

Idaho Department of Correction 	Standard Operating Procedures	CONTROL NUMBER: 317.02.01.001	PAGE NUMBER: 1 of 5
	OPERATIONS Inmate Management	TITLE: Searches: Cell/Living Unit, and Offender	Approved: 11-13-1998 Reviewed: 11-16-2005 Next Review: 11-16-2007

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BOARD OF CORRECTION IDAPA RULE NUMBER

[None](#)

POLICY STATEMENT NUMBER 317

[Searches of Offenders](#)

POLICY DOCUMENT NUMBER 317

[Searches of Offenders](#)

DEFINITIONS

[Standardized Definitions List](#)

Body Cavity Search: A manual or instrument inspection of an offender's anal or vaginal cavity conducted by a qualified health professional.

Clothed Body Search: Also referred to as a Pat Search. A search during which an offender is not required to remove his clothing, with the exception of such items as jacket, hat, socks and shoes.

Unclothed Body Search: Also referred to as Strip Search. A search during which an offender is required to remove all clothing.

PURPOSE

The search of cells, cellblocks, living quarters, work areas, grounds, common areas and offenders is necessary to maintain a safe and secure environment in a correctional facility.

Searches uncover contraband, prevent escapes, maintain security standards, and eliminate fire and safety hazards.

SCOPE

This Standard Operating Procedure governs offenders housed in all IDOC correctional facilities and IDOC staff.

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RESPONSIBILITY

Facility heads are responsible to implement this Standard Operating Procedure and ensure that staff practice the provision contained herein.

All correctional staff members are responsible to conduct searches in a professional manner, to respect offenders' property, and to treat offenders with dignity.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

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1. Clothed, Unclothed, and Body Cavity Searches

Whenever possible, searches should be conducted in a manner that minimizes embarrassment and maintains the offender's dignity.

The type of search varies with the situation. Some searches should be done on an unannounced, irregular basis. Other searches should be done on a more consistent basis. For example, during daily routines random, unannounced searches should be done on an irregular basis. On some occasions, such as when a tool is missing, when an offender returns from a trip outside the facility, or before a transport, searches should be predictable and consistent. In addition, custody level is a factor in determining the frequency and number of searches conducted. Generally speaking, higher custody levels require more frequent search practices.

Clothed Body Searches

Clothed-body searches, also called "pat searches," are the most common and frequently used search method. Any staff member may conduct clothed-body searches at any time. A clothed-body search routinely includes taking off shoes and socks, removing coats, hats, excessive clothing, emptying/inverting pockets, inspecting hair and behind ears, and looking inside the mouth.

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Cross gender searches should be done in a manner that reduces the stress of the search on the offender. For example, when a male staff member searches a female offender, the staff member should use the backs of his hands on areas under the arms, rib cage, inner thighs etc. In addition, the officer can have the offender press the clothing tighter to expose contraband, invert pockets, etc. to ensure a more effective search.

When performed correctly, clothed-body searches can detect most contraband.

Unclothed Body Searches

Unclothed-body searches, also called “strip searches,” are common in correctional facilities and are often mandatory at certain times such as after visiting or before a transport.

Unclothed-body searches of an offender may be conducted at any time. Since an unclothed-body search requires the offender to remove all clothing, it should normally be conducted in privacy. A staff member of the same sex must conduct unclothed body searches, except in emergencies. In an emergency, escape, riot, etc., the shift commander may waive this provision if a correctional officer of the same sex is not available.

Body Cavity Searches

The facility head can authorize body cavity searches upon reasonable suspicion that the offender is carrying contraband or other prohibited material that cannot be detected by a clothed or unclothed-body search. Only qualified medical professionals, with proper authorization from the facility head, can conduct body cavity searches. These searches will be conducted in an area that ensures privacy.

All persons having a significant role in a body cavity search (including those whose information served as a basis upon which the search was authorized) must complete an incident report Standard Operating Procedure [105.02.01.001](#), General Reporting and Investigation of Major Incidents. Reports must be turned in to the shift commander before reporting staff members depart the facility.

