



San Diego County Sheriff's Department

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Kelly A. Martinez, Sheriff

March 29, 2024

Eileen Delaney, Board Chairperson
Citizens' Law Enforcement Review Board
1600 Pacific Highway, Suite 251
San Diego, CA 92110

CLERB POLICY RECOMMENDATION #21-117

Dear Chairperson Delaney,

The Sheriff's Department welcomes and supports the Citizens' Law Enforcement Review Board's independent review of complaints alleging improper actions by members of this organization. We continuously strive to respond with professionalism and concern to the public we serve, and the CLERB process provides invaluable input to that end.

The Department received your letter with a policy recommendation relating to handcuffing guidelines. The Department understands the concerns expressed by the CLERB members. Please see below for the response to your below-listed recommendation.

- 1. It is recommended that the SDCSD implement a policy that provides guidelines for handcuffing. These guidelines should cover, at minimum, such topics as the proper placement of handcuffs, checking to ensure the handcuffs are not so tight as to cause injury and mandatory double locking. A comprehensive handcuffing policy should also provide guidelines covering the documentation of injuries and/or complaints of pain allegedly due to handcuffs and the provision of medical treatment to prisoners claiming said injuries.*

Deputies are trained in the San Diego Regional Law Enforcement Academy on properly placing handcuffs, checking for tightness, and double locking when tactically safe. The academy uses Learning Domain 33: Arrest and Control – Chapter 4, General Guidelines for Use of Handcuffs (Revised February 2022). This Learning Domain (LD) specifically addresses the correct placement of handcuffs on a prisoner's bare wrists to prevent injury. It also includes guidelines for appropriately adjusting handcuffs and advises that they be double-locked when tactically safe. Deputies also learn to document injuries and complaints of pain allegedly due to handcuffs, and they review policies regarding the provision of medical treatment to prisoners claiming injury.

In addition to academy training, handcuffing is part of our perishable skills portion of arrest and control for Continued Professional Training (CPT). Deputies attend CPT training every two years,

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which includes handcuffing. CPT is based on the POST Perishable Skills Training Program (PSP): Arrest and Control, which provides training for hands-on/practical skills and covers current policies and legal issues. During this training, deputies demonstrate their knowledge of arrest and control and current case law. They also demonstrate their skills related to effective handcuffing techniques. CPT training also includes proper documentation of the events and any injury to an individual that may take place and to render aid or request additional medical services as needed.

Finally, Sheriff's P&P Section Addendum F states, "Whenever a subject requires or reasonably requests medical attention after a use of force incident, a deputy shall provide medical attention, request medical aid, and/or transport them to a medical facility as soon as it is safe and practical." Although Addendum F is not specific to handcuffing, it clearly advises that medical attention should be sought, when necessary, after a use of force incident.

Based on the above-noted references, the Department believes that the topic of handcuffing already receives a considerable and sufficient amount of training. Based on this, the Department does not believe a written policy on handcuffing is necessary in addition to the training and policies already in place related to handcuffing and providing medical care.

Thank you for your considerate policy recommendation and for your continued service to the citizens of the County of San Diego. We appreciate CLERB's assistance with helping the Sheriff's Department provide the highest quality public safety services to everyone in San Diego County.

Sincerely,

KELLY A. MARTINEZ, SHERIFF



David Perkins, Lieutenant
Division of Inspectional Services

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