
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 Berkeley 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 RESTRAINTS

302.3.1 USE OF RESTRAINTS

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

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

- (a) The circumstances or crime leading to the arrest.
- (b) The demeanor and behavior of the arrested person.
- (c) The age and health of the person.
- (d) Whether the person may be pregnant.
- (e) 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.
- (f) Whether the person has any other apparent disability.

302.3.2 RESTRAINT OF DETAINEES

Situations may arise where it may be reasonable to restrain an individual 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 assure 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.

302.3.3 ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF RESTRAINT

Alternative Means of Restraint include but are not limited to:

- (a) Handcuffing the person with their hands in front of their body
- (b) Handcuffing the person with multiple sets of linked handcuffs
- (c) Use of the entire WRAP system

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- (d) Use of the WRAP's ankle strap
- (e) Use of plastic handcuffs, aka "flex cuffs"
- (f) Use of an ambulance gurney with five point straps

302.3.4 RESTRAINT OF PREGNANT PERSONS

If a person's hands cannot be restrained behind their back because of pregnancy, officers will attempt to accommodate the person's condition by using alternative means of restraint.

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).

302.3.5 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.

302.3.6 NOTIFICATIONS

Whenever an 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 subject (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 plastic flex cuffs, may be used only to restrain a person's hands to ensure officer safety.

Although recommended for most arrest situations, handcuffing is 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 regardless of the circumstances, every person should be handcuffed.

In most situations handcuffs should be applied with the hands behind the person's back. When feasible, handcuffs should be applied between the base of the palm and the ulna bone of the wrist. When feasible, handcuffs should 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 individual or may cause unreasonable discomfort due to the person's size, officers should consider alternative means of restraint.

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If the person being handcuffed is on the ground or in a prone position, then as soon as possible after being handcuffed, the person should be placed in an upright sitting position or on their side for respiratory recovery and to mitigate the potential for positional asphyxia.

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

302.5 APPLICATION OF SPIT MASKS

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

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

Officers utilizing spit masks should ensure that the spit mask is applied properly to allow for adequate ventilation and that the restrained person can breathe normally. Officers should provide assistance during the movement of restrained individuals due to the potential for impaired or distorted vision on the part of the individual. Officers should avoid co-mingling individuals wearing spit masks with other detainees.

Spit masks should 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 should be obtained. If the person vomits while wearing a spit mask, the spit mask should be promptly removed and discarded. Persons who have been sprayed with oleoresin capsicum (OC) spray should be thoroughly decontaminated, including hair, head and clothing prior to application of a spit mask.

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

302.6 APPLICATION OF THE WRAP

The WRAP is a temporary restraining device comprised of a velcro strapped leg panel, torso harness, ankle strap and backside handcuff carabiner. The device immobilizes the body into a straight-legged seated position. Used properly, it restricts a subject's ability to do harm to oneself or others. Officer safety is enhanced and the risk of injury to the subject is reduced.

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

- (a) Whether the officer or others could be exposed to injury due to the assaultive or resistant behavior of a suspect.
- (b) Whether it is reasonably necessary to protect the suspect from his/her own actions (e.g., running away from the arresting officer while handcuffed, kicking at objects or officers).

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- (c) Whether it is reasonably necessary to avoid damage to property (e.g., kicking at windows of the patrol unit).
- (d) Whether conventional methods of restraint have failed.

302.6.1 GUIDELINES FOR USE OF THE WRAP

When applying the WRAP, the following guidelines should be followed:

- (a) If practicable, officers should notify a supervisor of the intent to apply the WRAP. In all cases, a supervisor shall be notified as soon as practicable after the application of the WRAP.
- (b) 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. Restraint straps should be checked frequently for tightness, and adjusted as necessary, until the WRAP is removed. The harness straps should never be tightened to the point they interfere with the person's ability to breath.
- (c) The restrained person should be continually monitored by an officer while the WRAP is in use. The officer should ensure that the person does not roll onto and remain on his/her stomach.
- (d) The officer should look for signs of distress such as sudden quiet or inactivity, complaints of chest pain, change in facial color, complaint of extreme heat, vomiting, and/or labored breathing, and take appropriate steps to relieve and minimize any obvious factors contributing to this condition.
- (e) Movement of the person can be accomplished in three ways, depending on the level of their cooperation. The person can be carried, allowed to stand and shuffle walk or be transported in a vehicle.
- (f) Once secured, the person should be placed in a seated or upright position, secured with a seat belt, and shall not be placed on his/her stomach for an extended period, as this could reduce the person's ability to breathe.
- (g) If in custody and transported by ambulance/paramedic unit, the restrained person should be accompanied by an officer when requested by medical personnel. 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).

302.6.2 DEVICE REMOVAL

Based on the prisoner's combativeness or level of aggression, officers should employ appropriate control techniques and tactics when removing restraint devices.

302.6.3 THE ANKLE STRAP

The ankle strap is one part of the WRAP restraint system. The ankle strap may be used alone, without the rest of the WRAP system to restrain the legs of a violent or potentially violent person when it is reasonable to do so during the course of detention, arrest or transportation. Use of the ankle strap should follow the same considerations listed in 302.6 and guidelines listed in 302.6.1.

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302.7 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.

Only department-authorized devices may be used. Any person in auxiliary restraints should be monitored as reasonably appears necessary.

302.8 REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

If an individual is restrained and released without an arrest, the officer shall document the details of the detention and the need for handcuffs or other restraints in an MDT, incident or case report.

If an individual is arrested, the use of restraints other than handcuffs shall be documented in the related report. The officer should include, as appropriate:

- (a) How the suspect was transported and the position of the suspect.
- (b) Observations of the suspect's behavior and any signs of physiological problems.
- (c) Any known or suspected drug use or other medical problems.