraining
328 device(s) used.
 - 329 ❖ Injuries which have been aggravated, as documented by medical personnel,
330 due to the use of restraining device(s).
- 331
- 332 ○ This information shall be entered in the narrative section of the incident report, to
333 include all actions taken by the deputy.