



Kern County Sheriff's Office
Policies and Procedures

TITLE: Hobble Restraint		NO: F-350	
APPROVED: Donny Youngblood, Sheriff-Coroner			
EFFECTIVE: September 7, 2004	REVIEWED: 01/25/2021	REVISED: 00/00/00	UPDATED: 10/13/2017

POLICY

It is the policy of the Kern County Sheriff's Office to attempt to minimize the potential for physical injury to all persons during all contacts. Officers are permitted to use that level of restraint during lawful detentions, arrests, and transportation that is reasonably necessary to effect the arrest, to overcome resistance, or to prevent escape in accordance with law and the policies and procedures set forth in this manual.

The following procedures are intended to apply to field situations. Detention Bureau personnel will adhere to applicable Detention Bureau policies and procedures.

During the transportation of a prisoner or a detainee, it is appropriate to restrain the person with his/her hands behind the back, unless the person has a physical injury that would be aggravated by this practice, or the person is a pregnant female. Officers shall ensure that once handcuffs are applied, they are double locked in order to minimize the potential for wrist injury to the person, and to maximize the handcuff's security.

Occasionally, officers may encounter a particularly violent person who continues to fight and resist even after his/her hands are appropriately restrained. There are a number of reasons for behavior of this nature, however it is most typically related to drug influence, mental illness, or a medical condition. In any case, restraining the person while he/she is in a facedown-prone position can inhibit their ability to breathe effectively.

The practice of using a soft restraint to tie the person's ankles together is referred to as a "hobble." In those cases where the use of handcuffs alone is not adequate to control the person and prevent him/her from further injuring himself/herself or others, officers are permitted to use the hobble. The hobble is particularly appropriate in those cases where the person is resisting the officers' efforts by kicking at the officers or violently thrashing his/her legs.

The only Sheriff's Office-approved hobble restraint is the RIPP Hobble Restraint. The RIPP Hobble Restraint is made of black, one-inch polypropylene webbed belting with a tested strength of 700 pounds. It is equipped with a steel alligator jawed, friction-locking clip, and a bronze swivel-snap ring.

Only Sheriff's Office members who have successfully completed Sheriff's Office-approved training in applying the RIPP Hobble Restraint are authorized to carry and apply the RIPP Hobble Restraint. In all cases, the use of the Hobble Restraint shall conform to the policies and procedures set forth in this manual and to the specific application techniques provided in training.

Any use of the RIPP Hobble Restraint will be documented pursuant to the reporting procedures

in section F-100 of this manual

DIRECTIVE #1

If, at any time, it becomes necessary to restrain a person in a prone position, that person would be appropriately restrained using the handcuffs and hobble (when necessary) as quickly as possible, giving due consideration to the safety of all persons. As soon as possible, the person should be rolled onto his/her side so that breathing is unimpaired. Officers should avoid applying weight to the person's upper torso during this restraint process, restraining only the arms and legs whenever possible.

This does not preclude the proper application of the Prone Control Technique wherein the officer's knee is positioned across the person's upper shoulder to maintain physical control of the suspect during the handcuffing process.

DIRECTIVE #2

Officers should never bind any person's hobble to the handcuffs except in the gravest of circumstances where less intrusive means of restraint are ineffective and the officer has reason to believe the use of lesser restraints will unnecessarily jeopardize the safety of the officer(s) and/or the person being restrained, and/or the public.

PROCEDURE A

In the event that it becomes necessary to bind a hobble to the handcuffs:

- As soon as possible after the hobble is attached to the handcuff, the person should be rolled onto his/her side so that breathing may continue unimpaired.
- Medical aid will be summoned as soon as possible to assist in evaluating the person's medical condition and to provide transportation to the medical facility should it become necessary to transport the person in a prone position with the arms and legs restrained.
- At least one officer at the scene will be assigned to stay with the restrained person to continually monitor the person and watch for any changes in breathing or consciousness.
- Once a person has become cooperative, release the hobble from the person's handcuffs.
- Apply first aid as needed.
- Transport to a medical facility for examination.
- Advise any transporting officer or Jail Receiving officer of the circumstances.

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- Follow the reporting procedures in F-100 of this manual.

DIRECTIVE #3

No person shall remain with the hobble bound to the handcuff after it no longer appears reasonably necessary to effect the arrest, prevent escape, overcome resistance, or prevent the arrestee from injuring himself/herself.

DIRECTIVE #4

No person will be transported in a Sheriff's Office vehicle in a prone position lying on his/her chest or abdomen.

When, for the safety of the person or officers involved, it becomes necessary to transport a person with the hands and feet secured and it is not possible to transport the person in a seated position, the person will be secured to a gurney or a longboard using soft restraints and transported to a hospital via ambulance for medical evaluation prior to booking.

When transporting a person in a seated position and it is necessary to restrain the feet it is permissible to attach the hobble to an eyebolt installed in the interior of the vehicle. No part of the RIPP Hobble Restraint shall be allowed to extend outside of the vehicle as it can become trapped underneath the rear wheel causing injury. The person will be seat belted during transportation.

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