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## **TRAINING BULLETIN**

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### **Searching Prisoners for Patrol Personnel**

Searching subjects in the field is as dangerous now as it has ever been. Communicable diseases, the current anti-police trend, as well as recent legislation that mandates the release of felons in greater numbers, have increased the dangers to law enforcement exponentially in the last several years. In addition, new techniques and technology have been created to circumvent the efforts of officers to locate and seize drugs and weapons from those they contact. In an effort to prevent drugs and weapons from entering custody as well as injuries to our personnel, a look at search techniques will be discussed below.

This discussion deals primarily with the following searches: pat-downs, searches incident to arrest, transportation, and booking searches. In many circumstances when officers fail to locate drugs or weapons, complacency plays a part. The key factor in successful searches is attitude. When searching, the attitude should always be that a weapon or drugs will be found. This is followed by professional, efficient, and complete searches. In addition, the “1+” rule always applies. This means if you find a weapon or drugs on a person, you will find another if you search competently. Secondly, when taking custody of a subject from another officer, always conduct a thorough search before transporting. Lastly, despite the fact that a subject has already been searched, the booking search should be even more thorough.

There are different ways to search subjects. Whether you search using the “quarters” method, divide the body in halves, or any other technique, the importance is completing a methodical and thorough search. Make sure the search includes the head area (including hats), waistbands, and the small of the back. Most importantly, an efficient search of the groin area and bra (when practical) are paramount for success. The booking search shall include the removal of socks and secondary clothing items that have pockets, as well as the head area and mouth.

Officer safety is paramount. Use the following techniques to maximum your safety:

- Avoid searching anyone in the field by yourself.
- Remember and utilize the approved arrest and control techniques provided by the department's defensive tactics personnel.
- When practical, handcuff first.
- Don't put your hands where you cannot see
- Wear latex gloves.
- Utilize your body worn camera
- Related to booking searches, remove the handcuffs after the person has been searched.

In the past, cellphones, shanks, and brass knuckles, among other contraband have been discovered by jail personnel after the booking process had been completed. This endangered our jailers, detectives and patrol personnel. Luckily no injuries have been reported. However, serious injuries have occurred in other jurisdictions where searches have failed to ensure the safety of others.

<http://www.officer.com/video/11303333/proper-searching-defensive-tactics-technique>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gsCWK4XYHV8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kS9QFhLeUcg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SiyPTuek7mQ>