

420 – Guidelines for Use of Leg Restraints

Santa Ana Police Department

Departmental Order #420 – Guidelines for Use of Leg Restraints

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Purpose

The purpose of this Order is to provide officers with information to assist them in the proper application of the Ripp Hobble to safely restrain violent or potentially violent individuals, and to provide guidelines for the transportation of individuals who may be at risk of sudden death from Substance Induced Excited Delirium.

Background

The leg restraint is a device used to restrict the movements of an individual who is exhibiting violent and/or bizarre behavior. High-risk individuals, those under the influence of certain drugs or suffering from different psychoses, present a difficult and dangerous problem to law enforcement officers. Typically, a violent high-risk individual is physically restrained with the use of handcuffs and leg restraints. A subject left on his chest on his chest or stomach and unable to move into another position may have difficulty breathing.

Individuals who abuse narcotics may exhibit symptoms of a phenomena known as Substance Induced Excited Delirium and be at extreme risk of sudden death. Generally, Substance Induced Excited Delirium is a toxic reaction to the substances ingested, and can lead to an individual's sudden death. Studies in this area are inconclusive and experts disagree on the total overall effect of this restraint position; however, procedures do exist to minimize the potential deleterious effects to a subject's health.

Policy

Leg restraints shall only be used by police officers on individuals who are violently resisting arrest, and remain combative, or pose an escape risk. The restraints shall be used only by those officers who have successfully completed the leg restraint training program and within the procedures outlined by this Order. The "Ripp Hobble" restraint device is the only leg restraint system approved for use by Santa Ana Police Department personnel (other than traditional leg restraint cuffs used inside the jail/detention facility).

I. Procedures

A. Recognition of Substance Induced Excited Delirium.

1. Generally, officers are called to a scene involving Substance Induced Excited Delirium because of the violent or bizarre behavior exhibited by the suspect. Police are often confronted with violent individuals who exhibit extreme strength, and are suffering from hypothermia, resulting in profuse sweating. Without warning, the individual suddenly collapses and dies, generally within an hour after being restrained. It is imperative for the safety of both the officers and subjects, that the officers be able to identify the common symptoms and behavioral patterns exhibited by subjects in a cocaine psychosis or excited delirium state. Symptoms of Substance Induced Excited Delirium can include:
 - a. Bizarre and Aggressive Behavior
 - b. Dilated Pupils
 - c. Fear
 - d. High Body Temperature (as high as 106-108 degrees)
 - e. Hiding Behind Cars, Trees, and Bushes

- f. Irrational or Incoherent Speech
 - g. Panic, Paranoia
 - h. Profuse Sweating, Inappropriate Removal of Clothing
 - i. Shivering, Seizures
 - j. Unexpected Physical Strength
 - k. Violent Behavior Towards Objects, Especially Glass, and Other Individuals
2. High risk individuals, those under the influence of certain drugs, or affected by the lack of taking certain prescription medication (such as Lithium in the case of certain manic depressants) or suffering from different psychoses, may become extremely combative with officers and others, and must be physically restrained.
 3. If feasible, the initial contact with a high-risk individual should be done in a calm and soothing manner. Reassure the individual that you are there to help and attempt to talk him/her into custody.

B. Use of Restraint Devices Including the Leg Restraint

Any person whose violent or bizarre behavior requires them being restrained by the use of the leg restraint shall be handled in accordance with the procedures outlined in this Order.

1. When it becomes necessary to use handcuffs and/or leg restraints on any person, the following procedures shall be followed:
 - a. Anytime a subject is handcuffed and/or leg restraints are applied to the legs, the subject shall not be placed face down and left lying on his chest or stomach area.
 - b. The restrained subject shall be rolled onto his side and left in that position or in a sitting position until the restraints are removed.
 - c. Under no circumstances will an officer apply the leg restraint system to the head or neck of a subject.

In regard to the proper application of the leg restraint system, there are three (3) recognized techniques that shall be used by the Santa Ana Police Department.

1. **The waist/handcuff restraint technique** is used to prevent a subject from slipping the handcuffs under the legs to the front position.
 - a. The restraint is looped around the subject's waist with the snap hook placed through the looped end. Wrap the snap hook end around the handcuff chain and hook it back onto itself.
 - b. To make the restraint taut, the restraint may be wrapped around the handcuff chain.

