





POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

	DETAINEE TRANSPORTATION	
	POLICY NUMBER: 70-1	ISSUING AUTHORITY 
	EFFECTIVE DATE: June 12, 2025	Christine A. Elow Police Commissioner

I. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS AND GUIDELINES

The proper transportation and processing by law enforcement of persons in custody is essential for the safety of officers, the public, and detainees. The Commission for Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) standards that address these functions cover two general time periods. The first is immediately after detention when the subject is taken to a facility for booking or holding. The second is when the detainee is moved from one facility to another, such as from a holding facility to court or a hospital.

Adherence to proper procedures during any transport of a detainee is critical for the safety of all involved, limiting the risk of escape and accusations of mistreatment, and protecting the constitutionally guaranteed rights of persons in custody.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the Cambridge Police Department to:

- A. take all appropriate measures to preserve the rights and safety of detainees, and to prevent their escape;
- B. use only such force as is proportional, reasonable, and necessary to control the detainee and to protect the officer; and
- C. require that all arrestees and persons held in protective custody who are in transport to the police station shall be brought immediately and directly to the holding facility adjacent to the sally port. No such person shall be tested, processed, or temporarily detained in any area of the police station other than the designated holding facility.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. *Flex cuffs*: Plastic, flexible restraints that may be used in place of metal handcuffs in extenuating circumstances.

- B. *Lunge zone*: The space near enough to a person such that objects can be easily and immediately grabbed and used as a weapon.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. 70.1.1 (M) Pre-transport Detainee Searches

1. Immediately prior to transporting a detainee, the *arresting officer* or other officer *on scene* shall search the prisoner and property, then the *transporting officer* shall thoroughly search the detainee and property for any weapons, evidence, or contraband, unless exigent circumstances exist. The officers should never assume that the detainee has already been searched.
2. As soon as practical, the transporting officer shall separate the detainee from all property, to include bags and other containers from their immediate surroundings known as the *grabbing area* or *lunge zone*.
 - a. When conducting a search incident to an arrest, officers will attempt to have the search conducted by an officer of the same gender/gender expression as the self-identified gender/gender expression of the subject.
 - (1) In cases when an officer of the same gender/gender expression is unavailable, the search shall be conducted by the arresting officer or other officer on scene regardless of gender but in the presence of another officer or objective adult witness.
 - (2) If there is reason to believe the detainee is armed with an item that may be used to cause harm to the officer, themselves, or another person, no accommodation is required. However, to minimize the possibility of any accusation of misconduct, the officer shall conduct this search in the presence of another officer or objective adult witness, unless exigent circumstances exist.
 - b. A strip search requires the removal or rearrangement of some or all clothing to permit a visual inspection of any skin surface, including genital areas, where weapons, dangerous instrumentalities, evidence, or contraband may be concealed. These searches shall:
 - (1) be conducted in a non-humiliating, professional manner;
 - (2) be conducted only in the presence of two officers of the same gender/gender expression as the detainee and only with the approval of a Deputy Superintendent or Shift Commander;
 - (3) be conducted in the police booking area out of public view including windows and doors, with as minimal physical contact as possible without having the detainee completely disrobe, although the detainee may be asked to bend at the waist and spread the buttocks;
 - (4) extend only for the time necessary to complete the search;

- (5) be video recorded by surveillance cameras in the booking area;
 - (6) in extenuating circumstances, may be conducted outside of the booking area in another part of the building, or in the field if necessary, but only with prior approval of a Deputy Superintendent or Shift Commander.
 - c. Manual body cavity searches by members of the department are prohibited. However, manual body cavity searches may be conducted by skilled medical personnel with a valid search warrant signed by a judge, not a clerk magistrate.
 - d. Regarding searches, juvenile detainees shall be processed in the same manner as adult detainees; however, consideration shall be given to the age and physical stature of the juvenile. A juvenile is a person who is not yet eighteen (18) years of age.
- B. 70.1.2 (M) Searching Transport Vehicles
- 1. All patrol vehicles used for transporting detainees shall be searched at the beginning of each shift, as well as prior to, and after transporting a detainee.
 - a. Vehicles shall be operationally suitable, free of damage or defect that could impact its operation, and should be properly equipped.
 - b. Vehicle transport compartments shall be free of weapons, contraband, and evidence.
 - c. Any contraband or weapons that have been found during an inspection of the patrol wagon or cruiser will be reported to the Shift Commander. All such items will be entered into the department's property and evidence system.
 - d. If any contraband or weapons are found after transporting a detainee, the officer will document in the police report the circumstances under which the items were discovered, to include the fact that the vehicle had been searched prior to placing the detainee in the vehicle.
- C. 70.1.3 (M) Procedures for Transporting by Vehicle
- 1. All transports of detainees shall be conducted in the marked patrol wagon(s) or marked cruisers equipped with a safety barrier; detainees shall be secured with appropriate restraining devices.
 - a. When the patrol wagon is unavailable, detainees will be transported in a marked police cruiser seated in the rear right passenger-side seat and secured with a seatbelt. A second officer will accompany the detainee seated in the rear left position.
 - b. In some cases, with the approval of the Shift Commander, an unmarked cruiser may be used to transport a detainee who is: a juvenile; in the custody of detectives and should be closely monitored; under intense media attention; or is in the presence of vulnerable children.
 - c. Other special situations or circumstances may arise to warrant transport in an unmarked cruiser with the approval of the Shift Commander.

