



State of North Carolina
Department of Correction
Division of Prisons

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Chapter: F
Section: .1900
Title: **Highway Work Squads
Medium Custody**
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.1901 Purpose

To define medium custody road squad operations in the Division of Prisons to insure public safety through the consistent application of operational standards.

.1902 Policy

The Division of Prisons as required by G.S. 148-26(b) provides medium custody inmates for maintenance and construction of public roads in the State. Every effort is made to insure the safety and welfare of citizens through the effective classification and assignment of medium custody inmates for this program and through constant supervision of inmates by armed Correctional Officers. At the beginning of each fiscal year, the Department of Correction and the Department of Transportation renew an annual contract that specifies the details pertaining to the employment of medium custody inmates on the public roads. Squad designation for each facility is determined as part of the DOC-DOT labor agreement.

.1903 Organization

The Division of Prisons has organized medium custody inmates into a work squad configuration that is conducive to the level of supervision necessary to insure custody and security. A work squad will consist of a maximum of eight inmates supervised by two armed Correctional Officers, one of whom is designated as a Lead Correctional Officer. If the work site requires a higher level of supervision, a third correctional officer may be assigned as necessary to ensure proper supervision.

.1904 Classification and Selection of Inmates

- (a) Inmates considered for assignment to road squad duty will be closely reviewed to minimize the risk of escape or other management problems that might occur.
- (b) Inmates are recommended for assignment by the facility classification authority and approved by the facility superintendent or designee.
- (c) Selection Criteria

- (1) Inmates selected will be in activity level one or two and be physically capable of performing any type of manual labor. Activity level two inmates and inmates that have received mental health intervention must be carefully assessed and assigned based on their specific limitations.
- (2) Inmates with any history of escape from armed supervision or more than one escape from minimum custody within the past five years are not eligible for assignment to road squad duty.
- (3) Inmates with a history of serious institutional violence within the last year which case factors greater than three points are not eligible for road squad duty.
- (4) Inmates sentenced for serious assaultive crimes against persons will not be selected for highway duty assignment until they are within twelve months of minimum custody eligibility and have served at least sixty days in medium custody if promoted from close custody.
- (5) Inmates with a detainer/notification or confirmed pending charges for Class A or B criminal offenses or any high profile or notorious crime will not be considered for assignment.
- (6) Inmates must be within thirty-six months of minimum custody eligibility before being selected for road squad duty.
- (7) Inmates must be able to hear, understand, and respond to verbal instructions.

.1905 Supervision

- (a) Medium custody road squads will be under constant supervision of armed correctional staff.
- (b) To provide safe and secure armed supervision of medium custody road squads, and to prevent inmate escapes, the following guidelines will be complied with:
 - (1) The Lead Correctional Officer and the Correctional Officer are to be armed with a shotgun and a revolver. An exception to the Lead Correctional Officer carrying a shotgun may be made by the superintendent.
 - (2) Both the Lead Correctional Officer and the Correctional Officer must always remain in the area of inmate supervision.
 - (3) When necessary for a Correctional Officer to be in close proximity to inmates, loading, unloading, searching, issuing tools, et cetera, that officer will surrender their weapon to the other officer who will maintain armed supervision of the inmates.

- (4) If three Correctional Officers are present, no more than one Correctional Officer will surrender their weapon to other correctional staff at any given time.
- (c) Highway work squads are loaded, transported, unloaded, and fed utilizing the utmost precautions to insure security and safety.
- (d) Correctional staff are prohibited from any activity that limits or distracts from their primary responsibility of providing constant armed supervision. Officers will not work along side of inmates or illustrate to inmates how to do tasks. When necessary because of the nature of the work to be accomplished, Department of Transportation staff are utilized to instruct or guide inmates in the work to be accomplished.

.1906 Operations

(a) Road Squad Preparations

- (1) The Lead Correctional Officer will inform the facility Officer-in-Charge of the location of the work site planned for that day.
- (2) The Lead Correctional Officer will insure the road squad vehicle is thoroughly inspected for contraband and mechanically reliable prior to loading inmates.
- (3) The Lead Correctional Officer will insure that all communications equipment (i.e. radios, walkie-talkies, cellular phones) are in proper working order prior to loading the inmates.
- (4) The Officer-in-Charge will insure appropriate weapons are issued to road squad staff.
- (5) The Lead Correctional Officer will review with road squad staff their duty assignments for the day.
- (6) The Officer-in-Charge will insure a complete search is made of each inmate assigned to the road squad. Exception to conducting complete searches of inmates leaving the facility may be authorized by the superintendent.

