



**Las Cruces Police Department**  
**GENERAL ORDERS**  
**FIELD OPERATIONS VOLUME 2**  
**GO-234 HOLDING CELLS (LESS CRITICAL)**  
**Revised 12/31/2014**

**234 HOLDING CELLS**

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this General Order is to establish procedures and guidelines for the use of holding cells.

**POLICY**

It is the policy of the Las Cruces Police Department that all persons having been arrested or charged with a criminal offense and transported to the police department shall be temporarily housed in holding cells.

**APPLICABILITY**

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

**REFERENCES**

- CALEA CHAPTER 71
- NMML OPR 8, 9, 10
- NMSA 31-1-5 Procedures on arrest; reports

**DEFINITIONS**

**Booking Room** – A secure room containing holding cells used for booking arrestees.

**Holding Cell** – A caged area used to confine arrestees during the booking process.

**Interview Room** – A secure room used for custodial or non-custodial interviews. The interview room is not as secure as a holding cell.

**234.01 HOLDING CELLS**

- A. Holding cells are located in the Booking Room as a temporary holding facility for arrestees. Placing persons inside the holding cells who have not been arrested is prohibited.



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- B. The senior patrol supervisor of each oncoming shift shall be responsible for ensuring the Booking Room and each holding cell is inspected for cleanliness, adequate lighting and ventilation, general repair, security, and safety prior to the start of each patrol shift. Any deficiencies shall be addressed as quickly as possible. Any contraband located shall be secured and entered into evidence as found property unless an investigation can link the contraband to an arrestee. The inspecting officer shall record the result of all inspections in the logbook. Completed logbook pages shall be retained by Internal Affairs.
- C. The transporting officer shall ensure that holding cell doors and all booking area doors are closed and locked when an arrestee is inside a holding cell or in the booking area. Booking area doors shall not be left propped open at any time. Arrestees shall be handcuffed to the cell bench during booking procedures unless circumstances make doing so unsafe for the officer or the arrestee.
- D. The transporting officer shall examine the holding cell for property, contraband, and damage prior to and after an arrestee has been placed inside. Any deficiencies shall be immediately reported to the on-duty supervisor. If a cell is damaged to the extent that it cannot be properly secured or if a prisoner could be injured because of the damage, the on-duty supervisor shall secure the cell from use until it is repaired or until deficiencies are corrected.
- E. Body fluids, debris, and contaminates should be cleaned immediately by custodial staff. The duty supervisor may authorize custodial staff to be called out after hours to clean a holding cell. Employees observing deficiencies shall contact an on-duty supervisor immediately. The on-duty supervisor may close the holding cell until it is properly sanitized.

**234.02 PLACING ARRESTEES IN HOLDING CELLS**

- A. Officers shall secure their firearms in the Booking Room lock box or in the trunk of their unit any time an arrestee is inside of the Booking Room.
- B. Transporting officers shall thoroughly search all arrestees upon arrival at the Booking Room, prior to placing them in a holding cell. Funds, valuables, and other items in the arrestee's possession (other than the clothing being worn) will be taken from the arrestee. The items taken will be inventoried on an Evidence and Property Control sheet and/or on the Arrest/Booking Report with a copy of the inventory provided to the detainee. When deemed necessary, items which could inflict bodily injury, such as belts, shoelaces, neckties, garters, and suspenders, may also be removed.



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- C. Arrestees shall be handcuffed to the benches. In the case of an evacuation, arrestees shall be immediately transported to the detention facility.

**234.03 HOLDING CELL OCCUPANCY AND TIME RESTRICTIONS**

- A. The holdings cells are equipped to temporarily house one or more arrestees. Arrestees shall be placed into an unoccupied holding cell if one is available. If multiple arrestees need to be placed into one holding cell, then adequate space should be provided between arrestees to prevent one arrestee from physically assaulting another.
1. If arrestees are harassing or physically assaulting each other, these arrestees shall be placed in separate holding cells or preferably separate booking rooms in order to provide for the safety of the arrestees.
- B. Arrestees of the opposite sex shall be held in separate holding cells. If the juvenile holding cell is available, it shall be used to further separate and segregate arrestees of the opposite sex.
- C. Arrested juveniles may be held in any holding cell but shall at all times shall be sight and sound separated from adult arrestees. If a holding cell is unavailable for a juvenile arrestee an alternate holding area as described in section 234.05 shall be used.
- D. An arrestee shall not be kept in a holding cell for more than two (2) hours without supervisor approval. The facts and circumstance of holding an arrestee longer than two (2) hours in a holding cell shall be documented in the police report.

**234.04 HOLDING CELL SECURITY**

- A. While an arrestee is occupying any holding cell, the interior lights of the cell shall remain on. Officers shall not leave an arrestee unattended in a holding cell unless the arrestee can be monitored through a window or via video surveillance.
- B. Arrestees transported to the police station that become violent to the point that officer safety and/or the arrestee's safety is jeopardized, should be transported immediately to the detention facility. The on-duty supervisor shall be immediately notified when this occurs.
- C. Arrestees who need to use the restroom shall use the one provided in the Booking Room. Arrestees shall be escorted by an officer of the same sex whenever practical.



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An arrestee who is disruptive and/or violent and requests to use the restroom facilities shall be transported to the detention facility.

**234.05 INTERVIEW ROOM**

- A. The interview room is used to conduct custodial and non-custodial interviews. Persons not in custody should not be restrained and may leave at any time during the interview. Persons who are in custody shall be escorted to the interview room in restraints and may be released from restraints during the interview upon the discretion the interviewing officer. Restraints shall be used to return the person in custody to the Booking Room.
- B. No one shall be left unattended in the interview room at any time. Officers may step out of the room and close the door but shall keep the door in view at all times or use the video monitoring equipment next door to the interview room to observe the interview room.
- C. If relief for the officer is needed, he/she shall call another officer to monitor the person in the interview room.

**234.06 ALTERNATIVE TO HOLDING CELL**

Interview rooms may be temporarily used as an alternative to a holding cell only when overcrowding occurs in the holding cells, and only with supervisor approval. The holding cell shall be used for arrestees charged with the most serious crimes or who present the greatest risk of violence or escape. Arrestees temporarily confined in an interview room shall be placed under constant guard by a police officer. Once the overcrowding conditions cease, arrestees shall be taken back to the holding cells in the Booking Room.

**234.07 ARRESTEE VISITS**

Arrestee visitors are not allowed in the Booking Room.

**234.08 USE OF TELEPHONES BY ARRESTEES**

Arrestees are entitled to three telephone calls within twenty (20) minutes after arrival at the police station. The booking officer shall allow the arrestee a reasonable opportunity to make a telephone call when a request is made. The booking officer shall dial the telephone number and remain with the arrestee during the telephone call. All calls shall be made from the Booking Room.