

**I. PURPOSE**

To provide guidelines for the use of restraints.

**II. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Fairfax County Sheriff's Office that instruments of restraint are authorized for use as a precaution against escape during inmate transport. The ADC Medical Director must authorize use of restraints for medical reasons. Extended or prolonged use of restraints as a prevention against inmate self-injury, injury to others, or property damage must be approved by an on-duty supervisor. Restraints are applied only for the length of time absolutely necessary.

**III. PROCEDURE**

- A. The following instruments of restraint are authorized for use: steel hand and leg cuffs; plastic flex-cuffs; waist chain/leather belt; gang chains; polypropylene webbed belt (RIPP Hobble); and the restraint chair.
- B. Inmates will be placed in restraints prior to being escorted to court. Inmates will also be placed in restraints prior to being transported outside the confines of the ADC, with the exception of Inmate Work Force on work assignments, who will be escorted by an armed deputy.
- C. Unless otherwise stated in this SOP, prior approval of the on duty ranking supervisor is required to restrain an individual by any means other than with regulation hand and leg cuffs (metal or plastic).
- D. Whenever restraints are applied, (except for transportation from the facility, to court, during routine operations, and where restraints are required by ICC or for the inmate's safety);
  - 1. The Medical Section will be notified and will check the individual when restraints are applied, and at regular intervals thereafter. Prior to this medical assessment, the inmate will be under constant observation. These checks will be documented.
  - 2. A Special Housing Observation Log will be prepared.
  - 3. An incident report will be submitted.
- E. Application of restraints for medical reasons is governed by [SOP 451 – Medical Restraints and Seclusion](#).
- F. Restraints are not to be used as a method of punishment.
- G. Restraints are not to be applied about the head or neck of an individual, or in a manner, which causes undue physical discomfort, inflicts pain, or restricts blood circulation or breathing.
- H. Metal hand and leg restraints will be double-locked upon application to prevent unnecessary injury.
- I. Hand restraints will be exchanged on any newly arrived inmate who is exhibiting

uncooperative, irrational or bizarre behavior. The Receiving Supervisor will make the final decision as to when the restraints will be removed.

- J. Hands and feet may be connected in front. No one is to be restrained with hands and feet connected behind them.
- K. Inmates who are deaf or hard of hearing, and use American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate, shall be handcuffed in the front to enable the inmate to communicate using sign language or writing, when safety permits.
- L. Restraint chairs may only be used to temporarily control inmates who display behavior which results, or is likely to result, in the destruction of property; who are in danger of causing physical harm to themselves; or who make overt attempts to assault staff, visitors or other inmates.
  - 1. The mobile restraint chair may be moved to any location in the facility when it is necessary to restrain an inmate at his/her location.
  - 2. Inmates placed in restraint chairs will be kept physically separated from other inmates.
  - 3. The ranking supervisor on duty will be responsible for ensuring incident reports, medical and mental health assessments, Special Housing Observation Logs, and Fluid/Restraint Chair Assessment Logs are completed and updated as required.
  - 4. Placement, Observation and Removal of Inmates in Restraint Chairs. All inmates will be secured in the chair per manufacturer's instructions.
    - a. Placement of Inmates in Restraint Chairs
      - 1) A Sergeant or above must authorize, be present and directly supervise the placement of an inmate in a restraint chair.
      - 2) Only staff trained in the use of the restraint chair and using approved restraint equipment shall place an inmate in a restraint chair.
      - 3) Whenever possible, inmates will be fully clothed when placed in a restraint chair.
      - 4) Inmates placed in the mobile restraint chair shall be housed in a single cell. The ranking supervisor on duty must approve alternate locations only in exigent circumstances.
      - 5) Medical Staff will check all restraint belts and hard restraints to ensure the inmate has proper circulation.
    - b. Observation of Inmates in Restraint Chairs
      - 1) A Special Housing Observation Log will be posted in the Special Housing Observation log book for an inmate in a restraint chair. The staff member completing the Observation Log will write the words "Restraint Chair" on the form to indicate its use.
      - 2) A Fluid/Restraint Chair Assessment Log shall be filled out and

placed on the cell door for inmates placed in the restraint chair. All evaluations by supervisors and medical staff shall be documented on the form.

- a) EIN/TIME shall be legibly documented.
  - b) Comments shall be written each time an inmate is assessed by either a supervisor or member of the medical staff.
- 3) Staff members shall be responsible for monitoring the inmate for signs of distress and for documenting the consumption or refusal of fluids.
  - 4) The Medical Staff will physically evaluate inmates at minimal intervals of once every two hours. Medical Staff will respond to confinement requests for review as needed. Each check shall be documented on the "Fluid/Restraint Chair Assessment Log" posted on the cell door.
  - 5) A confinement supervisor shall evaluate the need for continued retention in the restraint chair at minimum intervals of at least one time per hour. The supervisor will attempt to converse with the inmate, make their determination and ensure proper documentation of the "Fluid/Restraint Chair Assessment Log" posted on the cell door.
  - 6) Post deputies will maintain direct periodic checks of the restrained inmate at no more than 15-minute intervals.
    - a) Inmates who are placed in a restraint chair shall have their restraints physically checked for tightness and to ensure all restraints are correctly in place.
    - b) If a deputy observes a lack of circulation in the hands or feet of an inmate during a 15-minute check, the deputy will contact the Medical Staff to evaluate the inmate. The Deputy, with the assistance of a supervisor, shall adjust the restraints to improve circulation.
    - c) If an inmate complains of pain due to the restraints or his/her placement in the restraint chair, the deputy will contact a Medical Staff member to examine the inmate.
- c. Removal of Inmates in Restraint Chairs
- 1) An inmate may be removed from the restraint chair only under the direction of a Sergeant or above after a review of the original circumstances and an assessment of the inmate's current behavior and/or medical condition.
  - 2) The ranking supervisor on duty shall ensure a supplemental incident report is completed documenting the removal of the inmate from the restraint chair.

**FAIRFAX COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
STANDARD OPERATION PROCEDURE**

**SOP NUMBER: 517  
SUBJECT: USE OF RESTRAINTS**

- 3) Medical Staff shall check the inmate for injuries following his/her removal from the restraint chair.



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SHERIFF**

**01/23/97  
DATE APPROVED**

**08/31/18  
EFFECTIVE DATE**

**Revised:  
December 1996, December 2002, July 2006, March 2008, September 2009, November 2017, August 2018**