(b) Boarding Road Squad Vehicles

- (1) Staff will assume security positions to observe inmates boarding the road squad vehicle.
- (2) The shift supervisor or other line officer will provide instructions to the road squad inmates and call the roll. As each inmate is called, he moves forward and boards the road squad vehicle. Inmates are properly identified to insure the correct inmates board the vehicle.

- (3) The Lead Correctional Officer will verify each inmate's name on the road squad roster, conduct a final count after the vehicle is loaded and secure the vehicle door.
 - (4) The shift supervisor and the Lead Correctional Officer will compare the final roster and count. A roster of the road squad inmates will be maintained at the facility and with the road squad.
 - (5) After the vehicle door is secured, the armed road squad officer is instructed to board the bus and prepare for departure.
 - (6) The Lead Correctional Officer will verify the appropriate type and number of meals and beverages available for the road squad.
 - (7) The road squad vehicle will not be loaded or crowded with passengers and/or property to impair or restrict the proper and safe operation of the vehicle.
 - (8) If seat belts are available on the vehicle, the Lead Correctional Officer will instruct all inmates to fasten their seat belts.
- (c) Traveling
- (1) The Lead Correctional Officer is responsible for the safe transportation of the road squad.
 - (2) The laws of North Carolina prohibit transporting of inmates outside the state boundaries. Correctional Officers in those counties bordering other states will insure that these laws are not violated.
 - (3) Road squads shall travel to and from the designated work location by the most direct route. They should refrain from stopping at stores, restaurants, etc., except in cases of emergency or if staff have a call of nature.
- (d) Unloading at the Work Location
- (1) Inmates on the road squad vehicle are instructed to remain seated until they receive instructions to unload.
 - (2) Prior to unloading, the Lead Correctional Officer will inspect the job site for security and safety hazards. The Lead Correctional Officer will insure the area can be worked safely and that the inmates can be supervised securely without danger to the general public. Work sites that present a safety hazard to inmates, staff or the general public are not worked.
 - (3) Once the Lead Correctional Officer determines the site is clear for work, staff will set up the roadwork signs in the appropriate locations.

- (4) Prior to unlocking the road squad vehicle, the armed Correctional Officer takes custody of the vehicle ignition key, the shotgun and handgun from the officer who will assemble the inmates. The armed officer will then assume position away from the vehicle. (Surrendered shotguns are to be carried slung over the head and shoulder. Surrendered handguns are to be carried on the belt in an extra holster worn for that purpose.)
 - (5) The officer who has surrendered his/her weapons unlocks the vehicle door and instructs the inmates to unload. Inmates will be counted as they unload and the count will be called to the armed officer (s) who acknowledges the count.
 - (6) The inmates are given their work assignments, receive tools and personal protective equipment and are told to remain in position until instructed to move to the work site.
 - (7) Once the unarmed officer assumes custody of his/her weapons, the Lead Correctional Officer instructs the inmate crew to move to the work site and positions the road squad staff for supervision.
- (e) Loading at the Work Location
- (1) One officer will surrender their shotgun and handgun to a second officer who maintains armed supervision of the inmates. Inmates are to remain in sight of the armed officer at all times during the surrender of weapons. The armed officer maintains custody of the ignition key to the vehicle.
 - (2) The unarmed officer inspects the vehicle for contraband before it is loaded.
 - (3) The unarmed officer collects and inspects the tools and personal protective equipment from the inmates and stores them on the vehicle.
 - (4) The unarmed officer conducts a routine search on each inmate, instructs them to board the vehicle and secures the vehicle door.
 - (5) The unarmed officer counts the inmates and will verify the count with the armed officer (s).
 - (6) Roadwork signs will be stored on the vehicle.
- (f) Arrival at the Correctional Facility
- (1) Upon arrival at the facility, staff will assume security positions to observe inmates unloading the road squad vehicle.