- d. Multiple detainees should be transported separately, if possible.
 - e. A juvenile shall not be transported in the patrol wagon or in a police vehicle with an adult detainee. A juvenile may be transported to the station by wagon but must be transported by cruiser from the station to court.
 - f. When transporting any detainee, the transporting officer shall notify the Emergency Communications Department of the starting mileage from the point of arrest to the ending mileage at the police station. The officer shall notify dispatch of any delays. Dispatch will note in the log the time of arrival.
 - g. All detainees shall be transported from the location of arrest directly to the police station unless there are multiple arrests.
 - h. All traffic regulations shall be observed unless an emergency exists; blue lights and siren should not be activated unless an emergency requires such with authorization of a supervisor.
 - i. Detainees shall be separated by gender. Detainees who self-identify as transgender or non-binary shall be transported separately from other detainees who are being transported at the same time.
- D. 70.1.4 (M) Interruption of Transport
- 1. When transporting a detainee, the transporting officer may stop to provide police services only in the following circumstances.
 - a. When immediate response is required to prevent serious bodily injury or death.
 - b. When serious bodily injury has occurred that requires immediate attention.
 - c. When a serious or violent crime is in progress and/or a criminal is fleeing and immediate apprehension is required for public safety.
 - 2. In the case of a stop or detour, the transporting officer shall contact ECD and the sector supervisor giving the reason for the stop, the location, and a request for assistance if needed. If the transporting officer is required to exit the transport vehicle, the engine shall be turned off, keys removed, and all doors locked. When transporting a detainee in a cruiser, there should be no deviation from the shortest possible transport route unless circumstances dictate otherwise.
- E. 70.1.5 (M) Detainee Communications During Transport
- 1. If more than one detainee is being transported during the same incident and there is reason to separate the detainees for investigative purposes, each detainee will be transported in separate vehicles.
 - 2. The transporting officer may communicate with the detainee regarding reasonable requests for information such as the destination of the transport. Whereas the detainee in a police vehicle is in custody, no questioning shall be initiated by any officers unless and until the

detainee has been fully advised of the *Miranda* warnings and has knowingly and intelligently waived those rights.

3. If a citizen, including the detainee's attorney, requests to speak with a detainee, the transporting officer should deny the request and advise that person of the destination of the detainee transport and refer the person to the Shift Commander.

F. 70.1.6 (M) Procedures Upon Arrival at the Police Station

1. No officers in the department booking area will carry a firearm. When the transporting vehicle arrives in the sally port and is secured within and the door is shut, the transporting officer(s) shall secure all firearms in gun lockers prior to removing detainees from the transporting vehicle.
2. There are two ways detainees may enter the booking area. Either the booking officers will take direct custody of the detainees and will remove restraints in the booking room; or the detainees will be brought to the holding cell by the transporting officer, handcuffs removed, and then secured to the bars with the restraints that are already attached to the bars. In some cases, detainees may be secured to the bars with the officer's handcuffs. The station relief officer, or other officer designated by the Shift Commander, shall maintain watch on any detainees in the holding cell awaiting the booking process.
3. When a detainee arrives at the station and is secured in any location, the Shift Commander will be notified that a detainee has arrived. All documentation will be completed by the booking officers.
4. The transporting officer will provide to the booking officer and the Shift Commander all pertinent information regarding the detainee to include known charges, if the detainee is violent, disorderly, or a security risk; if the detainee is a known suicide or escape risk; if the detainee is a foreign national, has a medical condition, or presents any unusual circumstance; and/or is an active member of the military.
5. Before leaving the police station, the transporting officer will confer with booking personnel and transfer all detainee property, if applicable. All property will be inventoried and documented by the booking or station relief officers. Any property of value and/or money shall be accounted for on video in the booking area.