Note: Although staff members are directed to conduct searches in a professional manner and to elicit cooperation with offenders, if an offender refuses to cooperate, reasonable force in accordance with Standard Operating Procedure [307.02.01.001](#), Use of Force, may be used to accomplish the search. In such a case, the offender should face disciplinary action because of his behavior.

2. Searches of Cells/Living Areas, Common Areas, and Legal Materials

Unannounced cell/living area searches conducted on an irregular basis support the following goals:

- To prevent the introduction of weapons or other dangerous contraband;
- To detect the manufacture of weapons, escape devices, alcohol, etc.;

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- To enforce rules designed to eliminate the cause of dissension and strife between offenders;
- To discourage theft;
- To discover and suppress the trafficking of drugs, tobacco, etc.;
- To reduce waste or destruction of facility property;
- To discover hazards to health or safety that may go unnoticed during routine inspection; and,
- To ensure offender property is within the guidelines of Standard Operating Procedure [320.02.01.001](#), Control of Offender Property. (Any property confiscated must be inventoried and processed in accordance with the Control of Offender Property SOP.)

All searches shall be documented in the unit log or cell search log, to include the offender's name, date, time, and names of the staff who conducted the search.

Common Areas

Common areas such as work areas, recreation areas, day rooms, program areas, classrooms, and chapel, should be searched on a frequent yet irregular basis. Such searches should be conducted in a manner that shows respect to the offenders, staff, and volunteers who use the area, while maintaining good correctional practices. For example, a chapel would not be searched during a service, unless there were extraordinary circumstances that demanded immediate attention.

Legal Materials

An offender's legal materials may not be read but may be searched for physical contraband and scanned for written contraband or correspondence that is personal in nature.

Contraband shall be disposed of in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedure [320.02.01.001](#), Control of Offender Property.

If the staff members has a question regarding legal materials, he will contact the facility paralegal staff, or in the paralegal staff's absence the shift commander or assistant shift commander. In cases when the paralegal staff are unavailable, the staff member in the decision-making capacity will contact the paralegal the next working day to discuss the issue and make a final decision regarding the materials.

3. Search Standards

Cells should be searched a minimum of once every thirty (30) days. When conducting a cell search, staff will use Standard Operating Procedure [320.02.01.001](#), Control of Offender Property, to make decisions regarding authorized property. Staff will not leave an offender's property or cell in significant disarray.

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Correction staff must complete a search and inspection of a cell/room before the offender moves into or out of it (See Appendix 1, Cell Check In/Out).

When conducting a cell search the offender should be close by, but unable to observe the actual search. An exception is that offenders should observe the search of legal materials.

Process Steps

There are no process steps in this Standard Operating Procedure.

References

Appendix 1, Cell Check In/Out

Department [Policy 105](#) General Reporting and Investigation of Major Incidents

Department [Policy 307](#) Use of Force

Department [Policy 320](#) Control of Offender Property

Department [Policy 405](#) Access to Courts

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APPENDIX 1
IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION
Division of Operations
CHECK IN/OUT

CHECKLIST FOR CELL	Block	Cell		
OCCUPANT	Name		DOC Number	
ITEM	CONDITION – IN		CONDITION – OUT	
DOOR				
WALLS				
WINDOWS				
SCREENS				
VENTS				
CALL BUTTON				
ELECTRICAL SOCKET				
CEILING / LIGHTS				
FLOOR				
BED FRAME(S)				
MATTRESS(ES)				
FIRE / SMOKE DETECTION				
LOCKER(S) / STOOL(S)				
TABLE				
TOILET				
SINK				
MIRROR				
COAT HOOK				
MISCELLANEOUS				
IN	Offender Signature		Officer Signature	Date
OUT	Offender Signature		Officer Signature	Date

Directions: Complete all the items on this inspection before the offender moves into or out of a cell/room. Initial any discrepancies. The offender and officer must sign the designated places.

Distribution: Original to the unit file and a copy to the offender.