- (2) The facility shift supervisor or other line officer supervises the unloading, count and complete search of all road squad inmates.
- (3) The Lead Correctional Officer will insure that the road squad vehicle is thoroughly inspected for contraband and mechanically reliable prior to the end of duty.
- (4) The road squad officers report to the Officer-in-Charge any matters pertaining to the custody, discipline and welfare of the inmates, account for all prison property used by the work squad and unusual events.

.1907 Supervision During Work Assignments

(a) General

- (1) Inmates in a highway work squad are kept sufficiently close together to allow for proper custodial supervision. The permissible spread of the work squad will vary according to the terrain and is left to the discretion of the Lead Correctional Officer.
- (2) Armed Correctional Officers are not to congregate for conversation while supervising inmates assigned to the work squad.
- (3) All inmates under a Correctional Officer's supervision will remain on the same side of the road. The Correctional Officers will be posted on the side of the road on which the inmates are working.
- (4) Unless assigned to a fixed post (i.e., a stationary work site), Correctional Officers will remain standing except during temporary suspension of work or during the noon meal when they may be seated if conditions permit.
- (5) The Lead Correctional Officer shall constantly evaluate the work site as work progresses and insures clear line of fire are maintained by all staff in case of an escape attempt. Each officer shall maintain a constant awareness of the position of other road squad staff.
- (6) Road squad staff are not permitted to use the road squad vehicle as a position from which to supervise inmates outside the vehicle.

(b) Counts

- (1) Counts are made when inmates are loaded or unloaded, before and after lunch, and before and after each suspension of work for any reason.
- (2) In addition to these specifically required counts, each Correctional Officer is required to spot-check the total number of inmates present against the proper

count and maintain an awareness at all times of the location of the inmates in their charge.

(c) Food and Drink

- (1) While on their work assignment, inmates are given a short water break a minimum of once each hour or more frequently as weather condition requires.
- (2) At lunchtime, the Lead Correctional Officer chooses an appropriate location for a thirty-minute lunch break. The road squad vehicle may be used for this purpose. Otherwise the inmates are kept sufficiently close together to allow for proper custodial supervision. Correctional Officers shall eat when the inmates eat but remain alert and keep the inmates under constant surveillance.
- (3) The Lead Correctional Officer is responsible for insuring prior to departure from the facility an adequate amount of properly prepared and sufficiently varied food is available for the work squad. Non-pork and special diets are provided to qualifying inmates according to departmental policy.
- (4) In addition to ice water being provided, an appropriate beverage is provided with the noon meal.
- (5) All food scraps, leftovers and trash from the noon meal are to be returned to the facility for routine garbage disposal.

(d) Smoking

There will be no smoking in any state vehicle by staff or inmates. While working there are no special breaks for smoking, but smoking is permitted if the Lead Correctional Officer is satisfied smoking does not interfere with the work or create a fire hazard.

(e) Use of Toilet Facility

- (1) When an inmate requests to use the toilet facilities, the Lead Correctional Officer determine which officer accompanies the inmate to the toilet facility located inside the road squad vehicle. If conditions permit, the work of the road squad continues under the supervision of the remaining Correctional Officer (s).
- (2) The Correctional Officer escorting the inmate away from the squad is armed and only one inmate is taken at time.
- (3) If in the judgment of the Lead Correctional Officer the vehicle is too far from the squad, the vehicle is moved closer to the squad.

- (4) To maintain security and control when an inmate uses the toilet facility, in the event of unusual terrain or security precautions the entire squad is moved to the vehicle.
 - (5) Staff that have to use a restroom will not use natural areas/woods. They may use the road squad toilet. If they do so, inmates are positioned so that they cannot see the officer at the toilet. Another option is that the officer may stop to use the restroom at a DOT substation, convenience store, restaurant etc.
- (f) Emergencies
- (1) Escapes
 - (A) Officers are authorized to use deadly force to prevent the escape of a convicted felon or to defend themselves or others from a deadly attack. In all situations involving the use of firearms, an officer's decision to fire is guided by consideration of the line of fire and safety concerns for the public, staff or other inmates who may be in the line of fire considering the type of weapon used, the surrounding population and similar matters.
 - (B) Whether the fleeing inmate is successful or is stopped, the road squad shall be ordered to cease work and to sit down.
 - (C) The Lead Correctional Officer shall report the escape by the quickest means possible to the Officer-in-Charge of the facility. The report will include the name of the escapee, location and time of escape.
 - (D) The road squad shall be moved from the area of the escape and loaded onto the road squad vehicle as soon as practical.
 - (E) The staff supervising the road squad will remain at the scene of the escape until assistance arrives and will provide all information pertinent to the escape.
 - (2) Injuries to Inmates

