

# ICE/DRO DETENTION STANDARD

## POPULATION COUNTS

**I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE.** This Detention Standard protects the community from harm and enhances facility security, safety, and good order by requiring that each facility have an ongoing, effective system of population counts and accountability for detainees.

It applies to the following types of facilities housing ICE/DRO detainees:

- Service Processing Centers (SPCs);
- Contract Detention Facilities (CDFs); and
- State or local government facilities used by DRO through Intergovernmental Service Agreements (IGSAs) to hold detainees for more than 72 hours.

***Procedures in italics are specifically required for SPCs and CDFs.*** IGSAs must conform to these procedures or adopt, adapt or establish alternatives, provided they meet or exceed the intent represented by these procedures.

Some terms used in this document may be defined in the separate **Definitions Standard**.

**II. EXPECTED OUTCOME.** The expected outcome of this Detention Standard is: Security, safety, and orderly facility operations will be maintained through an ongoing, effective system of population counts and accountability for detainees.

**III. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED.** This Detention Standard replaces **Population Counts** dated 9/20/2000.

## IV. REFERENCES

American Correctional Association 4th Edition Standards for Adult Local Detention Facilities: 4-ALDF-2A-16, 2A-17.

ICE/DRO National Detention Standard on Medical Care

## V. EXPECTED PRACTICES

### A. Formal Counts

Formal counts are conducted at specific times of the day and night in a predetermined manner. A formal count shall be conducted at least once every eight hours, with a shift supervisor verifying its accuracy. Additional counts are encouraged at the discretion of the facility.

*In SPCs and CDFs:*

1. *The formal count(s) shall be conducted at least once every eight hours (ordinarily once per shift) at a time determined by the chief of security. Counts shall be scheduled to achieve full accountability with minimal interference with daily work and activity schedules.*
2. *Count procedures must be strictly followed. If the accuracy of a count is in doubt, the officers shall do a recount and any other double-checking necessary. Officers performing the count shall never rely on a roll call.*
  - a. *An unaccompanied officer shall never perform a count in an open area (housing units, food service area, etc.). One officer shall count while a second officer observes all detainee movements, to ensure that no detainee shifts from one location to another, to be counted twice. Upon completing the first count the officers shall change positions and count again.*
  - b. *The officers assigned the count shall have primary responsibility for the count accuracy, and shall be familiar with possible sources of error. The officers must know the specific manner of counting detainees in different types of locations (for example, housing units, open-type areas, or work areas). A system for counting each detainee, including those who are outside the housing unit, will be developed. The officers shall encourage detainees to accept the count as a facility necessity.*
  - c. *Officers must make positive identification of the living body of the detainee ("living, breathing flesh") -- and not mere clothing in a human shape--before counting anyone present. Escapes have been affected by the skillful use of such mannequins, replicas, dummies, etc. The counting officers shall remain in the count area until the facility Control Center verifies and clears the count.*
  - d. *When making night counts, officers should use flashlights judiciously, however with sufficient light to make a positive identification of a living body. The officer must not count a detainee based on a part or parts of clothing, hair, shoes, or the appearance of a human form.*
3. *Officers shall encourage detainee cooperation; however, they shall not allow detainees to perform the count, nor participate in the preparation or documentation of the count process.*
4. *There shall be no movement of detainees during formal counts. All detainee movements into, out of, and within the facility must cease before the count begins. Detainee movement shall not resume anywhere in the facility until the complete facility count has been cleared. If while conducting a count staff observe an unusual incident e.g. medical emergency, criminal act, etc., they will cease the count and respond appropriately according to local procedures. Should an emergency arise during the count that necessitates the movement of detainees, a new count shall be conducted.*
5. *All detainee units/areas shall be counted simultaneously. Each detainee shall be counted at a specific location; and all movement of detainees shall cease*

