

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 Colorado Department of Revenue authorizes the use of restraint devices in accordance with this policy, the Use of Force Policy and agency training. Restraint devices shall not be used to punish, to display authority or as a show of force.

302.3 USE OF RESTRAINTS

Only members who have successfully completed Colorado Department of Revenue-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, investigators should carefully balance officer safety concerns with factors that include, but are not limited to:

- The subject has committed a crime, subject is a safety hazard, or the subject is an escape risk.
- The circumstances or crime leading to the arrest.
- The demeanor and behavior of the arrested person.
- The age and health of the person.
- Whether the person is known to be pregnant.
- 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.
- Whether the person has any other apparent disability.

302.3.1 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 investigators and others. When deciding whether to remove restraints from a detainee, investigators should continuously weigh the safety interests at hand against the continuing intrusion upon the detainee.

302.3.2 RESTRAINT OF PREGNANT PERSONS

Persons who are known to be pregnant should be restrained in the least restrictive manner that is effective for officer safety. Leg irons, waist chains, or handcuffs behind the body should not be used unless the investigator has a reasonable suspicion that the person may resist, attempt escape, injure self or others, or damage property.

Handcuffing and Restraints

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, investigators, or others.

302.3.3 RESTRAINT OF JUVENILES

A juvenile under 14 years of age should not be restrained unless the juvenile is suspected of a dangerous felony or when the investigator has a reasonable suspicion that the juvenile may resist, attempt escape, injure themselves, injure the investigator, or damage property.

An investigator working as a school resource officer or responding to a public school or school-sanctioned event shall not handcuff any juvenile unless the juvenile poses a threat to self or others or during transport after arrest (CRS § 26-20-111).

302.3.4 NOTIFICATIONS

Whenever an investigator transports a person with the use of restraints other than handcuffs, the investigator shall inform the jail staff upon arrival at the jail that restraints were used. This notification should include information regarding any other circumstances the investigator 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 nylon or plastic cuffs, may be used only to restrain a person's hands to ensure officer safety.

Although recommended for most arrest situations, handcuffing is discretionary and not an absolute requirement of the Agency. Investigators should consider handcuffing any person they reasonably believe warrants that degree of restraint. However, investigators should not conclude that in order to avoid risk every person should be handcuffed, regardless of the circumstances.

In most situations handcuffs should be applied with the hands behind the person's back. 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, investigators should consider alternatives, such as using an additional set of handcuffs or multiple plastic cuffs.

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

Handcuffing and Restraints

302.5 APPLICATION OF SPIT HOODS/MASKS/SOCKS

If issued by your division, spit hoods/masks/socks are temporary protective devices designed to prevent the wearer from biting and/or transferring or transmitting fluids (saliva and mucous) to others.

Spit hoods may be placed upon persons in custody when the investigator reasonably believes the person will bite or 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.

Investigators utilizing spit hoods should ensure that the spit hood is fastened properly to allow for adequate ventilation and that the restrained person can breathe normally. Investigators should provide assistance during the movement of restrained individuals due to the potential for impaired or distorted vision on the part of the individual. Investigators should avoid comingling individuals wearing spit hoods with other detainees.

Spit hoods 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 hood, the spit hood 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 hood.

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

302.6 APPLICATION OF AUXILIARY RESTRAINT DEVICES

If issued by your division, 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 agency-authorized devices may be used. Any person in auxiliary restraints should be monitored as reasonably appears necessary.

302.7 APPLICATION OF LEG RESTRAINT DEVICES

If issued by your division, leg restraints may be used 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. Only restraint devices approved by the Agency shall be used.

In determining whether to use the leg restraint, investigators should consider:

- (a) Whether the investigator 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., hitting his/her head against the interior of the patrol unit, running away from the arresting investigator while handcuffed, kicking at objects or investigators).

Handcuffing and Restraints

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

302.7.1 GUIDELINES FOR USE OF LEG RESTRAINTS

When applying leg restraints the following guidelines should be followed:

- (a) If practicable, investigators should notify a supervisor of the intent to apply the leg restraint device. In all cases, a supervisor shall be notified as soon as practicable after the application of the leg restraint device.
- (b) Once applied, absent a medical or other emergency, restraints should remain in place until the investigator arrives at the jail or other facility or the person no longer reasonably appears to pose a threat.
- (c) 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.
- (d) The restrained person should be continually monitored by an investigator while in the leg restraint. The investigator should ensure that the person does not roll onto and remain on his/her stomach.
- (e) The investigator should look for signs of labored breathing and take appropriate steps to relieve and minimize any obvious factors contributing to this condition.
- (f) When transported by ambulance/paramedic unit, the restrained person should be accompanied by an investigator when requested by medical personnel. The transporting investigator should describe to medical personnel any unusual behaviors or other circumstances the investigator reasonably believes would be potential safety or medical risks to the subject (e.g., prolonged struggle, extreme agitation, impaired respiration).

302.8 REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

If a person is restrained and released without an arrest, the investigator shall document the details of the detention and the need for handcuffs or other restraints.

If a person is arrested, the use of handcuffs or other restraints shall be documented in the related report:

- (a) The factors that led to the decision to use restraints.
- (b) Supervisor notification of restraint used, if other than handcuffs.
- (c) The types of restraint used.
- (d) The amount of time the person was restrained.
- (e) How the person was transported and the position of the person during transport.
- (f) Observations of the person's behavior and any signs of physiological problems.
- (g) Any known or suspected drug use or other medical problems.

Handcuffing and Restraints

302.9 TRAINING

The Office of Professional Standards and Training (OPS) unit will ensure ongoing training on proper use of handcuffs and other authorized restraints.