



Las Cruces Police Department
GENERAL ORDERS
FIELD OPERATIONS VOLUME 2
GO-230 PRISONER SEARCHES (MOST CRITICAL)
Revised 11/9/2012

230 PRISONER SEARCHES

PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to outline procedures and guidelines for searching prisoners.

POLICY

It is the policy of the Las Cruces Police Department that all prisoners be searched for weapons, contraband, and personal effects. When time and conditions allow, prisoners should be searched by officers of the same sex as the prisoner.

APPLICABILITY

This General Order applies to all commissioned and transport officers. This General Order supersedes all previous versions.

REFERENCES

- CALEA 1.2.5, 1.2.8
- NMML OPR.08.03

230.01 SEARCHING TRANSPORT VEHICLES

Any vehicle or conveyance used to transport a prisoner shall be thoroughly searched for weapons, evidence, and contraband by the transporting officer prior to and after transporting a prisoner.

230.02 SEARCHING PRISONERS

- A. Prisoners shall be searched thoroughly for weapons, evidence, and contraband after being arrested, prior to and after being escorted and/or transported to any location.
- B. Officers may have prisoners remove footwear, jackets, sweaters, layered clothing, hats, gloves, or other similar type of outer wear for the purpose of searching for contraband.
- C. Prisoners shall be searched every time a change in custody occurs, such as relinquishing a prisoner to another officer, to another agency, or removing a prisoner from or returning a prisoner to a detention facility.



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D. Female prisoners should be searched by a female officer when practical. If a female officer is not available, searches of female prisoners shall be conducted in front of a witness.

230.03 STRIP SEARCH

LCPD does not authorize strip searches of prisoners at any time. If an officer believes that a strip search may be necessary to locate a weapon, evidence, or contraband the prisoner may be concealing, the officer shall notify the detention facility staff upon arrival at the detention center and/or petition for a search warrant. The transporting officer shall take appropriate precautions to ensure their safety until a strip search can be conducted by detention center staff. An officer of the same sex as the person being searched shall be present to collect any recovered evidence.

230.04 BODY CAVITY SEARCHES

- A. Officers may search a prisoner's mouth for contraband and/or interfering substances for the breathalyzer but shall not insert any object into the prisoner's mouth nor use the officer's finger to sweep contraband out of the prisoner's mouth due to the risk of a bite.
- B. All other body cavity searches are prohibited unless the officer has obtained a search warrant from a court authorized to issue one in our jurisdiction. At all times a supervisor shall be contacted prior to conducting a body cavity search. Any authorized body cavity search shall be conducted at a medical facility by a licensed physician, nurse, or other adequately licensed medical professional. An officer of the same sex as the person being searched shall be present to collect any recovered evidence.