

RESTRAINTS (Detention)

OBJECTIVES

- Staff will learn the different types of restraints
- Staff will learn general rules for using restraints
- Staff will learn to select the appropriate restraining device for combative inmates

Restraints are an important in controlling inmates, and for maintaining security. Normally, restraints are used as a safety precaution to control inmates while they are being transported, but they are also used to restrain an inmate who is physically resisting, preventing injury to others or to an inmate himself, to enforce rules and regulations, and for authorized medical purposes.

TYPES OF RESTRAINTS

Authorized restraints generally include:

- Handcuffs
- Belly Chains
- Leg Irons
- Leather Restraints
- Flex Cuffs
- Restraint Chair

Most facilities discourage the use of hard restraints for medical or long-term situations. Instead, the general practice is to use soft restraints. Soft restraints are commonly used on inmates who are self-destructive or enraged. Soft restraints include:

- Canvas
- Rubber
- Leather Strapping

RULES FOR USING RESTRAINTS

Officers should select the most appropriate restraining device for the situation, e.g., purpose of restraint, activity, location, and inmate behavior or behavior history. Other than for transporting inmates, the use of restraints for more than a short time should be authorized by medical professionals or a ranking official.

- 1) Restraining devices should be used humanely, only as required, and applied only as long as is necessary.
- 2) Restraining devices should never be used as punishment or in a way that causes undue physical pain or restricts the blood circulation or breathing of an inmate.
- 3) When it is necessary to place restraints on an inmate due to violent behavior, the inmate should be placed alone in a holding cell and closely monitored. If the behavior continues for more than thirty minutes, medical personnel should be contacted to evaluate the inmate.
- 4) If an inmate is to be placed in four-point restraints-that is, restraints that bind each hand and each foot- prior approval should be obtained and medical personnel should be notified.
- 5) In all cases where physical force and restraints are used, a written report should be filed as soon as possible by each officer involved.

COMBATIVE INMATES

For combative inmates, select the proper restraint based on the following criteria:

- 1) The behavior of the inmate. The more violent and combative the inmate, the more the need for restraints.
- 2) The physical and mental health of the inmate. Medical personnel should be consulted if the inmate is injured or if the inmate exhibits bizarre behavior.
- 3) A history of violent or uncontrollable behavior. Often the inmate and his or her behavior patterns are known to staff and violence can be anticipated.
- 4) The purpose and destination of movement when transporting an inmate.
- 5) Whether there is anticipated contact with the public.

RESTRAINT CHAIR

Restraint chairs are useful in controlling the behavior of uncooperative and violent inmates if used properly. Improper use can be harmful and even fatal to the inmate. For example, the possibility of "positional asphyxia" or suffocation that occurs when inmates are restrained after excessive exertion from violence or resistance.

The following rules should apply when using a restraint chair:

- 1) It should be authorized by a supervisor.
- 2) It should be used only to prevent the inmate's self-injury, injury to others, or property damage.

- 3) It should only be used in cases of extremely aggressive or disruptive behavior.
- 4) It should only be used when other approved control techniques are inappropriate.
- 5) When occupied, the restraint chair should be placed in a holding cell with no other occupants, and the inmate monitored.
- 6) Upon placement in the chair, the inmate should be examined by medical staff to prevent injury.
- 7) The use of the restraint chair should be documented. The date and time the inmate was placed in the chair should be recorded, as well as each time the inmate is observed, and when he or she is removed.
- 8) Inmate behavior should be evaluated at least hourly for removal from the chair.
- 9) Adequate food and fluids should be offered as advised by medical staff. Each time food or fluid is given or offered, it should be recorded in writing.
- 10) Inmates should be released from the chair when necessary to use the toilet facilities. If their disruptive behavior has not changed, they should be returned to the chair.
- 11) The inmate should be kept in the chair only until the disruptive behavior that necessitated the use of the chair ceases. It is recommended that in no case should the inmate be kept in the chair for more than four consecutive hours.
- 12) If after four hours, the inmate's behavior has not changed, a ranking official should authorize its continued use.

POLICY

Review all department policies, procedures, and post orders relating to restraints and restraining inmates.

CLOSING

- *Encourage discussion about this presentation, restraint types available to staff, and the need to restrain inmates humanely.*