- c. Two restraints may be joined together to fit around the waist of a large subject.
2. **The leg restraint technique** controls movement of the feet, yet allows the subject to walk. The following are the two approved techniques:
- a. The restraint is looped once around the subject's legs just above the ankle and pulled taut. The restraint is then wrapped twice around the other leg above the ankle and snapped onto the cross member formed by the restraint. The subject can then walk, but with limited mobility.
 - b. The restraint is looped and placed around the subject's legs just above the kneecaps and pulled taut. The friction locking clip should be on the same side as the officer. Assist the subject into a standing position. Hold the subject's elbow in one hand and the restraint in the other. Assist the subject and walk slowly.
 - c. The restraint is looped once around both of the subject's ankles and pulled taut. The free end of the restraint is placed inside the doorjamb of the rear door and pulled taut to secure the subject's feet against the inside of the door. The remaining free end of the restraint is placed inside the front door jamb to prevent the end from dangling on the ground. NOTE: Under no circumstances is the free end to be left unsecured. If necessary, another hobble may be used to lengthen the free end.
3. **The maximum restraint technique** will be used as a last resort to control combative individuals who remain violent and continue to resist or kick once handcuffed.
- a. The maximum restraint technique incorporates two or more leg restraints. The subject is placed in the prone handcuffed position with hands behind his back and handcuffs double locked.

i.	The first leg restraint secures the feet by wrapping around the ankles.
ii.	As the subject is rolled onto his side, the second leg restraint is wrapped around the waist. The snap hook is pulled through the loop and slack is taken out. The loop and snap hook are in front of the subject. A knot can be made at the loop. The slack in the leg restraint is made taut by pulling the snap hook between the legs of the subject.
iii.	The snap hook from the leg restraint on the ankles is brought to the snap hook from the waist restraint and attached. The subject is now maximally restrained.
iv.	On large-framed individuals, it may be necessary to attach two leg restraints together to go around the waist. Modifications may need to be made due to the variations of the slack in the leg restraints.

- b. After an individual has been maximally restrained, he should immediately be placed on his side or in the sitting position. The individual shall not be placed face down and laying on his chest or stomach. The individual shall be constantly monitored. The three key things to watch for after the individual has been restrained are:

i.	Breathing
ii.	Color (watch for subject turning blue or gray)
iii.	Functional level of consciousness -- the physical state of a person being conscious and able to speak, answer questions, and move around spontaneously.

- c. Any body weight necessary to control the subject shall be limited to the legs, lower torso, and shoulder area. Body weight shall be immediately minimized on the subject's back to prevent restriction of his breathing.

C. Transporting a Restrained Subject

1. When transporting a subject who has been maximally restrained, and does not exhibit signs of substance induced excited delirium, two officers shall be used. The second officer will watch and monitor the subject. Officers, under normal circumstances, will not transport any subject in the prone position. A subject who has been maximally restrained will be transported sitting sideways across the back seat with waist and feet secured with seat belts, or seated in the conventional position secured with the seat belt.

If the subject cannot be transported in a seated position, paramedics shall be called to the scene to transport.

- a. The paramedics shall be called to the scene to transport any subject who is in the maximum restraint position when that subject is:

i.	Not at a Recognizable Level of Consciousness
ii.	Having Difficulty Breathing
iii.	Convulsing
iv.	Having a Seizure
v.	Complaining of Pain

- b. Individuals suffering from Substance Induced Excited Delirium are at a very high risk for cardiovascular or respiratory collapse, leading to sudden death. Therefore, officers shall not transport anyone exhibiting the symptoms of substance induced excited delirium to any police facility before that person has been examined by paramedics and/or treated at an emergency medical facility.
2. An individual shall not be restrained in the maximum restraint position any longer than necessary. The restraints shall be immediately removed once it has been determined that the restrained individual is no longer a threat to himself or others.

3. The preferred method for lifting and carrying a subject in the maximum restraint position is to place an officer on either side of the subject and sit the subject up. Facing each other, the officers will place one hand under the subject's knee and the other on the inside of the subject's upper arm. Simultaneously, they will lift the subject up using their legs to minimize the potential for injury.

If the subject continues to struggle, bite, or spit, the officers can lift and carry the subject in the prone position. At least three officers should be involved in this lift; one officer on either side and the third on the legs. As soon as possible, the subject should be placed on his side or in the sitting position.

- a. To place a subject in the back seat, one officer will lift the subject's body by grabbing the subject from the rear under the arms and across the chest. The second officer will control the legs at the leg restraint. The third officer will prepare the back seat and seat belts.
 - b. The third officer will take control of the feet from the second officer and guide the subject into either a sitting position across the back seat, or into a conventional seated position. The subject shall be secured by seat belts.
4. Whenever a subject is restrained utilizing the Maximum Restraint Technique, a field supervisor shall be called to the scene. The field supervisor shall ensure that the leg restraint system has been properly applied and that the person restrained is transported in a safe manner. The field supervisor shall document the use, circumstances, and proper application of the Maximum Restraint Technique on his/her Supervisor's log. In the event of injury or death, supervisors shall document the incident as outlined in Departmental Order 425, Use of Force. All other techniques do not require supervisory approval, but the use and justification for the use of the restraint must be thoroughly documented in the officer's report.