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| <p><b>RABUN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE</b></p>  <p><b>General Order Number: 4.30</b></p> | <p><b>Date of Issue</b></p> <p>2/23/2016</p>                              | <p><b>Effective Date</b></p> <p>2/23/2016</p> | <p><b>Revision Date</b></p> |
| <p>Subject: <b>PRISONER TRANSPORT</b></p>  | <p>Amends:</p>  |   | <p>Rescinds:</p>            |
| <p>Index as:<br/>Prisoner Restraint; Prisoner Transport; Transport</p>   | <p>State Certification Standards: 5.3, 5.7, 5.8 5.9, 5.10, 5.11, 5.12</p> |   |                             |

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this General Order is to prescribe the Rabun County Sheriff's Office's policies and procedures with guidelines for the safe transportation of all persons in the custody of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office.

**STATEMENT OF POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office to take all of the necessary precautions while transporting persons in custody in order to protect the lives and safety of the officers, the general public and of the person in custody.

**DISCUSSION**

The safe transporting of all prisoners or persons in the custody of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office is one of the most important aspects of the duties of this department. When a person is in the custody of the Rabun County Sheriff's Office this department has the legal duty to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the officer, the general public and of the person in custody.

**DEFINITIONS**

**CUSTODY** — The legal or physical control of a person; legal, supervisory or physical responsibility for a person.

TRANSPORTING DEPUTY — A sworn deputy, or non-sworn jail officer, who is responsible for transporting a prisoner from one point to another.

## I. GENERAL PROCEDURES

- A. The transporting of adults taken into custody by law enforcement agencies will be handled as follows:
  - 1. The Rabun County Sheriff's Office will transport personnel on a valid State of Georgia arrest warrant initiated by the department;
  - 2. The Rabun County Sheriff's Office will transport adults sentenced in any State or Superior Court in Rabun County. Transportation of any adult sentenced in any municipal court is the responsibility of that municipality;
  - 3. The transportation of prisoners from the Rabun County Detention Center held on "local" non-state charges is the responsibility of the agency initiating the charges;
  - 4. Other Law Enforcement Agencies are responsible for providing all other transports to the Rabun County Detention Center UNLESS prior arrangements have been; and
  - 5. The Georgia State Patrol will normally provide transportation to the Rabun County Jail for individuals under arrest by their personnel unless GSP personnel are unable to do so and specifically request Rabun County Sheriff's Office transport assistance. Such assistance will be provided unless on-duty personnel are assigned higher priority calls.
- B. The transporting of juveniles taken into custody by other law enforcement personnel will be handled as follows:
  - 1. Law enforcement agencies are responsible for providing juvenile transports to the Youth Detention Facility or other location as directed by the in-take officer, except for those individuals who are listed on a valid arrest warrant or outstanding detention order initiated by the Rabun County Sheriff's Office;
  - 2. All requests by the Georgia State Patrol will be handled by the GSP unless other arrangements have been made; and
  - 3. The Rabun County Sheriff's Office will transport juveniles sentenced in any Juvenile Court in Rabun County.

## II. HANDCUFFING SUBJECTS

All persons arrested **will be handcuffed** at the time of arrest, **before being searched and transported**. When necessary, leg restraints and belly chains may also be used. In addition:

- A. Prisoners will not be handcuffed to a fixed object or the vehicle;
- B. Deputies will not handcuff themselves to a prisoner;

- C. Should a prisoner be disabled, in a wheelchair, or one who uses walking aids; the handcuffs, "humane" leather restraints, waist chains, and/or leg irons may be used if the deputy has reason to believe the individual poses a threat to himself/herself, to law enforcement personnel, or to others. Handling a person with disabilities should be considered on a case by case basis;
- D. Restraining devices may be harmful to sick or injured prisoners, depending upon the nature of the sickness or injury, and should be used in a manner that does not interfere with the medical problem;
- E. In cases involving mentally disabled prisoners, handcuffs, "humane" leather restraints, or other reasonable means will be used to prevent the individual from posing a threat to themselves and to law enforcement personnel;
- F. When transporting a number of prisoners in a special purpose vehicle (i.e. transport van), two or more prisoners may be handcuffed together.

