

# INMATE SAFETY CHECKS

## 902.1 DEFINITION AND PURPOSE

1. An inmate safety check is a direct visual observation (i.e., direct personal view of the inmate/area without the aid of audio/video equipment), performed at random and varied intervals of each inmate located in an area of responsibility. The purpose of conducting inmate safety checks is to ensure there are no inmates displaying any obvious signs of distress requiring assistance, maintaining the safety and welfare of each inmate and ensuring the security of our facilities.
  - (a) During inmate safety checks, deputies will check for obvious signs of life, which can include but are not limited to the following:
    1. Talking/eating
    2. Head movement (i.e., lifting their head from their mattress)
    3. Movement of the inmate's extremities
2. For an inmate who is sleeping or appears to be sleeping, deputies will check for obvious signs of trauma or distress as well as obvious signs of life.

## 902.2 DOCUMENTATION OF INMATE SAFETY CHECKS

Every inmate safety check will be documented in the most appropriate documentation log, (e.g., guard station log, module log, area log, or door log).

All guard stations responsible for securing inmates in a cell or dormitory will maintain a Safety Check Log. The Safety Check Log will be generated by guard station staff and begin at 0000 hours.

The documentation entry will include the name(s) of the personnel who conducted the inmate safety check and the actual starting times of each inmate safety check. The entry will also include appropriate details of the check and the conditions observed.

Some examples could be, but are not limited to:

1. No problems to report.
2. No unusual activity noted.
3. No suspicious activity observed.
4. Roof leaking in W-18. Sgt. X and Facility Manager notified.
5. Light is not functioning in courtroom 13 holding cell. Facility Manager notified.
6. Inmate X was found crying on bench. Stated, "Family trouble". No injuries observed, inmate transported back to jail facility. Court Operations Log entry made, Sgt. X notified court clerk, Presiding Judge, and CHS staff.

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Each sergeant will check the logs in his/her area of responsibility to verify staff is properly documenting the inmate safety checks. A notation will be made in the log with the sergeant's name and the time the log was checked.

#### **902.3 LATE INMATE SAFETY CHECKS**

1. If it appears an inmate safety check cannot be conducted within the required time frame, the area sergeant will be notified as soon as possible, preferably prior to the time the check will be due. The sergeant will locate and assign available staff to complete the inmate safety check.
2. If an inmate safety check is not completed within the required time frame, staff must:
  - (a) Complete the inmate safety check as soon as possible.
  - (b) Notify the area sergeant as soon as possible.
  - (c) If staff is still not available to conduct the inmate safety check, advise the sergeant of the apparent conditions, including any unusual circumstances or activity, and continue to observe the area.
  - (d) Make an entry in the Safety Check Log describing the circumstances which caused the inmate safety check to be delayed, which sergeant was notified, and the information provided to the sergeant.
3. The sergeant will document the late inmate safety check in the log, including the reason the inmate safety check was late and any corrective action taken.

#### **902.4 CONDUCTING INMATE SAFETY CHECKS**

1. Deputies will conduct all inmate safety checks.
2. Deputies will conduct timely, thorough inmate safety checks. Due to the variety of housing designs within our facilities (modules, tanks, barracks, dorms, tents, holding cells, and areas such as dayrooms, showers, recreation and program related classrooms, etc.), methods of conducting inmate safety checks may vary. Inmate safety checks must be conducted in any area inmates are present, and from a location which provides a clear, direct view of each inmate. Deputies shall be close enough to each inmate to ascertain their presence and apparent physical condition. Deputies shall investigate any unusual circumstances or situations.
3. Inmate safety checks may not be conducted from a guard station. For linear style housing units, inmate safety checks must be conducted from the beach and the upper tier within the housing unit. In addition to the beach and upper tier, other locations for the inmate safety check may need to be utilized (e.g.: the guard corridor and rear-guard corridors) in order to ascertain the presence and apparent physical condition of every inmate.
4. Audio/visual electronic surveillance systems shall not be used to conduct inmate safety checks, but may be used to supplement and verify checks.

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5. Diligent enforcement of the jail rules will help prevent inmates from covering lights or placing items which obstruct deputies' view. This will increase deputies' ability to do comprehensive visual inmate safety checks.
6. Inmate safety checks shall occur at random and varied intervals (CCR Title 15, Section 1027.5(d)-Safety Checks)
7. In the event an inmate safety check is needed, but immediate resources are not available, the staff members (Deputy, SSO, CSA) of the affected area will attempt to identify resources for completing the inmate safety check. In situations where an inmate safety check cannot be started or has been started but cannot be completed, the area sergeant will be notified as soon as possible and identify resources for ensuring the inmate safety check is conducted or completed without delay.
8. Anytime an inmate safety check is completed outside of the required time period, the staff members (Deputy, SSO, CSA) of the affected area will document an explanation and the name of the supervisor who was notified. The supervisor shall make a notation in the "Custody Operation Supervisor's Log" under the tab "Late Safety Check".
9. Facility specific inmate safety check information is located in the following sections of the Custody and Court Operations Manual:
  - (a) Theo Lacy Facility – 7000
  - (b) Central Women's Jail – 5000
  - (c) Central Men's Jail – 4000
  - (d) Intake Release Center – 3000
  - (e) James A. Musick Facility – 6000
  - (f) Court Operations – 10000-19000