G. Procedures Upon Arrival with a Juvenile Detainee in Custody

1. According to Massachusetts General Laws, juveniles who are not yet eighteen (18) years of age are prohibited from being in the same area as adult prisoners. If a juvenile is being booked, the transporting officer may be required to standby in the transporting vehicle with an adult prisoner.
2. Officers transporting juvenile detainees in custody will adhere to all department policies and procedures related to juveniles.

H. 70.1.7 (M) Procedures, Escape of a Detainee

1. In the event of an escape of a detainee from custody during transport, the transporting officer will immediately notify dispatch providing the detainee's name, description including clothing, location of escape, direction of flight, possible destination if known, and any other pertinent information. Dispatch will notify the Shift Commander.
 - (a) The Shift Commander is responsible for determining which other agencies should be notified, identifying other resources that may be useful in locating the escapee, the nature and type of broadcasts that should be made in alerting other agencies and notifying other command staff as appropriate.
 - (b) The Shift Commander will submit a written report detailing the events leading to the escape and steps taken to regain custody.
 2. The transporting officer will begin a search of the immediate area in an attempt to regain custody of the detainee. In the event of two detainees and one escapes, the transporting officer shall remain with the detainee still in custody.
 3. The Shift Commander will deploy other available resources to assist in the search and will direct dispatch regarding any appropriate agencies to alert about the escape.
 4. Prior to the end of the shift, the officer will complete a full report of the escape and attempts to regain custody.
 5. In the event attempts to regain custody are not successful, the Shift Commander will determine further action, if any. This may include notifying the police department of the detainee's hometown, applying for an arrest warrant, and notifying the working Deputy Superintendent or Duty Chief .
- I. 70.1.8 (M) Notifying Court of Transfer of a Detainee of Unusual Security Risk
1. In a case when a detainee is to be transferred from one facility to another, such as court or a medical facility, and represents an unusual security risk, the department will be responsible for notifying the receiving agency of that risk prior to transport.
- J. 70.2.1 (M) Detainee Restraint Devices
1. All detainees shall be handcuffed, double locked, behind the back, palms facing outward prior to being placed in the police transport vehicle. Exceptions may include persons known or believed to be pregnant, frail or elderly, of extremely large stature; a person with one arm or a prosthetic, a person being transported on an ambulance gurney, or a person with a physical disability. The Shift Commander as well as the street sergeant should be notified of such cases.
 2. Leg restraints may be used in addition to handcuffs when the officer believes the detainee has a potential for violent behavior or flight; leg restraints may be used in place of handcuffs if the detainee has an injury or disability.
 3. Detainees shall not be handcuffed to any part of a police vehicle during transport.

4. When transporting two detainees, each detainee will be handcuffed behind the back and secured with separate seatbelts. Detainees shall never be transported while handcuffed to each other.
5. Detainees shall not be transported in a prone position due to the risk of positional asphyxia.
6. Officers will use their issued metal handcuffs or in some cases may use *flex cuffs*.

K. 70.3.1 (M) Sick, Injured, Disabled Detainees

1. Detainees who are injured, ill, have limited mobility, or suffer from severe mental illness or emotional disturbance shall not be transported from the point of arrest to the police station. Rather, they shall be transported by ambulance to an appropriate medical facility for examination and treatment prior to booking.
2. If a detainee becomes ill during transport, the officer shall stop, evaluate the detainee, and request medical assistance unless circumstances dictate otherwise.
3. Dispatch shall notify the medical facility of the impending arrival and will provide all available and pertinent information. The officer shall accompany the detainee in the ambulance and remain in contact at all times including during examination and treatment unless directed by the attending physician to do otherwise. In such a case, the officer will remain in close proximity and be available for immediate response if necessary.
4. When transporting a detainee believed to be suffering from an emotional or mental condition, the arresting officer(s) should confer with the sector sergeant to determine whether the individual should be psychologically evaluated in accordance with M.G.L. c. 123, § 12 at the nearest health care facility prior to being transported to the police station to complete the booking process.

L. 70.3.2 (M) Hospital Security Control

1. If a detainee is transported to the hospital for treatment, examination, or admission, the accompanying officer will confer with the hospital staff to determine protocols. These protocols will include direction regarding restraints, suicide watch, risk of escape, and possible assault on hospital personnel.
 - a. Hospital security will be informed of security risks and any assistance that may be required.
2. Whenever a detainee is under arrest and transported by ambulance to a medical facility from the point of arrest or from the station, one officer will ride in the ambulance and another officer will follow in a cruiser.
3. If the subject is being transported to a medical facility from the station, the subject may be transported by transport vehicle for non-emergency procedures, such as dispensing medication; and shall always be transported by ambulance for medical evaluation or treatment.