### III. PRONE RESTRAINT TECHNIQUES

- A. Prone Restraint Positions have been suspected to cause positional asphyxia and may result in sudden death or serious physical injury. To avoid possible injuries, deputies should remember that such techniques are especially dangerous when handling individuals who:
  - 1. Suffer from suspected acute alcohol intoxication;
  - 2. Are delirious and/or violent;
  - 3. Are suspected to be under the influence of illegal or prescription drugs; or
  - 4. Are obese, especially with large abdomens.
- B. Whenever feasible, prone restraint methods should not be used.
- C. Suspects should be kept in an upright, seated position. However if prone restraint methods become necessary for the protection of law enforcement or civilian personnel, the subject should be closely and continuously monitored.

### IV. SEARCHES PRIOR TO TRANSPORT

All persons in custody will be searched before being transported.

- A. The search will include a full and careful pat down of the individual for weapons, contraband, and items that could be used for an escape. Every square inch of the prisoner will be covered without removing any clothing except for exterior garments.
- B. Prisoners will be searched whenever one deputy transfers custody to another deputy. This is done to assure the receiving deputy's safety.
- C. Deputies will maintain a professional attitude during searches, starting at the head and systematically working down to the soles of the shoes. The search will include all clothing pockets, wallets, handbags,

coin cases, and other possessions that might conceal a weapon, contraband, or item to be used in an escape.

- D. Whenever possible, male deputies will search male prisoners and female deputies will search female prisoners.
  - 1. If the search of the opposite sex is required, it will not begin until the arrival of another deputy or a neutral witness is available to watch the proceedings, unless exigent circumstances exist. The name of any witness(s) will be recorded in the Incident Report and
  - 2. When safety dictates that a male deputy make physical contact with the groin, buttocks, or breast area of females, only the edge or back of the hands or items such as a kubaton, an expandable baton or flashlight will be used. When safety dictates that a female deputy make physical contact with the groin or buttocks or any male, only the edge or back of the hands, or items such as a kubaton, an expandable baton or flashlight will be used.

## V. SPECIFIC TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS

- A. All vehicles used for transports will be thoroughly searched at the beginning of each shift and before and after transporting individuals in custody for weapons, escape devices, and contraband.
- B. Prisoners of the opposite sex will not normally be transported in the same vehicle unless a safety screen, wire cage, or other barrier can physically separate them.
- C. Vehicles used primarily for transporting prisoners will be equipped with safety screens or wire cages and with the rear compartment modified to minimize opportunities for exit.
- D. Prisoners will be placed in the rear seat of the transport vehicle, with handcuffs placed behind their backs or belly chains with handcuffs placed in front of the individual and leg irons, when necessary, fastened with the seat belt securely connected if feasible. If possible, prisoners will be seated belted in for additional security.
- E. If a second deputy is present, he/she will sit in the right front seat.
- F. When required, leg restraints will be used. In addition, "belly chains" may be substituted for handcuffs and utilized by securing the hands in front of the individual.
- G. When being transported in one-person patrol vehicles not equipped with safety screens/cages, the person in custody will be secured in the right front of the vehicle, with handcuffs placed behind the individual, and with the seat belt fastened.
- H. When being transported in two-person vehicles not equipped with safety screens/cages, the suspect will be placed in the rear seat behind the passenger's position with handcuffs placed behind the back or belly chains and handcuffs placed in front of the individual, leg irons, when necessary, fastened with the seat belt securely connected. The second deputy will sit behind the driver.
- I. In no case will a lone deputy transport more than one prisoner in a vehicle without screens/cages.
- J. Whenever possible, persons in custody will be transported with one member of the same sex in the vehicle. If this is not reasonably practicable, the deputy will furnish the dispatcher with the location,

odometer reading, and location at the start and end of travel. This information will be recorded in the Daily Activity Sheet and/or dispatch log.