#### **902.5 INMATE SAFETY CHECKS/P.C. 4021**

1. When an inmate is in a cell, at least one employee entering the cell shall be the same sex as the inmate in the cell (P.C. Section 4021)
2. P.C. 4021 does not preclude deputies of either sex from assisting each other or excuse them from ensuring a housing unit inmate safety check is completed.
3. Special Circumstances
  - (a) A staff member of the opposite sex may enter the housing unit or cell under emergency circumstances to perform life saving measures when needed. Examples include, but are not limited to:
    - Medical Emergencies
    - Or any other life-threatening situation
    - Attempt Suicide
    - Natural Disasters
    - Riots/Assaults

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### 902.6 FREQUENCY OF INMATE SAFETY CHECKS

1. Deputies will conduct inmate safety checks to verify the status of inmates in their area of responsibility within the following timeframes:
  - (a) For all housing units, not otherwise specified in this policy, each inmate safety check must begin within forty-five (45) minutes of the beginning time of the previous inmate safety check.
  - (b) Any activity conducted by deputies in housing areas (i.e., Count, chow distribution, medication distribution, clothing exchange, commissary distribution, passing out mail, etc.) can be considered an inmate safety check if it meets the requirements of Department Policy 902 for an inmate safety check and the activity is performed for every inmate in the housing area. The activity will be documented accordingly (i.e., Medication Distribution/Inmate Safety Check, Commissary Distribution/Inmate Safety Check, Clothing Exchange/Inmate Safety Check, etc.) in the guard station log.
  - (c) Designated Behavioral Health housing locations require each inmate safety check to begin within thirty (30) minutes of the beginning time of the previous inmate safety check. (This does not apply to Chronic Behavioral Health housing).
    1. The following locations are currently designated as Behavioral Health housing however, this is subject to change based on the department's needs:
      - IRC Modules L, M and Module K
      - IRC Mental Health Unavailable Housing (Psychological Observation)
      - Medical Observation
      - Central Men's Jail-Sheltered Living
      - Central Woman's Jail-Medical Floor
  - (d) At all facilities, for inmates requiring a mental health referral, deputies will either directly monitor the inmate or provide inmate safety check(s) within fifteen (15) minutes of the beginning time of the previous inmate safety check on the inmate until they are seen by CHS. See Department Policy 903.3 for further details.
  - (e) Intake Release Center Module "S" - Each inmate safety check must begin within (30) thirty minutes of the beginning time of the previous inmate safety check. When there are no inmates housed in Module "S-2" checks can be conducted within (45) forty-five minutes of the beginning time of the last check for "S-1" housing.
  - (f) Safety Cell inmate safety checks must begin within fifteen (15) minutes of the beginning time of the previous inmate safety check. Requirements for using a safety cell are covered in Policy 903.6 Suicide Prevention.
  - (g) When the restraint chair is in use, staff will check the condition of each inmate in the chair by direct visual observation within fifteen (15) minutes of the beginning time of the previous check. A sergeant shall check the condition of any inmate

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in the restraint chair by direct visual observation within sixty (60) minutes of the beginning time of the last sergeant's check. Requirements for using a restraint chair are covered in CCOM 1800.3 – Restraint Chair.

- (h) At any Justice Center, each inmate safety check in detention must begin within (45) forty-five minutes of the beginning time of the previous inmate safety check, except as required in 902.6.I -902.6L below.
- (i) At any Justice Center, when inmates are secured in a holding cell not in view of a guard station, each inmate safety check must begin within (30) minutes of the beginning time of the previous inmate safety check.
- (j) At any Justice Center, when an inmate is secured in a holding cell, alone and out of view of other inmates, each inmate safety check must begin within (30) minutes of the beginning time of the previous inmate safety check.
- (k) At any Justice Center, when juveniles are secured in a holding cell, an inmate safety check shall be performed at least twice every thirty (30) minutes.
- (l) CJ1 – The Central Justice Center operates one courtroom (CJ1), with an adjacent Detention area, inside of the Central Men's Jail. Court Deputies will conduct inmate safety checks as follows inside CJ1 Detention:
  - (a) Each inmate safety check in CJ1 Detention must begin within thirty (30) minutes of the beginning time of the previous inmate safety check.
  - (b) If Court Deputies assigned to CJ1 are unable to conduct an inmate safety check, they shall request the assistance of Central Men's Jail Deputies to complete the inmate safety checks.