

2.8 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.

This detention standard applies to the following types of facilities housing ERO detainees:

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

Procedures in italics are specifically required for SPCs, CDFs, and Dedicated IGSA facilities. Non-dedicated IGSA facilities must conform to these procedures or adopt, adapt or establish alternatives, provided they meet or exceed the intent represented by these procedures.

Various terms used in this standard may be defined in standard “7.5 Definitions.”

II. Expected Outcome

- The expected outcomes of this detention standard are as follows (specific requirements are defined in “V. Expected Practices”).

Security, safety and orderly facility operations shall be maintained through an ongoing, effective system of population counts and accountability for detainees.

III. Standards Affected

This detention standard replaces “Population

Counts” dated 12/2/2008.

IV. References

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

ICE/ERO *Performance-based National Detention Standards 2011:*

- “2.9 Post Orders”; and
- “4.3 Medical Care.”

V. Expected Practices

A. Formal Counts

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

1. *The formal count(s) shall be conducted at least once every eight hours (once per shift at minimum) at times 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 (e.g., housing units, food service area). One officer shall count while a second officer observes all detainee movements, to ensure that no detainee is miscounted. 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 (e.g., housing units, open-type areas, or work areas). A system for counting each detainee, including those who are outside the housing unit, shall be developed. The officers shall encourage detainees to accept the count as a facility necessity.*
 - c. Prior to counting a detainee present, officers must make positive identification of the living body of the detainee and shall ascertain non-use of decoys (e.g., mannequins, replicas, dummies). Counting officers shall remain in the count area until the facility control center verifies and clears the count.*
 - d. When making night counts, officers shall use flashlights judiciously, but 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), they shall 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 as soon as possible after the emergency subsides.*
 - 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/her count to the facility control officer, who is responsible for collecting and maintaining the count.
 - a. After the count is reported, a signed paper count slip shall be delivered to the control center. This count slip shall be used to verify the area count.*
 - b. Count slips must be prepared and signed in indelible ink. The control center shall not accept an improperly prepared count slip or one that contains erasures or alterations of any kind.*
 - c. Both officers conducting the count must sign the count slip.*
 - d. 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 indicate that count in the control log.
 - a. 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.**

- b. *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.*
 - c. *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 re-count, 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 shall conduct at least one face-to-photo count daily.

Face-to-photo counting procedures are the same as the formal count procedures, except each detainee shall be matched with the photo on his/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/her charge.

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.

The facility control officer maintains the master count record. He/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 may affect detainee accountability. An up-to-the-minute count record shall be maintained at all times 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.

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 after 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.

All detainees shall be returned to their housing units during emergency counts. An emergency count

shall be conducted in the same manner as a formal count.