- K. The use of toilet facilities will normally not be authorized except for transports of prisoners outside Rabun County. When possible, deputies should utilize the facilities of other law enforcement, detention agencies or weigh stations. Under such circumstances, only toilet facilities allowing the deputy to continuously observe the prisoner will be used.
- L. While transporting a prisoner, the primary duty of the deputy is for the safe delivery of the prisoner and to prevent his/her escape. Deputies will not lose sight of their prisoner and will normally make no stops to render assistance to others, unless another certified deputy is in the vehicle. In these cases, other individuals will not be allowed to approach the patrol car to reduce the chances of something being passed to the prisoner.
- M. Deputies will not respond to service calls or provide non-emergency assistance while transporting a prisoner.
- N. Only under the most urgent of circumstances when it becomes necessary to protect life or to prevent severe injury of another may an deputy stop to render assistance while transporting a prisoner. Before leaving the vehicle, the deputy will first ensure the prisoner is properly restrained and secured, will notify dispatch of the emergency and request another unit to respond before taking action. If outside Rabun County, the deputy will notify the jurisdiction's communication center of the emergency and request local assistance.
- O. Prisoners will not be allowed to communicate with non-law enforcement or non-medical personnel while being transported. However, conversation between prisoners will be permitted when authorized by escort personnel.
- P. Transporting sick, injured, or disabled prisoners may require special arrangements with Rabun County medical authorities. Because of the cost involved, the Commander of the Rabun County Detention Center must authorize any extreme expenditure.
- Q. Should a prisoner become sick or injured after a transport has been initiated, the prisoner will be transported directly to the closest medical facility. The transporting deputy will attempt to contact a local 911 center to request assistance if needed.
- R. Prisoners who are non-ambulatory or who require a wheelchair, crutches, or prosthetic devices may need to be transported in an ambulance.
- S. Those appearing to be mentally disabled may also require medical transportation. When necessary, "humane " leather restraints, or other reasonable means, may be used to prevent the individual from a threat to themselves and to law enforcement personnel.
- T. Should medical personnel find any contraband items associated with the person being transported or treated, the transporting deputy will seize the item(s) and initiate an Incident Report.
- U. When requested by medical personnel, deputies will either ride in the ambulance with the prisoner upon approval of the Shift Supervisor, or follow the ambulance to the medical facility.

- V. When a prisoner considered to be a security hazard is transported to another agency or court, Court Staff Personnel will contact the appropriate court official prior to the transport in order to determine if the judge may require any additional security arrangements and/or restraining devices.

## **VI. TRANSPORTING OF SUSPECTS WITH CONTAGIOUS DISEASES**

- A. Personnel should consider the blood and body fluids from any individual as infectious. Protective gloves will be worn when handling persons who are injured or where there is the presence of blood or body fluids. Deputies will follow all procedures outlined in the department's Universal Precautions General Orders when transporting and handling all persons in custody.
- B. Any contact with blood or other potentially infectious body fluids with chapped skin, open wounds, mucous membranes or saliva will be reported to a field supervisor immediately and treated as a possible exposure by medical personnel in accordance with the department's Universal Precautions General Orders.

## **VII. ACTIONS AT DESTINATION**

When transporting a prisoner from one facility to another, the transporting deputy(s) will comply with the following:

- A. Secure personal weapon in accordance with the procedures at the facility;
- B. Remove restraining devices just prior to placing the prisoner in a cell or other holding area or as directed by personnel at the receiving agency;
- C. Deliver all documentation that accompanies the prisoner to the facilities receiving officer;
- D. Obtain the signature of the receiving officer on the transport slip; and
- E. Advise receiving agency personnel of any potential medical or security hazards in writing on the transport slip.

## **VIII. SPECIAL TRANSPORT SITUATIONS**

- A. Transports of mentally ill, alcoholics, drug dependent, or drug abusers.
  - 1. Deputies will transport adults and juveniles for involuntary medical evaluation and treatment to the appropriate receiving facility when a physician states that they are either mentally ill, an alcoholic, drug dependent, or a drug abuser. (O.C.G.A. 37-3-41 or 37-7-41)
  - 2. Such authorization may be given by any physician by executing either the Emergency Admission Certificate Form 1013 or 2013.
  - 3. Upon receiving Form 1013 or Form 2013, deputies will insure that it has not expired by being more than seven days old from the date it was executed. If the form has expired, deputies will not conduct the transport unless a valid form is provided by the physician.