Security precautions are followed during incidents involving inmate injuries:

 - (A) The work squad is ordered to cease work and sit down.
 - (B) The Lead Correctional Officer designates an officer to surrender their weapons and approach the injured inmate. The armed officer (s) maintains a posture of readiness in anticipation of a potential security breach.

- (C) The nature of the injury determines whether first aid is administered, the inmate is returned to the prison facility for treatment, transported immediately to the nearest medical facility for treatment or emergency medical services is called to respond. The decision concerning the initial medical response is made by the Lead Correctional Officer.
- (D) The Lead Correctional Officer shall notify the Officer-in-Charge of the facility and request assistance with an inmate who has suffered major injury. If unable to contact the facility, the Lead Correctional Officer contacts local law enforcement and emergency medical services to request assistance at the scene or at the emergency medical facility. If required to transport an injured inmate utilizing the road squad vehicle, the entire work crew is loaded on the bus as expeditiously as possible while observing standard security precautions.

(3) Injuries to Staff

Security precautions are to be followed during incidents involving severe staff injuries.

- (A) The work squad is ordered to cease work, is moved away from the injured officer's area and is ordered to sit down.
- (B) The uninjured Correctional Officer will retrieve the injured officer's weapons and assess the nature of the injuries. The uninjured officer must maintain a posture of readiness in anticipation of a potential security breach.
- (C) If the injured officer can be moved, staff should ensure the work crew is securely loaded onto the vehicle and then take the injured officer to the vehicle to be observed. The Officer-in-Charge of the prison facility is notified by the most expedient means. First aid is rendered until assistance arrives.
- (D) If the injured officer cannot be moved the work crew is loaded onto the vehicle, emergency medical assistance is requested for the injured officer utilizing the most expedient means and first aid is administered until assistance arrives. The Officer-in-Charge of the facility is notified as soon as practical.

(g) Discipline

(A) Prohibited Activities

- (1) Inmates assigned to highway work squads are not permitted to visit any person, to mail/receive letters or packages to give/ receive or sell any article.

- (2) Inmates assigned to highway work squads are not to wave, yell, talk or communicate in any way with members of the general public or enter any building except in the line of duty. Inmates are not to use loud or boisterous language among themselves or engage in any conversation that is detrimental to the efficiency of their work.

(B) Infractions

- (1) When an inmate assigned to the road squad commits an infraction, the Lead Correctional Officer determines whether the infraction is so detrimental to prompt the immediate removal of the inmate from the road squad. In such cases, the Officer-in-Charge shall be notified to send for the inmate. Otherwise, the Lead Correctional Officer reports the offense at the end of the working day.
- (2) In event of mass disobedience, the Lead Correctional Officer will immediately notify the Officer-in-Charge and return the inmates to the facility.

.1908 Security Equipment

(a) Communication Equipment

- (1) Each road squad vehicle is equipped with a two-way radio for communication between the squad members and the base station. Each road squad officer should be equipped with a walkie-talkie for communication between officers.
- (2) Radio communications are for routine and emergency situations. Emergency communications are attempted first utilizing the prison frequency radio unless a more expedient means is immediately at hand.
- (3) The ten-code series are used for communication over the prison frequency radio.
- (4) Each morning when departing the facility the road squad vehicle staff communicates with the facility base station via the prison frequency radio to insure proper operation.

