

NEW HAVEN DEPARTMENT OF POLICE SERVICE

GENERAL ORDERS



GENERAL ORDER 5.07

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 2, 2016

STRIP SEARCH

5.07.01 PURPOSE

The purpose of this General Order is to set guidelines in order to adhere to state and federal laws under which strip searches may be authorized and conducted during misdemeanor and/or motor vehicle arrests.

5.07.02 POLICY

The New Haven Department of Police Service 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 this Department's prisoner detention and holding facilities. It is the policy of this Department that such searches shall be conducted only with proper authority and justification, and in accordance with the procedural guidelines for conducting such searches as set forth in this General Order.

No persons arrested for a misdemeanor or motor vehicle violation shall be strip searched unless there is a reasonable belief that the individual is concealing weapons, a controlled substance or contraband. A strip search shall only occur after a Strip Search Authorization Form is filled out. **This General Order does not pertain to strip searches that are conducted incident to a lawful arrest on a felony charge; during such time a Strip Search Authorization Form is not required.**

5.07.03 DEFINITIONS

STRIP SEARCH: Having an arrested person remove or arrange some or all of his/her clothing or, if an arrested person refuses to remove or arrange his/her clothing, have a peace officer or employee of the police department remove or arrange the clothing of the arrested person so as to permit a visual inspection of the genitals, buttocks, anus, female breasts or undergarments used to clothe said anatomical parts of the body.

BODY CAVITY SEARCH: A body cavity search is either a visual search or a manual internal inspection of body cavities, other than the mouth, for contraband, such as illegal drugs, money, jewelry, weapons, etc.

5.07.04 PROCEDURES**AUTHORITY**

Any superior officer of the Department, holding the rank of Lieutenant or above, or acting as the Shift Commander and as a disinterested party, may authorize a strip search of someone arrested for a misdemeanor or motor vehicle violation, when, after the on-site independent assessment of the facts, the superior officer develops a reasonable belief that the subject is concealing weapons, a controlled substance, or contraband.

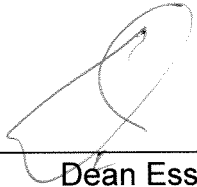
STRIP SEARCHES

- Field strip searches of arrestees shall be conducted in private, except where exigent circumstances exist because the life of officers and/or others are reasonably believed to be at risk, and with the explicit approval of a supervisory officer.
- Strip searches shall be conducted by persons of the same gender as the arrested party, preferably two officers, and conducted on premises where the search cannot be observed by persons not physically conducting the search or not absolutely necessary to conduct the search.
- A "Strip Search Authorization Form" shall be completed by the superior officer authorizing the search and when practical, hand-delivered to the person subject to the search. If hand delivery is impractical, delivery by certified mail is permitted. An original of the Strip Search Authorization Form shall be attached to the original report and forwarded to the Records Division.

BODY CAVITY SEARCHES

- Searches of body cavities, other than the mouth, shall not be engaged in other than pursuant to a search warrant and then only pursuant to C.G.S. Section 54-33l(b).
- A search warrant authorizing a body cavity search shall specify that the search shall be performed under sanitary conditions and shall be conducted either by or under the supervision of a person licensed to practice medicine in the State of Connecticut.

This supersedes General Order 906.



Dean Esserman
Chief of Police



Date