4. Deputies will complete the "Report of Peace Officer" found on the reverse side of the form and leave a copy of the report with the hospital personnel.
  5. Deputies will not wait at the hospital unless requested by medical officials to help control a violent individual and only upon the approval of a Shift Supervisor.
- B. Deputies will transport adults and juveniles for involuntary medical evaluation and treatment when directed by a Court Order stating they are either mentally ill, an alcoholic, drug dependent, or a drug abuser. (O.C.G.A. 37-3-41 or 37-7-41)
1. The transporting deputy will complete the "Report of Peace Officer" on the reverse side of the Form 1013 or Form 2013 and leave a copy with hospital personnel.
  2. No female patient shall be transported without another female in attendance that is not a patient, unless the patient can be accompanied by her husband, father, adult brother, or adult son.
- C. Deputies may take into custody any person for involuntary treatment if the individual is committing any punishable offense and the deputy has probable cause to believe that the person is mentally ill, an alcoholic, drug dependent, or a drug abuser. (O.C.G.A. 37-3-42 or 37-7-42)
1. The person will be transported directly to the Mountain Lakes Medical Center or to another approved medical facility for evaluation and treatment.
  2. The transporting deputy will complete the "Report of Peace Officer" on the reverse side of the Form 1013 or Form 2013 and leave a copy with hospital personnel.
  3. The transporting deputy does not have to initiate charges against the individual transported.
- D. Under certain circumstances, the Court can issue an order to provide transportation for a medical patient upon the request of the County Board of Health. (O.C.G.A. 37-3-101 and 37-7-101)
- E. Transports of adults from the Mountain Lakes Medical Center or another approved medical facility will require the adult to be a verified Rabun County resident and only upon the authorization of a physician by executing either a Form 1013 or 2013. Upon completion of the transport, deputies will complete the "Report of Peace Officer" and return to their normal duties.
- F. Transports of juveniles from the Mountain Lakes Medical Center or other approved medical facility will require the juvenile to be a verified Rabun County residents 17 years of age or younger upon the authorization of a physician by executing either a Form 1013 or 2013. Upon completion of the transport, deputies will complete the "Report of Peace Officer" and return to their normal duties.

## **IX. TRANSPORT OF COMBATIVE OR DISORDERLY PERSON**

- A. Whenever a combative or disorderly person is taken into custody for transport to the Rabun County Detention Center, the transporting deputy shall:
1. Notify Rabun County Detention Center personnel through Rabun County Central Communications or by telephone and alert them of the estimated time of arrival of the individual for book-in; and

2. Not remove the prisoner from the vehicle at the Rabun County Detention Center until the proceedings can be recorded by RCDC personnel and they indicate they are ready to receive the prisoner.
- B. Rabun County Detention Center personnel responsibilities:
1. Ensure the video recording equipment is working properly;
  2. Meet the transporting deputy upon arrival at the RCDC in the vehicle sally port area;
  3. Observe the prisoner being removed from the vehicle and if necessary escort him/her into the RCDC until all related book-in activities have been completed or, if book-in cannot be accomplished, until the individual is securely placed in the holding cell;
  4. Prepare a Rabun County Detention Center Incident Report and include any Supplemental reports from other personnel involved in the incident; and
  5. Ensure all security logs reflect the incident.

#### X. **TRANSPORT AND SECURITY RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. Prior to book-in, the primary responsibility for in-custody transports within Rabun County rests with the Uniform Patrol Division, Criminal Investigations Division.
- B. Individuals arrested for criminal offenses may be transported to the Law Enforcement Center for interviewing by CID personnel prior to book-in.
- C. Once there, the person in custody is the responsibility of CID.
- D. If the individual is to be booked into the Rabun County Detention Center following an interview, CID personnel will be responsible for providing the required security and transportation, unless transport assistance is necessary from Uniform Patrol Division personnel.
- E. Following book-in, the primary responsibility for transports within Rabun County rests with the Rabun County Detention Center.
- F. The primary responsibility for the security of prisoners arrested for a felony or serious misdemeanor violation, who are admitted to a medical facility for treatment either before book-in rests with the Uniform Patrol Division until deputies from the RCDC can be called to stand by with the prisoner.
- G. The primary responsibility for security of prisoners after book-in, rests with the Rabun County Detention Center.
- H. Criminal Investigation Division personnel or other city agencies that want to remove an inmate for any reason are responsible for the security, transportation and return of the individual to the Rabun County Detention Center.
- I. The primary responsibility for in-custody transports outside Rabun County, both before and after book-in, rests with the Rabun County Detention Center. The Shift Supervisor will determine if they have escort personnel and the appropriate vehicle available. Transports for the Rabun County Detention



