7-03/040.00 Safety Chair

Unit commanders shall ensure that procedures related to the use of the Safety Chair conform to the policies of the Custody Division Manual (CDM).

The Safety Chair is intended to be used for short term security, temporary control and transportation of an inmate who has been identified as violent, self-destructive, or a high security risk. Safety Chairs shall never be used as punishment, harassment, or for the sole purpose of knowingly causing harm to an inmate. This is not a medically ordered restraint device but rather a security restraint device as noted in the California Code of Regulations, Title 15 section 1058, “Use of Restraint Devices.”

Only the "Safety Restraint Chair, Inc." brand Safety Chair shall be used unless the unit commander receives the prior approval of the respective Custody Services Division chief. The Safety Chair shall not be modified from the original specifications unless done so by the manufacturer.

Only trained personnel shall be authorized to perform, assist, or supervise the placement or removal of an inmate in the Safety Chair. The concerned facility’s training unit shall maintain a record of custody personnel trained in the use of the Safety Chair.

USE OF THE SAFETY CHAIR

The Safety Chair shall only be used when other less restrictive alternatives have failed, or it is apparent the less restrictive alternative will be ineffective in controlling the inmate. Absent exigent circumstances, authorization from the on-duty watch commander is required prior to the use of the Safety Chair, and a supervisor at the permanent rank of sergeant or above shall be present during the inmate's placement in the chair. The use of the Safety Chair shall be documented in the Watch Commander's Log.

If reportable force is used to place the inmate in the Safety Chair or if the inmate struggles against the chair restraints or complains of pain, medical personnel shall examine the inmate as soon as the inmate is placed in the Safety Chair and perform a check of the inmate's vital signs every hour while the inmate is secured in the Safety Chair. This medical evaluation as to whether the inmate shall remain in the Safety Chair shall take precedence over the custody evaluation. All Department policies regarding injuries sustained by inmates and use of force procedures shall remain in effect. Pregnant inmates shall not be placed in the Safety Chair. Personnel should ensure that all of the inmate's personal property, excluding jail clothing, has been removed (e.g. jewelry, glasses, shoes, boots, socks, etc.). Whenever possible, the cooperation of the inmate shall be sought in order to seat them in the Safety Chair on their own.

MONITORING INMATES SECURED IN THE SAFETY CHAIR

The following criteria shall apply in each incident when an inmate is secured in the Safety Chair:

- The inmate shall remain in continual, direct visual contact at all times by the designated custody personnel
- At least twice every thirty (30) minutes, approximately fifteen (15) minutes apart, custody personnel shall check the inmate and document any comments regarding the health and physical condition of the inmate. All components shall be physically checked to ensure they are properly secured and present no obvious physical signs of circulatory restrictions to the inmate’s extremities

- The maximum time an inmate shall be secured in the Safety Chair is two (2) hours, unless exigent circumstances require the need to keep the inmate secured in the Safety Chair. Approval shall be obtained from a supervisor at the permanent rank of lieutenant or above, or on-duty watch commander, in consultation with medical staff, for any extension past the two (2) hours and every two (2) hour period thereafter. The reason for the extension shall be noted in the Inmate Safety Chair Security Check Log (SH-R-637)
- The medical opinion as to whether the inmate shall remain in the Safety Chair shall take precedence over the custody evaluation
- All observations and actions taken shall be documented on the Inmate Safety Chair Security Check Log (SH-R-637)
- If observations indicate that the inmate is and has been calm for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes, a supervisor at the permanent rank of sergeant or above shall be summoned to observe the inmate and make the determination if the inmate should be removed from the Safety Chair
- Medical assistance shall be summoned immediately whenever an inmate appears to be experiencing medical distress or complains of difficulty breathing.

If an inmate is held in the Safety Chair for a two (2) hour period, then it is required that the inmate be removed from the Safety Chair for a minimum of thirty (30) minutes prior to any subsequent application (unless exigent circumstances apply as noted above). Inmates secured in the Safety Chair shall not be denied food, water or beverages, prescribed medications, or access to a bathroom unless there is substantial cause to do so and the watch commander has been notified and has obtained the concurrence of available medical staff.

USE OF THE SAFETY CHAIR DURING EXTRACTIONS

The Safety Chair should be considered a viable tool in controlling an inmate who is displaying or has the potential for, violent, hostile, or combative behavior post-extraction. When planning a controlled extraction, it is recommended custody personnel use a Safety Chair during the extraction rehearsal in case the use of a Safety Chair becomes necessary. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure the entire procedure is video recorded. Without exception, all inmates placed in a Safety Chair shall be expedited to their final destination.

MEDICAL EVALUATION WHEN RELEASED FROM THE SAFETY CHAIR

Inmates that complain of pain or have any visible signs of injury shall be medically evaluated immediately upon release from the Safety Chair.

Should the inmate's continuous uncooperative, violent, or self-destructive behavior result in the inmate's placement in the Safety Chair for a period of time exceeding eight (8) hours, the watch commander shall consult with healthcare staff for their assessment of any potential healthcare concerns, and determine whether the inmate can be safely removed from the Safety Chair. If this assessment indicates the inmate cannot be safely removed from the Safety Chair, the inmate shall be provided appropriate medical care as determined by healthcare staff.

USE OF THE SAFETY CHAIR FOR SHORT-TERM SECURE MOVEMENT WITHIN THE FACILITY

When utilizing the Safety Chair for security reasons during short-term secured movement/escort within the

facility, the provisions in Title 15, section 1058 do not apply. The following procedures will apply and conform to the policies of the CDM.

- The inmate shall remain in direct and unobstructed visual observation by the supervising sergeant and designated custody personnel.
- The inmate's safety and physical condition shall be monitored continuously by designated custody personnel throughout the movement/escort.
- If during the placement of the inmate in the Safety Chair, the inmate struggles against the chair restraints, has any visible signs of injury, or complains of pain, they shall be medically evaluated immediately after being secured in the Safety Chair.
- The use of the Safety Chair for security reasons during short-term movement within the facility does not require documentation in the Inmate Safety Chair Security Check Log (SH-R-637). In these cases, use of the Safety Chair shall be documented in the electronic Line Operations Tracking System (e-LOTS) under Project Type "Misc.", with a project description of "Use of the Safety Chair, Short-Term Secured Movement."

REPORTING USE OF FORCE

The un-resisted placement of an inmate into the Safety Chair may not necessarily constitute a use of reportable force. However, if in the course of applying restraints, the inmate struggles or resists in any way, it does constitute a use of force and must be reported pursuant to CDM section 7-06/000.00, "Use of Force Reporting Procedures."

In all instances that the Safety Chair is utilized for safety reasons as noted in Title 15, section 1058, or when used in transporting an inmate outside of the custody facility, a reference number shall be drawn, and an Inmate Safety Chair Security Check Log (SH-R-637) shall be completed. A copy of the form shall be forwarded to the statistical coordinator for entry into the electronic Use of Force Tracking System.

The video recording and all appropriate paper work shall be maintained at the concerned facility for four (4) years. If the inmate is injured as a result of utilizing the Safety Chair, or if there is a significant risk management factor or a lawsuit is filed, all documentation shall be maintained indefinitely.