4-11/030.00 Inmate Safety Checks

The California Code of Regulations, Title 15, section 1027.5, requires hourly safety checks of inmates. All inmates in our custody shall be visually checked at least once each hour to ensure their safety and welfare. Department policy, however, requires more frequent safety checks of some inmates. If inmate safety checks are required more frequently, it is imperative all personnel strictly adhere to those requirements.

STAGGERED INMATE SAFETY CHECKS

All inmate safety checks shall be staggered to minimize the ability of inmates to plan around anticipated checks. In order to accomplish this, inmate safety checks shall be completed within the time interval assigned to the housing location and not precisely and repeatedly on the interval.

QUALITY OF INMATE SAFETY CHECKS

Personnel conducting inmate safety checks, shall look at the inmates for signs of life (e.g. breathing, talking, movement, etc.) and obvious signs of distress (e.g. bleeding, trauma, visible injury, choking, difficulty breathing, discomfort, etc.).

Personnel shall conduct these checks by looking into rooms/cells and by entering the dormitories of inmate housing areas, visually inspecting each inmate's entire body (not solely observing a portion of an inmate's body through a window or row of bunks), and inspecting the general area. If personnel observe any item (e.g. clothing, linen, towel, papers, etc.) obstructing their view into the cell or dormitory, the item(s) shall be removed immediately, with officer and inmate safety in mind. Should there be any doubt regarding an inmate’s condition, staff shall attempt to elicit a response from the inmate. If unable to elicit a response from the inmate, a sergeant and medical staff shall be requested. Personnel shall continue to attempt to elicit a response from the inmate (and, if necessary, render first aid and/or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) as described in Custody Division Manual (CDM) section 5-03/060.00 "Response to Inmate Medical Emergencies") until medical and supervisory personnel arrive. The sergeant and medical staff shall respond to the location and conduct an assessment. Proper officer safety practices shall be observed at all times.

If custody personnel are unable to conduct an inmate safety check, a supervisor shall be notified and advised that assistance is required. The supervisor shall ensure that inmate safety checks are completed and there are sufficient personnel to conduct the checks.

DOCUMENTING INMATE SAFETY CHECKS

The handheld Title 15 barcode scanners shall be used to record safety checks. When not in use, the scanner shall be returned to its docking station. All bar codes within an occupied housing location shall be scanned during safety checks regardless of whether inmates are present at the time of the check.

Once a barcode has been scanned, it is automatically recorded in the e-UDAL with the time, date, location, name, and employee number of the person who conducted the check. It is the responsibility of the person conducting safety checks to confirm that all scans were recorded in either the e-UDAL or the Title 15 Security Check Compliance Dashboard.

If the Title 15 scanner is not operational, or if the area being checked does not contain bar codes, a manual

entry (stating that an inmate safety check has been completed) shall be documented in the “Additional Information” section of the UDAL/e-UDAL. For additional information or issues regarding the Title 15 scanner, see CDM section 4-11/030.05 “Title 15 Scanner.”

SUPERVISORS' RESPONSIBILITY

Each floor sergeant shall conduct an unannounced check of each housing area under their supervision, not less than once per shift, to ensure all inmate safety checks are conducted and properly documented. See CDM section 4-11/020.00 “Uniform Daily Activity Log.”

Custody personnel shall not alert other custody staff that a supervisor check is occurring or is about to occur, unless it is related to legitimate operational functions of the facility.

HOUSING TYPES AND CORRESPONDING INMATE SAFETY CHECK FREQUENCY

Listed below are the specific types of housing locations and intervals for the required inmate safety checks.

Housing Area	Time Interval At minimum:
Cells (including but not limited to Discipline, Administrative Segregation, Diminished Privilege Environment, Protective Custody, and Station Jails)	Once per 30 minutes
Dorms - Unobstructed Visual Observation*	Once per hour
Dorms-Without Unobstructed Visual Observation *	Once per 30 minutes
Barracks (example: PDC South)	Once per hour
Intake / Inmate Reception	Once per hour
Medical / Infirmary	Once per 30 minutes**
High Observation Housing (HOH) / Forensic In-Patient (FIP)	Every 15 minutes***
Moderate Observation Housing (MOH)	Once per 30 minutes
High Security	Once per 30 minutes
Sobering Cell	- Once per 30 minutes (adults) - Once per 15 minutes - persons of undetermined age (possible minor)

* “Unobstructed Visual Observation” means continuous but not necessarily uninterrupted observation within a

reasonable physical distance of the inmate(s).

** Checks may be required more frequently as directed by Medical / Mental Health Staff. Safety checks for inmates identified as suicidal in locations other than those listed above shall be performed every 15 minutes.

*** One safety check shall be performed every 15 minutes, and shall be staggered (as described above) to minimize inmates' ability to plan around anticipated checks. In no case shall more than 15 minutes elapse between any two safety checks, regardless of shift change, change in personnel, breaks, or any other circumstance. (A **minimum** of four safety checks shall be performed each hour.)

As new housing areas and categories are established at any facility, the frequency of the safety check must be assessed and added to the above list to conform to current Title 15 regulations, Department policies, and other legal requirements. It shall be the responsibility of the individual facilities creating the new category to notify Custody Support Services for policy review and revision.