Center will normally be done by the Transport Unit if one is available. If a Transport Unit is unavailable, the Rabun County Detention Center Shift Supervisor will request assistance from Patrol Division personnel. If no patrol units are available, the transport will be conducted as soon as possible.

- J. The primary responsibility for court ordered transports of inmates for trial or hearings to or from the Rabun County Detention Center will rest with the Rabun County Detention Center
- K. Whenever possible, a marked vehicle will be used for transports outside Rabun County.
- L. Only as a last resort and with the prior approval of a senior commander, captain, chief deputy or sheriff, will an unmarked CID vehicle be used for out of county transports.
- M. A minimum of two escort officers will accompany the prisoner when transported outside the county in an unmarked vehicle.
- N. Any transport over 100 miles one-way, or any transport with a violent prisoner or escape risk will be performed with a minimum of two officers.

## **XI. DOCUMENTATION**

- A. Positive identification of prisoners will be based upon the visual identification of jail personnel and by checking the prisoner's identity.
- B. For prisoners obtained from other agencies, positive identification will be based upon the verbal authorization of the releasing agency's jail/holding personnel after presentation of the appropriate arrest warrant or teletype request.
- C. Documentation required to accompany prisoners for their transfer to another agency is the CHANGE OF CUSTODY FORM. The transporting deputy must obtain the signature of the individual the prisoner is released to at the receiving agency.
- D. Information relating to the prisoner's escape or suicide potential or other personal traits or medical information of a security nature is recorded on the CHANGE OF CUSTODY FORM and accompanies the prisoner being transported.
- E. Any other paperwork or forms as appropriate will be used by the Transport Deputy.

## **XII. SECURITY**

- A. Special Security Situations
  - 1. Transports of prisoners outside Rabun County may require the consideration of vehicle fueling, emergency repair, and toilet facilities and the possible need for over-night accommodation arrangements with appropriate law enforcement agencies along the route of travel.
- B. Transports To Medical Facilities

When prisoners are transported to medical facilities for treatment, examination, or admission:

1. Restraining devices will be removed only when requested by medical personnel and only as necessary for the proper treatment of the prisoner, when safe to do so by the escorting officer;
2. The prisoner is to remain under observation of the officer during his/her treatment, if possible. The officer shall take the appropriate actions to ensure the security and safety of the prisoner and the public;
3. Prisoners being held for a felony or serious misdemeanor violation and admitted for continued medical treatment may require continuous security arrangements. Should the prisoner be admitted for continued medical treatment, deputies will contact their supervisor and remain with the prisoner until properly relieved;
4. Non medical personnel will not be allowed access to the prisoner, nor will telephone contact be permitted, unless authorized by the Shift Supervisor, Rabun County Detention Center;
5. Restraining devices will be used when necessary based upon the degree of risk involved;
6. Eating utensils will be closely monitored so that the prisoner cannot use such items as a weapon or possible escape device;
7. Any unusual occurrences will be reported to the Shift Supervisor, Rabun County Detention Center;
8. When a prisoner is released from the medical facility, all instructions for future treatment and medication should be obtained in writing and signed by the attending physician. The Shift Supervisor will be notified and the necessary transport arrangements made; and
9. In the event that a Federal Inmate needs transportation for medical reasons, the United States Marshal's Office will be notified to arrange for the transport. In the event the medical transport is of an emergency nature, two deputies will accompany the inmate for treatment and the United States Marshall's Office will be notified as soon as possible to take custody of the prisoner.
10. Further details on inmate medical transports can be located in the Rabun County Detention Center's Policy and Procedures Manual.

