

KERN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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TRAINING BULLETIN

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DETENTIONS BUREAU MANUAL POLICY UPDATE: C-0200 SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM

The changes listed below were made to the Detentions Bureau Policy and Procedure Manual (DBPPM) C-0200 Suicide Prevention Program.

Policies are available in the official version of the Detentions Bureau Manual, which is located on the "Detentions Bureau" page of the SharePoint website. In accordance with DBPPM "Maintaining Bureau Policies", any printed copies of the manual will be maintained and updated from this source. The official Detentions Bureau Policy and Procedure Manual may be accessed by clicking on the link below:

[Detentions Bureau - Detention Bureau Manual](#)

Please note: This update bulletin provides a summary of the revisions to the listed policies. Please review the whole policies to ensure that you are familiar with the changes.

Policy Highlights

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear protocol for monitoring incarcerated persons at risk of self-harm or suicide, ensuring their safety while in custody. This policy outlines two levels of suicide prevention observation, Suicide Watch, and Safety Precautions, to address varying degrees of risk based on assessed needs.

New Definitions

- **Suicide Watch:**
A high-level suicide prevention measure requiring safety checks at random intervals, at least twice every thirty (30) minutes, and not to exceed 15 minutes between safety checks documented on a log for individuals presenting immediate and high risk of self-harm.
- **Safety Precaution:**
A precautionary measure involving safety checks at random intervals at least once every thirty (30) minutes documented in a logbook for individuals assessed to be at a moderate risk of self-harm.
- **Suicide Resistant Cell:**
An anti-ligature cell. These cells have a bunk, toilet, and sink.

- **Safety Cell:**
A cell within the facility infirmary or Direct Observation Unit (DOU) that is designated for individuals actively engaging in self-harm, persistently destroying facility furnishings, or as determined necessary by Correctional Behavioral Health (CBH). These cells are unfurnished, with walls and floors covered in a protective padded layer to ensure the safety of the incarcerated person.
- **Direct Observation Unit:**
A housing unit designated for individuals requiring additional observation, such as those on suicide precautions or at the recommendation of CBH. These units are staffed by detentions personnel 24/7, with mandatory random interval safety checks that shall not exceed 30 minutes between checks for all individuals housed within.
- **Direct Visual Observation:**
Direct personal view of the incarcerated person in the context of their surroundings without the aid of audio/video equipment.
- **Safety Check:**
Entry into a housing unit by a deputy, during which the deputy makes direct visual observation of the housing unit and all incarcerated people within the housing unit.
- **Suicide Attempt:**
A non-fatal, self-directed, potentially injurious behavior with intent to die; suicide attempts might not result in injury.
- **Serious Suicide Attempt:**
A non-fatal, self-directed act with the intent to cause self-harm and achieve death, requiring admission to an external medical facility.
- **Property and Privileges Form:**
A door sign for suicide-resistant cells and observation cells that lists the commissary and county-issued items the incarcerated person is permitted to have in their cell as well as privileges that are restored such as Dayroom, Recreation Yard, Tablets, and visits, etc.

New Directives

- **Directive #2: Role of Shift Supervisor**
Detentions staff will notify the Shift Supervisor when an incarcerated person is placed on or removed from suicide watch or safety precaution. The Shift Supervisor will follow the determination of CBH to place on or remove the incarcerated person from suicide watch unless there are specific, articulable, and documented reasons to deviate from the determination.

