

6-04/060.00 Use of Sobering Cell

A sobering cell is a cell with a padded floor and standard toilet with a padded partition on one side for support. It must allow for maximum visual supervision of inmates by staff. For specific specifications refer to California Building Code, Title 24, Part 2, Section 1231.2.4.

A sobering cell shall be used for housing inmates who present a risk of harm to themselves or others, or a threat to jail security, due to their state of intoxication. Signs of intoxication include:

- inability to care for oneself;
- inability to stand or walk without assistance;
- lack of response to verbal stimulation.

Having an inmate medically cleared prior to booking could help determine whether to transfer the inmate to the Inmate Reception Center (IRC)/Century Regional Detention Facility (CRDF) or to place the inmate in a station sobering cell. Inmates with other medical conditions noted on the Los Angeles County Unified Arrestee Medical Screening Form (SH-R-422) are not appropriate candidates for a station sobering cell and should be transferred to IRC/CRDF.

Direct visual observation of inmates held in the sobering cell shall be conducted no less than **every half hour** to ensure the inmate's safety and welfare, and to monitor observable indicators of the inmate's intoxication level. **These checks shall be documented by the jailer on the back of the Intoxication Observation Sheet (SH-R-445).**

If it is determined that an inmate who was placed in a sobering cell is no longer intoxicated, the inmate shall be removed from the sobering cell and placed in a regular cell.

In no case shall an inmate be held in a sobering cell over six hours without a re-evaluation by Department personnel or healthcare personnel.

If after the six-hour re-evaluation it is determined that the inmate's intoxication level is not decreasing, or if it appears to be increasing, the jailer shall:

- request a supervisor immediately;
- request paramedics; and
- arrange for the inmate's transportation to the local hospital for care if recommended by paramedics or if the inmate refuses treatment by paramedics.

If after the re-evaluation it is determined that the inmate's intoxication level is decreasing but it is necessary for the inmate to remain in the sobering cell, the jailer shall complete the six hour re-evaluation and welfare check on the Intoxication Observation Sheet ([SH-R-445](#)), and continue to monitor the inmate.

The station jail supervisor shall ensure that any inmate who has remained in the sobering cell for twelve (12) hours is promptly evaluated by healthcare personnel.

Note: Intoxicated female inmates shall be housed in a sobering cell separate from other general population female inmates. Such inmates shall be removed from the sobering cell as soon as they are able to continue in

the processing procedures.

If the sobering cell has reached maximum capacity, personnel shall utilize an available sobering cell at another station jail or reception center.