(b) Weapons

(1) Authorized Issue

- A. The following standard equipment is authorized for use by road squad officers:

- (i) Remington model 870 shotgun (28-30” barrel) with sling and ten shells of # 1 buckshot;
 - (ii) Smith &Wesson. Model M&P .40 Caliber semi-automatic handgun with 30 rounds ammunition.
 - (iii) Two holsters (one to be used when an officer surrenders his/her weapon)
 - (iv) Appropriate ammo carriers to include magazine pouch and shotgun shell holder.
 - (v) OC Pepper Spray and Pepper Spray Holster
- (B) The Officer-in-Charge of the facility is required to keep a record of all weapons and ammunition and shall issue only the authorized types and quantities to road squad staff.
- (2) Carrying of Firearms and Ammunition
- (A) When supervising inmates in a standing position, officers shall maintain weapons in a safe position. Generally, this includes:
- (i) Right shoulder arms;
 - (ii) Left shoulder arms; or
 - (iii) Port arms.
- (B) Shotguns are not carried slung over the head and shoulder unless two shotguns are being carried. At such time one shotgun is carried slung over the head and the shoulder and the remaining shotgun is carried in one of the above safe positions. Surrendered shotguns will not be carried sling arms (i.e., slung over one shoulder) but must be carried slung over the head and shoulder to prevent the weapon from slipping during an emergency.
- (C) When supervising inmates in a seated position, the officer may lay the shotgun across his/her lap insuring the muzzle of the weapon is pointed in a safe direction.
- (D) Extra ammunition is to be carried on the belt in appropriate ammunition holders. Extra ammunition will not be left in an unoccupied vehicle or carried in the officer's pockets.
- (3) Use of Firearms

- (A) Firearms are used with extreme caution and only in the line of duty.
 - (B) Firearms are not pointed at any person unless necessary to prevent serious assault or to halt a fleeing felon inmate.
 - (C) See section .1907(f)(1)(B) of this policy for the factors to consider when deciding whether or not to fire a weapon.
- (c) Ballistic Body Armor
- (1) All Lead Correctional Officers and Correctional Officers assigned to Medium Custody Road Squad duty will be afforded the opportunity to wear ballistic body armor on the outside of their uniform shirt.
 - (2) The use of ballistic body armor will be optional, at each individual officer's discretion.
- (d) Restraints
- (1) The Lead Correctional Officer and each Correctional Officer will be equipped with handcuffs and a handcuff case.
 - (2) Each road squad vehicle will be equipped with two sets of leg restraints and two waist chains.

.1909 Other Equipment

Each road squad vehicle is equipped with other equipment as follows:

- (a) First Aid Kit
- (b) Water Cooler
- (c) Food container
- (d) Portable toilet with seat covers, germicide, clorox wipes and rubber gloves
- (e) Highway work signs and traffic cones
- (f) Tools and safety equipment sufficient for the day's work
- (g) Hand wash facilities
- (h) Weapons rack for vehicle
- (i) Vise to secure bush axes for sharpening
- (j) Amber light for vehicle roof
- (k) Fire extinguisher rated ABC, minimum size of 10 pounds
- (l) Bloodborne Pathogen Kit
- (m) Eye Wash Kit

.1910 Weather Conditions

- (a) Medium custody road squad inmates work under like weather conditions, as do employees of the Division of Prisons and Department of Transportation taking into consideration the requirement of supervision. Generally, inmates are not required to work if the chill factor is below 20 degrees Fahrenheit or if the temperature is above 95 degrees Fahrenheit. Unless an emergency exists, inmates are not to work in rain, sleet or snow to the extent that clothing becomes soaked.
- (b) The Officer-in-Charge of the facility is responsible for determining whether threatening weather conditions warrant holding road crews at the prison or delaying their departure until conditions improve. The Officer-in-Charge shall notify the Department of Transportation of this decision.
- (c) The Lead Correctional Officer is responsible for determining whether weather conditions warrant terminating work once work has begun. The Lead Correctional Officer notifies the Officer-in-Charge of this decision.
- (d) In cold weather, the Lead Correctional Officer shall permit inmates to warm themselves inside the road squad vehicle.
- (e) In hot weather the Lead Correctional Officer will decide when rest periods and water breaks are needed to prevent inmates from suffering heat exhaustion and to safeguard their health.
- (f) When work is suspended temporarily because of weather conditions, the inmates are to be confined in the road squad vehicle or in the most practical alternative place available. The armed officers always remain in a position to exercise effective supervision and to prevent escape.