C. Transports To Unusual Situations Or Emergencies

1. These unusual situations or emergencies may include funerals, of visits to critically ill family members, etc. Emergency leave may be granted to prisoners when it is confirmed that there exists a serious illness or death in the inmate's immediate family and appropriate departmental personnel are available to provide continuous security.
2. Emergency leave may only be considered when the serious illness or death involves an inmate's parent, spouse, brother, sister, grandparent, son or daughter. Immediate family member does not include aunts, uncles, and other relatives by marriage, nephews, nieces, cousins or other relations.
3. No emergency leave will be authorized to locations outside Rabun County unless directed by a court order or the Sheriff.
4. Inmates posing a threat to public safety and/or who are currently on disciplinary lock-down will not be granted emergency leave. Such a determination will be based upon an evaluation of the charges for which the inmate is incarcerated and his/her behavior record while at the Rabun

County Detention Center. Prisoners charged with a violent or sex offense and/or who have attempted to escape from custody or otherwise displayed disruptive/combatative behavior toward agency employees and/or other inmates, will not be authorized emergency leave.

5. Visitations will not exceed a period of one hour (not to include travel time) and, whenever possible, will be restricted to daylight hours.
6. A minimum of two deputies may be assigned to provide security to inmates granted emergency leave.
7. Inmates granted emergency leave may wear appropriate civilian attire as provided by the family and will be restrained with waist-chains, leg irons, and handcuffs during transport and visitations.
8. During funeral leave, prisoners shall be kept separate from other attendees and will not be allowed "grave side" attendance.

### **XIII. REQUEST PROCEDURES**

- A. Either the inmate or family member may initiate a written request to the Commander, Rabun County Detention Center for emergency leave to attend a funeral or serious illness of an immediate family member.
- B. Prisoners will be authorized to attend unusual situations only upon the authorization of the Commander, Rabun County Detention Center, Chief Deputy or Sheriff. Such authorization will be based upon:
  1. Availability of appropriate escort personnel;
  2. Security risk assessment of the prisoner; and
  3. Criticality or emergency of event as verified with medical personnel, funeral home officials, Red Cross, and/or legal representatives.
- C. The written request will provide sufficient information to fully identify the deceased or seriously ill family member, the relationship to the inmate, the specific medical condition, name of treating physician, the location where the inmate is to be transported, and any other information deemed appropriate to substantiate the request.
- D. The request for emergency leave will be submitted to the Shift Supervisor, Rabun County Detention Center for review and verification. The Shift Supervisor will contact the attending physician or funeral director to verify the situation, location of family member, and time of funeral or medical visitation period.
- E. Following verification, the Watch Commander will forward the request to the Commander, Rabun County Detention Center or to his designee for final review and approval.
- F. The Commander, Rabun County Detention Center or his designee(s) will advise the individual who initiated the request for emergency leave of his/her final decision.

- G. All expenses associated with the transport and security of inmates authorized emergency leave will be the responsibility of the prisoner's family unless it can be demonstrated that there is an inability to pay because of financial hardship or other mitigating circumstances.

#### **XIV. ESCAPE OF PERSONS BEING TRANSPORTED**

- A. The transporting deputy will immediately notify Rabun County Central Communications or if outside of Rabun County the local law enforcement jurisdiction and provide a full description of the individual and the exact location of escape.
- B. Request that Rabun County Central Communications initiate a "10-98" and contact all law enforcement agencies in the immediate area.
- C. Request notification of the appropriate Division Commander and the Chain of Command.
- D. If inside Rabun County, the Uniform Patrol Division Shift Supervisor will take immediate steps to organize and direct a search for the individual using all available on-duty personnel.
- E. The appropriate Division Commander will decide if additional search personnel are required.
- F. A Canine Unit will be contacted should it becomes necessary to obtain a tracking dog.
- G. In all escape situations; the deputy responsible for the prisoner will initiate an Incident Report. The report will outline in detail the facts and circumstances surrounding the escape and all actions taken to locate and recapture the person.



By Order of the Sheriff: **Chad K. Nichols**  
Sheriff, Rabun County