

DATE: DECEMBER 30, 2019
NUMBER: I.64
SUBJECT: SAFETY CHECKS: INMATES, HOUSING AND HOLDING AREAS
RELATED SECTIONS: Title 15 CCR § 1027.5; Penal Code § 4021; [I.43](#), [I.63](#)

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for conducting and documenting safety checks.

POLICY

Sworn staff will conduct safety checks of inmates, housing areas, holding areas and vacant cells through direct visual observation (i.e., direct personal view of the inmate/area without the aid of audio/video equipment). Safety checks of inmates consist of looking at the inmates for any obvious signs of medical distress, trauma or criminal activity. Safety checks shall be conducted at least once within every hour (60 minute) time period. The intervals of the safety checks, within the hour (60 minute) time period, shall vary and must be logged in the Jail Information Management System (JIMS). In addition to observing the safety and welfare of inmates, sworn staff shall also be attentive to security and maintenance issues as well as environmental factors (e.g., temperature, odors, cleanliness) while conducting safety checks.

PROCEDURE

I. CONDUCTING SAFETY CHECKS

- A. California Penal Code section 4021, in part, mandates it is unlawful for a deputy to enter into the room or cell occupied by an inmate of the opposite gender, except when accompanied by a deputy of the same gender as the inmate. Sworn staff shall adhere to California Penal Code section 4021 while conducting safety checks of inmates. This does not preclude sworn staff of either gender from assisting each other, or excuse them from ensuring a check is completed.

Each detention facility will develop a facility green sheet identifying safety check procedures and the staff positions within the facility responsible for ensuring safety checks are initiated, conducted and documented.

- B. Staff of the opposite gender of inmates will be required to announce their presence when entering an area where inmates are likely to be showering, performing bodily functions or changing clothing. Inmates shall be able to shower, perform bodily functions and change clothing without nonmedical staff of the opposite gender viewing their breasts, buttocks or genitalia, except when such viewing is incidental to routine safety checks or in exigent circumstances.

- C. When sworn staff conduct safety checks in a high-risk security level housing unit (e.g., administrative segregation), they should utilize the practice of contact and cover. Sworn staff should enter each module together on the same level and conduct the safety check as a team. Sworn staff should not split up in order to have one check the top tier and the other the bottom tier. Although recommended in high risk security level housing, contact and cover can be used in any housing unit/module when inmates are present in the dayroom. The cover deputy's primary responsibility is to provide security for the contact deputy during the safety check. While providing cover, this deputy is not expected to conduct the safety check.
- D. During safety checks in housing locations, sworn staff will physically enter each module and observe each inmate present in the common areas of the module (e.g., dayrooms, showers, exercise areas, holding areas). In cell style housing modules, sworn staff shall stop at or enter each cell and observe each inmate. In dorm style housing modules, sworn staff shall walk by each bunk in a manner that permits them to observe each inmate.
- E. Safety checks shall be completed in all non-housing locations designed as cells/holding areas for inmates (e.g., receiving, medical, release, court holding), even when unoccupied (the release area at Las Colinas Detention and Reentry Facility is excluded from this safety check requirement). Sworn staff shall stop at or enter each cell/holding area to conduct the safety check.

II. LOGGING OF SAFETY CHECKS

- A. The start of a safety check will be logged in JIMS using the event type "11-53 Started." The description field of the entry shall include the name(s) and/or ARJIS numbers of the sworn staff conducting the safety check. If additional space is needed, the notes section may be used. Once all necessary fields are completed, the sworn staff making the entry will immediately close the "11-53 Started" entry
- B. At the conclusion of the safety check, an entry may be logged in JIMS using the event type "11-53 Notes," if there was anything encountered during the safety check. Items that necessitate documentation include, but are not limited to:
 1. Inmate in medical distress (e.g., asthma attack, chest pain, etc.),
 2. Inmate suffering medical trauma (e.g., bleeding, ligature marks, etc.),
 3. Criminal activity (e.g., drug usage, fighting, etc.),
 4. Facility damage (e.g., broken fixtures, graffiti, etc.),
 5. Maintenance issues (e.g., clogged toilet, running water),
 6. Different or additional sworn staff conducted the safety check,
 7. Anything that delayed the start or completion of the safety check.
- C. In the event a safety check requirement cannot be met, the deputy of the affected area will document an explanation as detailed in section II.B and will immediately notify the responsible supervisor. Upon notification, or as soon as practicable, the supervisor shall make a notation in the notes field utilizing the event type "Supervisor's Log Review." This entry shall state the supervisor is aware the safety check was conducted outside the required timeframe.

- D. Sergeants will review the JIMS Area Activity Logs and ensure safety checks were logged and conducted at varying intervals within the required time periods.
1. Each supervisor's review of safety checks will extend back to the previous supervisor's log review entry.
 2. In the event the supervisor finds any discrepancies in their review, they will make a notation in the notes field of their "Supervisor's Log Review" entry.
 3. The watch commander will review the JIMS Area Activity Logs and ensure safety checks were conducted within the required time period. The watch commander will make an entry in the JIMS Area Activity Log, documenting any discrepancies they find during their review utilizing the event type "Supervisor's Log Review."