4. If the transport is direct from the point of custody to a medical facility, the arresting officer will notify the department's holding facility officers of the arrest and relay all pertinent information. The booking officer shall create a record of the arrest indicating that the detainee is being held and the name and location of the medical facility.
5. Upon arrival at a medical facility, officers shall adhere to the following protocols.
 - a. Never leave the detainee out of sight or unattended, except for bathroom breaks, which can be at the officer's discretion depending on the nature and condition of the detainee.
 - b. Guard against escape.
 - c. Ensure that detainees remain restrained during transport and for the entire duration of the hospital stay unless compelling reasons dictate otherwise.
 - d. Coordinate and communicate with hospital staff including hospital security.
 - e. Resolve conflicts between hospital staff and department officers, and/or hospital security procedures and department policy, by consulting with a department supervisor.
 - f. Always maintain control of their firearms.
6. Additional issues during waiting periods, examination, and/or treatment may include the following.
 - a. Telephone calls by detainees are prohibited.
 - b. Any item that could come into the possession of the detainee shall be inspected, monitored, and removed from the detainee immediately after use.
7. Admission to and release from the hospital.
 - a. For continuous supervision of detainees, department supervisors shall assign officers for rotations and relief during meal breaks. Officers may ask hospital security for relief for bathroom breaks.
 - b. Upon release of a detainee from a medical facility, the officer guarding the detainee shall notify ECD and the Shift Commander and request a transport vehicle be dispatched to the location. All medical discharge paperwork should be obtained and brought to the booking officers at the police station or court.

M. 70.3.3 (M) Special Situations

1. Officers should only transport detainees to special situations such as funerals, visits to critically ill persons, the reading of wills, or to nearby ATM's to retrieve bail money with the authorization of the Shift Commander. In such cases where the Shift Commander has granted authorization, a minimum of two officers should accompany the detainee at all times to ensure the care and custody of the detainee. Where circumstances warrant, an officer may explain bail procedures to a detainee or family members and may assist in having the detainee's request for bail addressed promptly.

N. 70.4.1 (M) Vehicle Safety Barriers

1. The patrol wagon shall be the primary vehicle used to transport detainees, which is equipped with a safety barrier separating the driver from detainees who are seated in the rear.

O. 70.4.2 (M) Rear Compartment Modifications

1. Department cruisers, which may be used to transport a detainee when the marked patrol wagon(s) or marked cruisers fitted with a safety barrier are unavailable, are not equipped with partitions nor are they modified to permanently disable power to the rear windows and door locks. However, cruisers are equipped to allow the driver to mechanically disable the power to the rear doors and windows. Therefore, when a detainee is transported in a cruiser, the driver shall ensure that the power to the rear doors and windows is disabled so that the detainee cannot open either from inside the vehicle.

P. 70.5.1 (M) Detainee ID and Documentation

1. When a detainee is transported from one facility to another, the following protocols shall be observed.
 - a. To confirm a positive identification of a detainee who is being transported from one facility to another, other than the police station, the transporting officers will verify the identity of the detainee with the responsible person at the discharging facility and the receiving facility. When a detainee is being transferred from the police station to another facility, the transporting officer will verify the identity of the detainee through the Shift Commander who will check that the department booking procedures have been followed.
 - (1) The procedure should verify that the booking records and numbers assigned to the detainee match with the person described in the records.
 - (2) If positive identification cannot be made, transport to another facility will be delayed until such time as a positive identification can be made.
 - b. The transporting officers will retrieve the booking sheet from the booking officer and ensure that it accompanies the detainee during transport and is submitted to the receiving agency.
 - c. The documentation that accompanies the detainee while being transferred will include any available information regarding the potential for a detainee suicide or escape and/or any other personal traits of a security nature. These documents could include but are not limited to a suicide check, a police report, or any other written document describing the statements or actions made by the detainee.
 - d. Prior to the detainee leaving the police station, the Shift Commander or designee will:
 - (1) verify with the receiving agency all documentation needed upon arrival and that the agency is prepared to receive the detainee;
 - (2) make notation of any obvious deformities, trauma markings, bruises, lesions, jaundice, and ease of motion; and

- (3) advise the receiving agency personnel of any potential medical hazards including information with respect to the detainee having received medical attention while in custody.