*before the count begins. Movement shall not resume until the total detainee population count is verified and cleared. The counting officer from each location shall report his or her count to the facility control officer, who is responsible for collecting and maintaining the count. After the count is reported in, a signed paper count slip shall be delivered to the Control Center. This count slip shall be used to verify the area count. Therefore, count slips must be prepared and signed in indelible ink. Both officers conducting the count must sign the count slip. The Control Center shall not accept an improperly prepared count slip or one that contains erasures or alterations of any kind. The control officer shall take into account the current out-count in verifying the population count against the master count.*

6. *As each area reports its count, the control officer shall so indicate in the control log. If any area/unit reports an incorrect count, all areas/units shall be required to count again. If the count remains incorrect, the shift supervisor shall be notified and additional staff shall be dispatched to the count area to assist with a third count. No count shall be cleared until all counting errors have been corrected, or until the cause of error has been identified and corrective action taken. If a detainee is in the wrong count area, the detainee shall be escorted to the correct count area. If this occurs, officers in all count areas/units shall recount, recall the earlier counts, and deliver the new count slip to the control officer.*
7. *If all recounts fail to clear the count, the shift supervisor shall conduct a face-to-photo count, matching photos on facility identification cards with detainee faces, individual by individual. When the face-to-photo count has been completed, the control officer shall report that count to the shift supervisor responsible for accepting and clearing the count.*
8. *In the event that a detainee is unaccounted for after the face-to-photo count, the supervisor on duty shall institute the escape policy.*

## **B. Face-to-Photo Counts**

Face-to-photo counts shall be conducted as necessary. Facilities will conduct at least one face-to-photo count daily.

*In SPCs and CDFs, face-to-photo counting procedures are the same as the formal count procedures, except each detainee shall be matched with the photo on his or her I-385 card or facility equivalent photo-identification card.*

## **C. Informal/Census Counts**

Each officer shall make irregular but frequent checks to verify the presence of all detainees in his or her charge.

*In SPCs and CDFs, these informal counts or checks occur between formal counts. For work crews, a count is made when the crew assembles for work, at frequent intervals during the work period, and when the crew is dismissed at the end of the work period. An informal count is reported only if a detainee appears to be missing. In that case, an emergency (formal) count shall be taken.*

#### **D. Master Count**

The facility Control Center shall maintain a master count.

*In SPCs and CDFs, the facility control officer maintains the master count record. He or she must be provided with up-to-the-minute information regarding detainee admissions, releases, housing changes, hospital admissions, outside work details, and any other changes that could affect detainee accountability. An up-to-the-minute count record shall at all times be maintained in the Control Center. The master count shall take into account the current out-count.*

#### **E. Out-Counts**

The control officer shall maintain an out-count record of the number and destination of all detainees who temporarily leave the facility.

*In SPCs and CDFs, this record must contain an accurate and up-to-the-minute listing of every temporary departure and return of a detainee. It must be updated regularly and used in any formal count.*

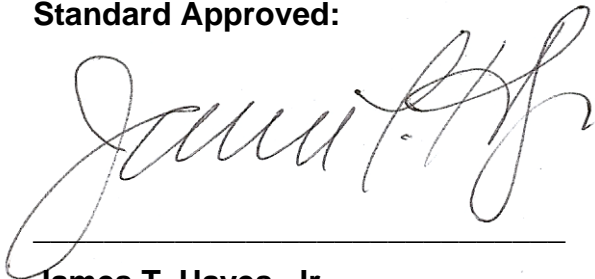
#### **F. Emergency Count**

An emergency count shall be conducted when there is reason to believe a detainee is missing, or after a major disturbance has occurred.

An emergency count is a formal count taken in addition to and at a different time from the regularly scheduled formal counts. When a detainee is unaccounted for, or a major disturbance has ended, a count shall be taken to determine that no one has escaped or is in hiding. The facility control officer must always be prepared to produce an up-to-the-minute count for such use.

In SPCs and CDFs, all detainees shall be returned to their housing units during emergency counts. An emergency count is conducted in the same manner as a formal count.

**Standard Approved:**



**James T. Hayes, Jr.**  
**Acting Director**  
**Office of Detention and Removal Operations**

**September 12, 2008**

**Date**