



State of North Carolina
Department of Public Safety
Prisons

Chapter: F
Section: .1100
Title: **Transporting Inmates**
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POLICY & PROCEDURES

.1101 General

Correctional staff tasked with custodial supervision of inmates to be transported within the state act as authorized agents of the Director of Prisons. These staff are vested with the authority of peace officers for this purpose. These staff are responsible for the safety and security of all inmates assigned to them. This policy will outline procedures governing the transportation of inmates outside of the institution/facility and from one jurisdiction to another. Procedures governing the use and security of institution vehicles will also be outlined.

.1102 Security

Precautions will be taken to maintain order and security. The following provisions should not be construed as excluding the employment of additional precautions that may be necessary.

- (a) **Armed Supervision.** All inmates other than those classified in minimum custody will be supervised by armed, certified correctional staff during transportation. Officers in possession of firearms will not place themselves in a position that they allow the inmate to gain possession of the weapon.
- (b) **Mechanical Restraints.** Handcuffs and leg cuffs will be used when the officer-in-charge of the inmates or responsible line staff deem the restraints necessary for custodial reasons. The restraints will be frequently and carefully examined. No inmate classified in control status, close custody or medium custody will be transported without leg cuffs, handcuffs with black box and security chain in a non-security vehicle. If inmates classified in control status, close custody and medium custody are transported with minimum custody inmates, all inmates will be handcuffed.
- (c) **Ballistic Body Armor.** All inmates classified in close custody and medium custody that are transported outside the confines of a correctional facility shall be supervised by correctional staff wearing ballistic body armor. This body armor is to be worn on the outside of the uniform shirt. Exceptions are authorized only for road squad officers and in emergency situations at the discretion of the OIC (Officer-In-Charge).
- (d) **Searches.** Inmates being transported classified in control status, close custody and medium custody will be completely searched (strip search) upon leaving and entering a close or medium security prison facility. Inmates will not be allowed to have any items that may be used as a weapon or instrument for escape. For additional specifics on

searches, refer to DOP Policy F.0100 (Operational Searches).

- (e) Copies of security alert comments should be provided to transporting officers so that appropriate security measures can be taken to reduce the likelihood of escape and/or assault.
 - (1) Certain inmates with security alert comments may require transportation by special teams, either PERT or SORT. These inmates are usually classified on the F12 Security Alert Screen as Extreme Escape Risk. The decision for identifying these inmates and identifying the special team utilized for transport will be made in concert by the Chief of Auxiliary Services and the Chief of Security.
- (f) In the event the inmate is being transported for a court appearance, the transporting officers shall be provided a copy of the court's writ prior to departing the facility in case questions arise related to the court appearance.
- (g) Vehicles. Vehicles used in transporting inmates will be thoroughly inspected before inmates are loaded. This inspection will insure there is no contraband, particularly which could be used to assist inmates to escape. When a security vehicle is used, stops for security inspections will be accomplished frequently when inmates of a high custodial risk are being transported. When practical, inmates will be transported during daylight hours and will be kept under observation at all times while in transit.
- (h) Routes. Inmates should not be provided prior information regarding the time of departure or the route that will be taken when they are transported. Generally, the most direct route should be taken when transporting inmates. The officer-in-charge may authorize deviation from the most direct route for security reasons.
- (i) Traffic Laws. Correctional staff driving vehicles must have a valid drivers license when operating a motor vehicle. All traffic laws must be followed at all times. Correctional staff transporting inmates may not travel in excess of the posted speed limit.

.1103 Staff to Inmate Ratios

- (a) Custody Levels. Under normal circumstances, the following staff to inmate ratio should be utilized in these custody categories. Based on the individual situation, additional security precautions may be authorized.
 - (1) Close Custody. Two staff with one or more inmates.
 - (2) Medium Custody. One staff member with one inmate; two staff with two or more inmates.
 - (3) Minimum Custody. Ratio to be determined by Facility Head or designee.

