



# POLICY AND PROCEDURES

**NUMBER:** 120

**SUBJECT:** Random Searches/Strip Searches

**ACA STANDARDS:** None

**DIRECTOR:** Herbert Bernsen

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 3/10/93

**REVISION DATE:** 4/13/93,  
9/97, 6/99, 4/02, 7/08, 7/13, 2/16

## I. POLICY

The St. Louis County Department of Justice Services shall randomly frisk staff, and always frisk individuals and their personal belongings upon entering the secure area of the Justice Center.

## II. RESPONSIBILITIES

[The St. Louis County Department of Justice Services' Superintendent of Security, *Superintendent of Human Resources/Operations*, Watch Commanders, and Intake Service Center Supervisors are responsible for implementing these procedures, and all Justice Services' staff are responsible for the following procedures.]

## III. DEFINITIONS

**Department Property:** Any property owned by the County and controlled by the Department. This includes, but is not limited to, desks, lockers, cabinets and vehicles.

**Food Containers:** Food containers and disposable cups are the only authorized personal belongings employees are allowed to take into the secure perimeter. The food containers must be stored in the break room available in the staff member's assigned working area. They may be either disposable in nature or a small soft sided insulated reusable lunch bag. (Lunch containers should be no larger than the size of a twelve pack.) Thermoses, coolers and gym bags are examples of unauthorized containers. (See Policy #137 Food and Beverage at Work Stations)

**Frisk:** A search of an individual by running his/her hands over the individuals clothing.

**[Random Staff Search Days:** A day or shift(s) designated by the *Superintendent of Security or the Superintendent of Human Resources/Operations* when random individuals entering the secure perimeter are frisked in the Search Room, across from Master Control, prior to their movement into the secure perimeter. This will be conducted at least twice a month. Individuals will be searched in random order according to a numerical sequence (e.g., every third person, every fifth person, etc.). This sequence will be predetermined prior to the actual search, by the Superintendent of Security and may differ from shift to shift.]

**Strip Search:** A thorough examination of the unclothed body of the individual and the individual's clothing in search of illegal contraband performed by Custody staff.

**Workplace:** Any area where the property is owned by St. Louis County and operated by the Department of Justice Services.

#### IV. PROCEDURES

##### A. General Rules

1. Any individual, with the exception of police and judges, is subject to being searched any time they enter the secure perimeter. The search room on the 3rd Floor across from Master Control will be used for searches.
2. Even though staff and Corrections Medicine staff may be given a locker or assigned to a desk, it is still Department property and subject to search when:
  - a. There is reasonable suspicion of work related misconduct or a criminal investigation is being conducted.
  - b. An inventory search is required due to a staff member being placed on Administrative Leave, reassigned or terminated.
3. Staff shall secure all personal belongings in their lockers before reporting for duty. This includes, but is not limited to: coats, keys, smoking paraphernalia, gym bags, personal cellular phones, etc.

(See Policy #136 Staff Locker Rooms) Personal pagers may be carried by employees but must be kept in their pants pocket.

4. If staff members have any doubts about personal property they wish to have in the workplace, they should check with the Watch Commander or not bring the property in question to work. The staff member may avoid exposing personal belongings at work by simply leaving these items at home.
5. If an emergency is broadcasted on the two-way radio, the staff conducting the searches will immediately depart the search area and respond to the emergency. If time allows after the emergency, the staff will return to their post and resume the random searches.

B. Random Searches

1. Random searches will be conducted in the following manner:
  - a. The Watch Commander and at least one (1) Lieutenant and one (1) line officer selected by the Watch Commander will conduct the searches. At least one of these officers will be female.  
  
**NOTE:** Immediately after a Watch Commander begins to conduct random searches, he/she will ensure all on-duty Supervisors are informed that random searches are being conducted.
  - [b. The Watch Commander or Shift Supervisor/designee will conduct the count of individuals using the numerical sequence given by the Superintendent of Security or the *Superintendent of Human Resources/Operations.*]
  - c. Individuals who are selected to be searched due to the numerical sequence will enter the search area.
  - d. The staff conducting the search will:
    - (1) Direct the individual to place all items in his/her pockets in a container.
    - (2) Check the items in the container.

**NOTE:** Personal pagers will be checked to ensure they are functioning. This will assist in ensuring the pager is not being used to transport contraband.

- (3) Frisk the individual
  - (4) Check any other items (e.g., boxes, food containers, etc.) the individual may be carrying.
  - (5) Confiscate any illegal contraband immediately
  - (6) Inform the Watch Commander of any contraband found on an individual
  - (7) Write an Incident Report on any illegal contraband as directed by the Watch Commander. Any witnesses to the search will also write a report.
2. If a Department of Justice Services staff member refuses to be searched, the Watch Commander/Lieutenant will inform the staff member that he/she will be immediately placed on Investigative Suspension without pay. The staff member will also be directed to contact the Internal Affairs Officer immediately or if the Internal Affairs Officer is not in then, by 9:00 AM the next normal working day. He/she will be directed to immediately depart the secure perimeter. The Watch Commander will inform Master Control and note any refusals in the Watch Commander's Report. The Watch Commander/Lieutenant and any witnesses will write an Incident Report concerning the incident.

