

	LOWER MERION TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT Ardmore, Pennsylvania	
	Policy 3.5.4	
Subject:		Distribution:
Strip & Body Cavity Searches		All Sworn Personnel
Date of Issue:	Expiration Date:	Rescinds:
07-27-2018	Until Amended or Rescinded	Policy 3.5.4 (06-01-2014)
References:		
CALEA: 1.2.8; PLEAC: 1.2.5, 1.2.2		
By Authority of:		
		Superintendent of Police

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all in-custody searches and seizures shall be conducted in accordance with the United States and Pennsylvania Constitutions.
(PLEAC 1.2.2 c)

STRIP SEARCHES

- A.** A strip search, by definition, is any search of an individual requiring the removal or rearrangement of some or all clothing to permit the visual inspection of any or all skin surfaces including genital areas, breasts and buttocks.
- B.** Arrestees shall not be subject to a strip search unless the arresting officer has articulable, reasonable suspicion to believe that the individual is concealing contraband, stolen property, or weapons. Strip searches will not be based solely on the nature of the charge. Reasonable suspicion may be based upon, but is not limited to, the following:
 1. The arrestee's appearance and demeanor.
 2. The circumstances surrounding the arrest.
 3. Indications of metal by the metal detector.
- C.** Except in an emergency, strip searches shall only be conducted with the explicit approval of a supervisor and should only be conducted by a member of the same sex. An arrestee may request a male or female officer, consistent with the arrestee's gender identity or expression, to conduct the search. Strip searches shall be conducted in a private setting. **(CALEA 1.2.8 a, b) (PLEAC 1.2.5 b)**
- D.** Generally speaking, strip searches do not require a search warrant, however in certain cases, (i.e. suspects in rape/sexual assault cases), a search warrant should be obtained. **(CALEA 1.2.8 a) (PLEAC 1.2.5 a)**

E. Strip searches of juveniles are prohibited. (**CALEA 1.2.8 c**)

BODY CAVITY SEARCHES

A. Should information lead an officer to believe that a person is concealing a weapon, evidence or contraband within a body cavity, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The person shall be kept secured and under constant visual surveillance until a body cavity search is conducted.
2. A supervisor will be notified and an affidavit for a search warrant shall be prepared.
3. Once a search warrant is obtained, the cavity search will be conducted by an authorized physician or other medically trained personnel at the physician's direction. (**CALEA 1.2.8 a**) (**PLEAC 1.2.5 a**)
4. Body Cavity searches shall be performed in a private hygienic setting, and the process shall be witnessed by an officer. The officer should be of the same sex as the arrestee, except that the arrestee may request a male or female officer, consistent with their gender identity or expression. (**CALEA 1.2.8 b**) (**PLEAC 1.2.5b**)

B. Body cavity searches of juveniles are prohibited. (**CALEA 1.2.8 c**)

DOCUMENTATION

A. Strip and body cavity searches shall be documented using secondary code 4449 in the original report and shall include why the search was conducted, date and time, who conducted the search, who was present during the search, results of the search, both positive and negative, and where the search was conducted.
(**CALEA 1.2.8 d**) (**PLEAC 1.2.5 d**)

RESPONSIBILITY

It is the responsibility of all supervisory personnel to ensure that all personnel under their immediate supervision comply with this policy.