
 <p style="text-align: center;">University of Pittsburgh Police Department</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Rules & Regulations Manual</p>	Reference Number: (Chapter / Section)	4 – 13 PLEAC 1.2.5a; 1.2.5b; 1.2.5c
	Issue Date:	04-01-09 Reviewed 12/2018
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Title: Strip and Body Cavity Searches	 By Order of James K. Loftus, Chief of Police	

1.0 Policy

The University of Pittsburgh Police Department recognizes that the use of strip searches and body cavity searches may, under certain conditions, be necessary to protect the safety of officers, civilians and other prisoners; to detect and secure evidence of criminal activity and to safeguard the security, safety and related interests of the Department’s prisoner temporary hold cell. Recognizing the intrusiveness of these searches on individual privacy, it is the policy of this Department that such searches shall be conducted only with proper authority and justification, with the due recognition and deference for the human dignity of those being searched and in accordance with the procedural guidelines for conducting such searches as set forth in this policy.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide officers with guidelines for determining if and under what conditions the use of strip searches and body cavity searches are permissible and to establish guidelines for the appropriate conduct of such searches.

3.0 Definitions

Strip search – any search of an individual requiring the removal or rearrangement of some or all clothing to permit the visual inspection of areas of the body covered by clothing to include: genital areas, buttocks, anus, chest and back.

Body cavity search – any search involving not only visual inspection of skin surfaces but the internal physical examination of body cavities and, in some instances, organs such as the stomach cavity.

4.0 Procedures

A. Strip Searches.

1. Where articulable and reasonable suspicion exists to conduct a strip search, the arresting officer shall request permission from a supervisor before proceeding with the search. If necessary, a search warrant will be obtained. Special consideration must occur in the case of a juvenile offender.
(PLEAC 1.2.5a)
2. Reasonable suspicion may be based upon, but not limited to, one or more of the following criteria:
 - a. The nature of the offense charged.
 - b. The arrestee's appearance and demeanor.
 - c. The circumstances surrounding the arrest.
 - d. The arrestee's criminal record, particularly past crimes of violence or narcotics offenses.
 - e. The discovery of evidence of a major offense in plain view or in the course of a search incident to the arrest.
 - f. Detection of suspicious objects beneath the suspect's clothing during a field search incident to arrest.
3. Individuals arrested for traffic violations and other minor offenses of a nonviolent nature shall not be subject to strip searches unless the arresting officer has articulable, reasonable suspicion to believe that the individual is concealing contraband or weapons.
4. Field strip searches of prisoners shall be conducted only in the rarest of circumstances under exigent circumstances where the life of officers or others may be placed at risk, and only with the explicit approval of a supervisor. The supervisor should review the basis of the officer's reasonable suspicion and ensure the criteria for a strip search have been met prior to granting permission.
5. When authorized by the supervising authority, strip searches may be conducted only by personnel designated by the supervisor and:
 - a. In conformance with approved hygienic procedures and professional practices (i.e., use of rubber gloves).
 - b. By the least number of personnel necessary and only by those of the same gender as the arrestee.
(PLEAC 1.2.5b)
 - c. Under conditions that provide privacy from all but those authorized to conduct the search.
(PLEAC 1.2.5b)
 - d. If dispatch personnel are the opposite gender of the person being searched,

the dispatcher shall maximize an alternate camera screen so as to not be able to view the search in progress.

6. Following a strip search, the officer conducting the search will include the action in the incident report that a strip search was conducted in accordance with this directive regardless if any contraband or weapons were found. The officer will also complete a Strip and Body Cavity Search Form.

(PLEAC 1.2.5c)

B. *Body Cavity Searches.*

1. No body cavity searches will be conducted without a search warrant. Should visual examination of a suspect during a strip search and/or other information lead an officer to believe that the suspect is concealing a weapon, evidence or contraband within a body cavity, the following procedures shall be followed:
 - a. The officer shall consult with his immediate supervisor to determine whether probable cause exists to seek a search warrant for a body cavity search. The decision to seek a search warrant shall recognize that a body cavity search is highly invasive of personal privacy and is reasonable only where the suspected offense is of a serious nature and/or poses a threat to the safety of officers or others and/or the security of the Department's detention operations.
 - b. If probable cause exists for a body cavity search, an affidavit for a search warrant shall be prepared that clearly defines the nature of the alleged offense and the basis for the officer's probable cause.
 - c. On the basis of a search warrant, if approved, a body cavity search shall be performed only by an authorized physician or by other medically trained personnel at the physician's direction.
 - d. For safety and security reasons, a designated officer or otherwise approved official, shall witness the search.
 - e. Body cavity searches shall be performed with due recognition of privacy and hygienic concerns previously addressed in this policy.
 - f. The officer witnessing the search shall complete a written report on the findings of the search. The officer will also complete a Strip and Body Cavity Search Form.

5.0 References

Form SBCSF-09 (Strip and Body Cavity Search Form)