- **Directive #3: Booking Process for Individuals to be Placed on Suicide Watch**
The booking process for that incarcerated person will be completed before putting them on watch. The incarcerated person deemed at risk for suicide shall not be left unattended during any portion of the booking process prior to placement on suicide watch.
- **Directive #4: Placement in a Safety Cell Only When Necessary**
Incarcerated people on suicide watch or safety precaution shall not be housed in a safety cell unless the incarcerated person's behavior indicates the need for a safety cell or is directed by CBH.
- **Directive #5: Notification and Documentation when Placement is Deemed Unnecessary**
If CBH staff evaluates an incarcerated person prior to placement and determines the incarcerated person does not need to be placed on suicide watch or safety precaution, a deputy will immediately notify the Shift Supervisor of the CBH determination and complete a Jail Management System (JMS) incident documenting the decision.
- **Directive #6: Restrictions on Property and Privileges**
CBH staff will communicate items and activities that are restricted or allowed by completion of the Property and Privileges Form. This form will be reviewed each time a clinician from CBH evaluates the incarcerated individual.
- **Directive #7: Notification of Suicide Watch or Safety Precaution Placement at Time of Transfer**
Transporting and escorting deputies will ensure that the incarcerated person's observation logs for suicide watch are continued in accordance with this policy and transferred with the incarcerated person.
- **Directive #8: Suicide Prevention Training**
The Medical and Mental Health Section will periodically disseminate Just In Time Training (JITT) bulletins on various mental health topics to all staff.
- **Directive #9: Suicide Attempt Notification Emails**
The on-duty Shift Supervisor shall send an email to the Compliance Section Sergeant, the ADA and Mental Health Section Manager, and CBH, which includes the name, booking number, and current housing location of the incarcerated person, and the relevant JMS or Incident Report numbers.
- **Directive #10: Timely Transfer to a Hospital for Individuals on Suicide Watch**
Incarcerated persons housed in a safety cell for twelve hours (12) who show no signs of improvement will be considered for being sent to the hospital for further evaluation. Incarcerated persons who remain in a safety cell at twenty-

four (24) hours will be transported to the hospital for further evaluation and treatment.

New Procedures

- **Procedure A: Placement on Suicide Watch or Safety Precaution**
Incarcerated people being placed on suicide watch or safety precaution will undergo a private visual body cavity search, conducted by a deputy of the same sex prior to placement. A JMS incident report shall be completed indicating that the search was conducted and detailing the results of the search.
- **Procedure B: Documentation and Monitoring Requirements**
It is imperative that every report includes all relevant information in the narrative, including details such as the Shift Supervisor's name, CBH contacts, and housing conditions.
- **Procedure C: Step-Down from Suicide Watch to Safety Precaution**
When CBH determines that an incarcerated person no longer meets the criteria for Suicide Watch but still requires continued monitoring, the incarcerated person may be stepped down to Safety Precaution status.
- **Procedure D: Removal From Suicide Watch or Safety Precaution**
The decision to remove an incarcerated person from suicide watch or safety precaution will be made by CBH. CBH will be responsible for notifying the Shift Supervisor of removal.
- **Procedure E: Release From Custody While on Suicide Watch or Safety Precaution**
If an incarcerated person is to be released from custody and CBH is not available, the Shift Supervisor will ensure transport to the Psychiatric Evaluation Center (PEC) at Kern Medical.
- **Procedure F: Meals**
Meals served to an incarcerated person on suicide watch will be served on suicide resistant food trays and with utensils that do not pose a risk of self-harm, unless clinically contraindicated.
- **Procedure G: Court Appearance**
Incarcerated persons on suicide watch will be sent in paper clothing unless otherwise ordered; those on safety precautions will dress as directed by CBH.
- **Procedure H: Property and Privileges Form**
A Property and Privileges Form shall be posted outside of every cell that houses an incarcerated person on suicide watch or safety precaution. CBH staff shall complete determinations, and detention staff shall post and update the form as needed.

- **Procedure I: Emergency Removal of Property by Detentions Staff**
If detentions personnel determine the approved and issued property presents a safety or security risk, they shall document the removal using JMS incident codes 4080 and 4016, notifying both the supervisor and CBH.
- **Procedure J: Suicide Attempt Reviews**
The Compliance Section shall consult with CBH and evaluate all incarcerated person suicide attempts within detention facilities. The panel review will occur within 30 days of each incident and must include representatives from KCSO, CBH, and Kern Medical.

The updated policy may be accessed via the following links:

- [C-0200 Suicide Prevention Program](#)
- [C-0200 Attachment A - Allowable Incarcerated Person Property](#)

By acknowledging this training bulletin, you indicate that you have read and understand the contents of this training bulletin and DBPPM C-0200 Suicide Prevention Program. All Sheriff's Office personnel are required to review and acknowledge this training bulletin by **Friday, November 21, 2025.**