

## **Section 2: Reception and Release**

**Subject: Searches – Initial Frisk Search at Booking**

**Minimum Standard: 5120:1-8-01(A)(6)**

**Revised: 07/2009, 12/2011, 06/2015, 09/2015, 05/2019**

**Authorized:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Effective date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Sheriff Paul A. Sigsworth**

### **POLICY**

The Erie County Jail shall implement policies and procedures and produce documentation that evidences compliance showing upon admission into the Erie County Jail, the booking officer will subject all prisoners to an initial physical search (frisk search) of the prisoner's person and all unauthorized items shall be confiscated. Confiscated items shall be listed in an inventory by objective description and secured. This search will be conducted before any restraining devices are removed from the prisoner. This initial but vitally important search is conducted to maintain the safety and security of any person present in the jail by ensuring that any weapons or other contraband articles concealed on the prisoner's person are properly removed from the prisoner's possession and secured prior to the prisoner's admission into the jail proper as an inmate. Contraband resulting from the search shall be processed, documented, and secured with the inmate's personal property or as evidence.

### **PROCEDURE**

The initial frisk search will be conducted with facility's security first and foremost in mind, but will also be conducted maintaining the greatest degree of personal dignity possible for the prisoner. At no time will a Corrections Officer, or any other agency staff member, make any derogatory remarks or comments regarding the prisoner's attire or physical attributes during this process. Unless documented dire exigent circumstances exist, a Corrections Officer shall not perform an initial frisk search on a prisoner of the opposite sex.

- A.** To prevent the risk of injury, the admitting Corrections Officer will:
1. Wear protective gloves (rubber, vinyl, and/or leather) during the initial frisk search; and
  2. Prior to commencing the initial frisk search, ask the prisoner being searched if he/she is in possession of any sharp objects (or any other type of weapon) concealed in their clothing that could cause injury to the admitting Corrections Officer; and
  3. Be cautious of any sharp or pointed objects in the person's clothing, even if the prisoner denies possession of same.
- B.** The admitting Corrections Officer will generally conduct the initial frisk search in the designated area in the jail sallyport in the following manner:
1. Instruct the prisoner to face the wall with feet apart.
  2. Carefully examine the shirt or blouse collar.
  3. Run hands down in inmate's shirt, blouse, and/or coat front carefully, checking and removing any items from the pockets.
  4. Run hands over the prisoner's back and small of the back to the belt line.
  5. Carefully examine and check the prisoner's waist and belt line, remembering that most weapons are hidden in an individual's front waistband area.
  6. Run hands over the prisoner's shoulders and down the outside of the arms to wrist and carefully examine the shirt or blouse cuffs.
  7. Move hands up the inside of the arms to the armpits, then down the prisoner's sides.

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8. Recheck the waistband by moving fingers around the inside of the waistband. Feel for any objects, which maybe concealed in or behind the belt. Remove the belt.
  9. Move hands over the prisoner's lower abdomen and crotch carefully to inspect for contraband that may be hidden or taped to these areas.
  10. Instruct the inmate to lift and extend one foot backwards, then remove and inspect each shoe and sock for concealed articles
  11. Place any legally possessed items removed from the prisoner's person in a plastic property box.
- C.** When the initial frisk search is completed, and the prisoner's behavior will allow, the prisoner will be subjected to a search by means of the full body scanner as outlined elsewhere in this policy manual. Prior to the use of the full body scanner, the admitting Corrections Officer will remove the prisoner's handcuffs and/or other restraints and will proceed with the full body scan process and the remainder of the inmate booking process.