.1911 Safety

- (a) Inmate safety while performing road squad duties is a primary responsibility of the Lead Correctional Officer.
- (b) Prohibited Work Activities
 - (1) Inmates perform only those work activities that do not present safety hazards. Questionable work activities are not performed until approved by the Facility Safety Officer in consultation with the Department of Correction Safety Officer when necessary.
 - (2) Specific work activities that are prohibited include but are not limited to: chain saw Operation, tree climbing and salt bin maintenance.
 - (3) Inmates are prohibited from working over, beside, on or in water where inmates might reasonably drown if they were to fall in; unless life vests, ring buoys and

rescue skiff with standby personnel are provided. Recreational swimming is prohibited.

(c) Additional Safety Requirements

- (1) The Lead Correctional Officer will require inmates to wear hard hats when the work activity presents a risk of head injury by falling objects or by being struck by tools or equipment./
- (2) Inmates and Correctional Officers must wear safety vests when working roadside.
- (3) Inmates must wear steel-toed work boots and work gloves.
- (4) Inmates must wear safety goggles anytime the work activity presents a risk of foreign objects entering the eye.
- (5) When work squads find firearms or other items that cannot be lawfully possessed such as illegal drugs or switchblades on the roadside, the Lead Officer should move the inmates away from the items. The Lead Officer will contact local law enforcement and provide them with the location of the items. If the work squads encounter other items that could be reasonably utilized by inmates as a weapon such as pocketknives the Lead Officer should not allow the inmates to gain possession of the item.
- (6) The Lead Correctional Officer will insure that the appropriate traffic warning signs are placed before the work site for safety purposes. When the work site is on four lane rural roads, freeways and expressways, signs will be placed on opposite sides of the road on the right hand shoulder of the roads at least 1000 feet up to one-half mile from the work site. When the work site is on a two lane rural road, one sign will be placed on the shoulder of the road at least 500 feet to 1000 feet from the work site. The Lead Correctional Officer will insure that the vehicle is pulled safely on the shoulder of the road or median. Orange traffic cones will be placed at the front and rear and aligned along the length of the vehicle on the side of the vehicle nearest traffic. The vehicle will display a flashing amber light on the vehicle roof as warning indicators to passing vehicles.
- (7) Job assignments requiring work on the paved portion of the roadway are performed only if a flagman is provided by DOT.

.1912 Training

- (a) Each Superintendent who furnishes medium custody inmates for road work will insure all Correctional Officers assigned to road squad duty have completed Basic Training and Correctional Officer's Road Squad Supervision Training as approved by OSDT.

- (b) Each Superintendent who furnishes medium custody inmates for roadwork will schedule annual road squad refresher training for all road squad staff.
- (c) Documentation of participation in all road squad-training programs will be maintained at the facility.

.1913 Other Requirements

- (a) Inspection
 - (1) The superintendent or designee of each facility furnishing medium custody inmates for road work should maintain regular contact with road squad staff and conduct regular unscheduled inspections of one or more road squads at least one time per month to assure compliance with prison policies.
 - (2) Road squad vehicles are inspected as part of the facility inspection program where it is stationed.
- (b) Locations of Work
 - (1) Work assignments are received from the Department of Transportation each day.
 - (2) Work locations are changed on a regular basis to prevent inmates from knowing the work site in advance.
 - (3) Planned work sites and changes to work sites during the day are communicated by the Lead Correctional Officer to the Officer-in-Charge each day.
 - (4) The Lead Correctional Officer and/or Superintendent or designee may modify the work schedule/location based on safety and security issues.
- (c) Clothing
 - (1) Inmates are dressed in clothing appropriate for the weather and their security classification.
 - (2) Steel toe work boots or steel toe rubber boots are worn for road duty.
- (d) Incentive Wage/Gain Time/Earn Time
 - (1) Inmates assigned to road squads earn \$.70 per day incentive wage and #3 gain time/earn time.
- (e) Post Orders

- (1) Each superintendent who furnishes inmates for medium custody road squads will establish post orders that address the requirements and operational issues of this policy.

Royal Bennett 10-12-07

Director of Prisons Date

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