- (b) Control Status. Under normal circumstances, the following officer to inmate ratio should be utilized in these control categories. Based on the individual situation, additional security precautions may be authorized.
- (1) High Security Maximum Control. Two staff with one inmate. More than one inmate will require two staff in the security vehicle and two staff in a chase vehicle.
 - (2) Maximum Control. Two staff with one to four inmates. Five inmates and above requires a chase vehicle.
 - (3) Death Row. Two staff with one inmate.
 - (4) Intensive Control. Two staff with one to four inmates. A chase vehicle is required when five or more inmates in this status are transported.
 - (5) Protective Control. Security consistent with the inmate's custody level.
 - (6) Disciplinary Segregation. Security consistent with the inmate's custody level.
 - (A) Inmates in regular population transferring to a facility for disciplinary segregation may be transferred on the regular transfer bus.
 - (B) Inmates already on disciplinary or administrative segregation that are transferring to a facility to continue segregation should not be transferred on the regular transfer bus.
 - (7) Administrative Segregation. Transportation is consistent with the inmate's custody level.

Inmates being transferred for administrative segregation should not be transferred on the regular transfer bus.
 - (8) Security Alert Inmates (Extreme Escape Risk). Transportation is consistent with the special team's training and will be approved by the Chief of Security.

.1104 Special Security Issues

- (a) Medical/Hospital Transportation
- (1) All transportation decisions for medical purposes should be made in consultation with medical staff.
 - (2) Close and medium custody inmates being transported on an emergency basis without a scheduled appointment should be transported with two officers to one inmate.

- (3) Close and medium custody inmates being transferred for an outside medical clinic should be transferred with two staff to one inmate; however, three staff may transport two inmates if the site and clinic schedule will allow one staff to observe one inmate in the waiting area while two staff escort one inmate to the examination/treatment area. All staff should be armed.
- (b) Safekeepers
 - (1) Misdemeanant. One staff member with one or more inmates.
 - (2) Felon. Two staff with one inmate.
 - (c) Security Threat Group

Security will be consistent with the inmate's custody classification
 - (d) Mental Health

Security will be consistent with the inmate's custody classification.
 - (e) Helicopter Transport
 - (1) With Staff
 - (A) Officer should not be armed.
 - (B) Restraints should be placed on the inmate as the medical condition will allow.
 - (C) Contact should be made with a nearby prison facility and a request made for an armed officer to go to the hospital.
 - (D) Local law enforcement near the hospital should be notified and assistance requested.
 - (E) Hospital security should be notified.
 - (2) Without Staff
 - (A) Restraints should be placed on the inmate as the medical condition will allow.
 - (B) Contact should be made with a nearby prison facility and a request made for an armed officer to go to the hospital.
 - (C) Local law enforcement near the hospital should be notified and assistance

requested.

(D) Hospital security should be notified.

(f) Ambulance Transport

- (1) The officer riding in the ambulance should not be armed. A chase vehicle with an armed officer should follow.
- (2) Radio communications between the officers in the ambulance and the chase vehicle should be maintained.
- (3) Restraints should be placed on the inmate as medical condition will allow.

(g) Vehicle Transportation

In cases where an inmate experiences a medical or psychiatric emergency during transport, the transporting officers should immediately pull over and call 911.

(h) Emergency Leave

- (1) Any inmate in close custody or medium custody approved for an emergency leave is supervised by two staff with one inmate.
- (2) Inmate supervision for minimum custody inmates is at the discretion of the Facility Head.
- (3) Inmates assigned to HCON, MCON, and ICON should not be allowed to attend a funeral service or private viewing. Close custody and medium custody inmates should not be allowed to attend a funeral service. The Region Director, designee or duty officer may approve a close custody inmate in the regular population or on administrative or disciplinary segregation to attend a private viewing. The Facility Head or designee is the approving authority for medium custody inmates in regular population or on administrative or disciplinary segregation to attend a private viewing. Close custody and medium custody inmates approved for a private viewing may only have immediate family present at the time of the private viewing. Minimum custody inmates may, at the discretion of the Facility Head or designee, attend either a private viewing or funeral service. The Region Director, designee or duty officer is the approving authority for emergency leaves for all inmates with Life sentences regardless of custody classification.
- (4) Additional information regarding emergency leave is found in DOP Policy F.0400 (Emergency Leave).

(i) Compliance with State Laws

Staff transporting or providing security in a chase vehicle must comply with all applicable state laws to include maintaining posted speeds and obeying all traffic lights and traffic signs.

George F. Solomon 3/31/15
Director of Prisons Date

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