

SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT ORDER

DATE/TIME: NOVEMBER 14, 2024 1700 HOURS

NUMBER: OR 24-25RR **REVISED**

SUBJECT: CHANGES TO PROCEDURES FOR PRISONERS WHO NEED MEDICAL ATTENTION

SCOPE: ALL MEMBERS OF THE DEPARTMENT

DEPARTMENT PROCEDURE AFFECTED: 6.01, 6.02, 6.20

In recent months, safety issues have emerged involving local area hospital staff and officers maintaining custody of prisoners who require medical treatment at local hospitals and medical facilities.

Effective immediately, officers who are maintaining custody of prisoners who require medical treatment at *any* medical or mental health facility must be accompanied by at least one additional officer while on the facility's property. A minimum of two officers will be assigned to a prisoner who is in custody and undergoing medical or mental health treatment at all times until the prisoner has been medically cleared and has completely exited the medical facility property or the subject has been retained at the medical or mental health facility.

NEW

An on-duty field lieutenant can determine that the prisoner can be transported by a single-person unit if they believe the prisoner poses no danger to a single officer due to their medical condition or other relevant factors. Only an on-duty field lieutenant can make this determination and any officer who transports in this manner shall document the decision in their case report, along with which field lieutenant approved the transport.

In instances of prisoners that have been admitted to a hospital for medical treatment and require a bedside arraignment, two officers will remain with the prisoner at all times until the prisoner has been arraigned and the San Diego Sheriff's Department has assumed custody of the prisoner.

Officers shall record all prisoner interactions in accordance with Department Procedure 1.49 – Axon Body Worn Cameras.

The following transportation procedures shall be utilized:

1. If a prisoner requiring medical treatment is transported by a single officer unit, a second officer shall follow the transporting officer. In this instance, the prisoner should be placed on the right side of the back seat, directly behind the front passenger seat of the transport vehicle, so the transporting officer can monitor the prisoner. The second officer shall

accompany the transporting officer and prisoner into the medical facility for the duration of the medical treatment or until relieved by another unit.

2. If a prisoner requiring medical treatment is transported by a two-officer unit, no secondary unit is required. In this instance, the prisoner should be placed on the left side of the back seat, directly behind the front driver's seat of the transport vehicle, so the passenger officer can monitor the prisoner. The two-officer unit shall accompany the prisoner into the medical facility for the duration of the medical treatment or until relieved by other units.
3. If a prisoner requiring medical treatment is transported to a medical facility by an ambulance, at least one officer will accompany the prisoner in the rear of the ambulance. A second officer shall follow the transporting ambulance. The second officer shall accompany the transporting officer and prisoner into the medical facility for the duration of the medical treatment or until relieved by another unit. For the purposes of this section pertaining to prisoners requiring transport by ambulance, a Field Training Officer and Trainee do **not** count as a two-officer unit.
4. If an arrestee is medically rejected from jail and requires medical or mental health clearance from a medical or mental health facility prior to incarceration, the transporting officer's command is responsible for staffing the second officer during transport.
 - a. The second officer can meet the initial transporting officer near the medical or mental facility, as both officers are required to be present while on the facility's property, if the second officer is not nearby for the transport.
 - b. If no officers are available from the transporting officer's command to assist with the transport, the supervisor of the transporting officer shall arrange for an officer from another command to meet with the transporting officer.
 - c. Prisoners rejected from jail needing medical or mental health clearance should generally not be transported with other prisoners.

The following prisoner control procedures shall be utilized:

1. Officers accompanying prisoners who require medical treatment shall honor a suspect's request to use a restroom facility whenever reasonable and practical. Officers' priorities are to maintain officer safety, preserve evidence, avoid escape attempts, and monitor the suspect's health and welfare. Officers shall process this request in a timely manner, requesting assistance as needed, to ensure proper security and officer safety standards are maintained at all times.
 - a. If a prisoner needs to use a restroom, an officer of the same gender identity shall keep the prisoner under observation during that time. If an officer of the same gender identity is not available within a reasonable amount of time, the responsible officer shall allow the prisoner to use a restroom after the officer has

visibly inspected the restroom and can secure it from any potential safety and security hazards. The officer shall discreetly monitor the prisoner in a manner that ensures contraband/evidence is not destroyed, while still respecting the prisoner's privacy by not unnecessarily observing the prisoner (e.g., leaving the bathroom or stall door slightly ajar).

2. For the purposes of this Department Order pertaining to the two-officer requirement for prisoners requiring medical treatment, a training unit comprised of a Field Training Officer and Trainee may count as a two-officer unit solely for supervision of the prisoner at a medical or mental facility and for the transport of a prisoner within a police vehicle in need of medical attention, provided the Field Training Officer and field supervisor have no concerns regarding a trainee's ability to adequately maintain control of a prisoner. This does *not* apply to prisoners requiring medical transport via ambulance.

Department Procedures 6.01, 6.02, and 6.20 will be updated to reflect this change.

Please read at squad conferences and give a copy to all personnel.