NOTE: During this time, the staff member's proximity card will be confiscated and his/her access to Department's computer system will be denied.

3. If a staff member from another Department or outside agency refuses to be searched, the Watch Commander/Lieutenant will direct that staff member to immediately depart the secure perimeter. The Watch Commander/Lieutenant will contact the staff member's supervisor. The Watch Commander will inform Master Control and note any refusals in the Watch Commander's Report. The Watch Commander/Lieutenant and any witnesses will write an Incident Report concerning the incident.

[NOTE: The staff member will not be allowed in the secure perimeter until the supervisor of the staff member contacts the Superintendent of Security or the *Superintendent of Human Resources/Operations* to discuss the situation.]

4. If a volunteer refuses to be searched, the Watch Commander/Lieutenant will direct that volunteer to immediately

depart the secure perimeter. The Watch Commander/Lieutenant will contact the Program Manager. The Watch Commander will inform Master Control and note any refusals in the Watch Commander's Report. The Watch Commander/Lieutenant and any other witnesses will write an Incident Report concerning the incident.

**[NOTE:** The volunteer's identification card will be confiscated and he/she will not be allowed in the secure perimeter until the Program Manager and Superintendent of Security *or the Superintendent of Human Resources/Operations* discuss the situation with the volunteer and are confident the volunteer will conform to the rules.]

5. Any contraband (e.g., cigarettes, disposable lighters, etc.) will be disposed of in a trash can immediately by the staff conducting the search. Any contraband (e.g., keys, cellular phones, etc.) will be removed from the secure perimeter by the individual and placed in the individual's locker or other area outside of the secure perimeter.
6. Any illegal contraband found will be immediately confiscated and placed in an evidence bag. (See Policy #840 Preservation of Evidence) The Watch Commander will ensure the Clayton Police Department is called. An incident Report will be written any time suspected illegal contraband is found.
7. The Watch Commander will place the name and Department of any individual who brings contraband into the secure perimeter during Random Search Days or strip searches in the Watch Commander's Report.

#### C. Strip Searches

- [1. Staff may be stripped searched if there are reasonable grounds based on objective facts that a staff member is attempting to smuggle contraband on his/her person into the secure perimeter. Only the following administrative staff (Director, Superintendent of Security, or *Superintendent of Human Resources/Operations*) will authorize a strip search of a staff member based on the supplied information and corroboration of that information.]

**NOTE:** For example, a strip search could not be authorized with only an anonymous tip. The search could be authorized if the person(s) in command received an anonymous tip along with other corroborating information concerning this matter.

2. Authorized strip searches will be completed in the following manner:
  - a. Conduct the search of the person with two (2) staff of the same sex. One staff will conduct the search and one staff will be used as a witness to the strip search.
  - b. Conduct the search in a private area away from the view of other people.
  - c. Prepare a written report of incident, to include:
    - (1) Person who gave verbal or written authorization for the strip search
    - (2) Name of person searched
    - (3) Name of person(s) conducting the search
    - (4) Time and date
    - (5) Place of search
    - (6) Narrative of incident, including any contraband found during search
  - e. Forward copy of report to the Internal Affairs Officer.

D. Superintendent of Security

- [1. The Superintendent of Security or the *Superintendent of Human Resources/Operations* shall initiate and facilitate all search days of individuals entering the secure perimeter of the Justice Center.]
2. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent of Security to inform the Department of Public Works and Department of Health of this policy.

E. Watch Commanders

- [1. The Watch Commanders in conjunction with the Superintendent of Security or the *Superintendent of Human Resources/Operations*, are responsible for coordinating all random search days and all other searches. The Watch Commander will note the Random Search Days in the Watch Commander's Report. ]

- 2.** The Watch Commanders, in conjunction with the other supervisors (Intake, Transportation, Housing Unit) are responsible for coordinating which individuals will be searched on Random Staff Search Days, per the predetermined numerical sequence.
- F.** It is the responsibility of Supervisors to review the Watch Commander's Report on a daily basis and address employees who are documented as bringing contraband into the secure perimeter at least two (2) times. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent of Security to review the Watch Commander's Report on a daily basis and address the Supervisors of individuals (Program Manager for volunteers) from other Departments who are documented as bringing contraband into the secure perimeter at least two (2) times.
- G.** It is the responsibility of the Program Manager to ensure all volunteers are informed of this policy.
- H.** Lobby Clerks shall instruct all volunteers to lock all personal belongings in a locker.
- I.** Any exception to the policy and these procedures will be approved by the Director of the Department of Justice Services or designee.

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