

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE	Transmittal # 17-11	Policy # 8.32
Applicability: <input type="checkbox"/> All DJJ Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Administration <input type="checkbox"/> Community Services <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Secure Facilities	Related Standards & References: ACA Standard: 4-JCF-2A-19, 27, 29, 3-JDF-3A-26, 27, 30 DJJ 3.12, 8.1, 8.5, 8.17, 8.30	
Chapter 8: SAFETY, SECURITY, AND CONTROL	Effective Date: 11/15/17	
Subject: SECURITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAMS	Scheduled Review Date: 11/15/18	
Attachments: A – Physical Fitness Assessment	Replaces: 11/12/14 Operations and Compliance Division APPROVED:  <hr/> Avery D. Niles, Commissioner	

I. POLICY:

Department of Juvenile Justice secure facilities may operate a Security Emergency Response Team (SERT) to assist other staff and enhance facility safety and security.

II. DEFINITIONS:

Inappropriate Use of Force: Use of force techniques beyond what is necessary to manage the behaviors of acting-out youth, unwarranted use of force techniques, or the use of force when the least restrictive alternative is not appropriately utilized.

Security Emergency Response Team (SERT): A team of highly trained, POST-certified Juvenile Correctional Officers who enhance facility safety and security.

SERT Commander: A Lieutenant or Sergeant who commands the SERT team.

Totality of Circumstances: What constitutes “objectively reasonable” is dependent on a number of additional factors, collectively known as the “totality of circumstances.” The entire situation needs to be examined in order to determine whether the actions of employees are reasonable. Some of the factors which must be considered when using force are the size, strength, and skill level of the officer and subject, degree of physical exhaustion, number of subjects, other force options available, ability to escape, severity of the crime/threat, etc.

Use of Force: Physical force used to compel an individual to take action against his/her will or to prevent a subject from taking action directed toward another that would be damaging to him/her, other persons, or property. This may involve the direct laying on of hands or putting of an object into motion that touches the individual, including oleoresin capsicum (OC Spray), Pepperball system, ASP Baton, and the use of firearms.

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Use of Force Munitions: Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) spray and the Pepper Ball Munitions are the only authorized chemical agents with use of force munitions.

III. RESPONSE TEAM:

A. Response Team:

Secure facilities may operate a Security Emergency Response Team (SERT), as authorized by the Deputy Commissioner of Secure Campuses.

B. Selection Criteria:

1. Care will be exercised in the selection of SERT members to ensure that the Department of Juvenile Justice is represented with members of integrity, excellent work experience and ethics, fitness for duty, and professional development within the agency.
2. Prospective members must be in good standing with the POST Council as POST certified officers.

C. Selection Process:

1. The selection of SERT members will be a planned and structured process in collaboration with the Director of Special Operations and facility Directors/Assistant Directors.
 - a) The selection process consists of:
 - i. A 3-member panel represented by a facility Director or designee and Director of Special Operations or designee. The third member will be identified by either the facility Director or Director of Special Operations.
 - ii. Physical Fitness Assessment (Attachment A) coordinated and conducted by Special Operations Commander to assess the physical fitness for special duty. The applicant must be able to perform physically to a standard of 60% or better as SERT duties require a certain level of fitness.
 - iii. Satisfactory completion of a psychological evaluation with a selected DJJ vendor.
2. The facility Director or designee and Director of Special Operations will coordinate and schedule the selection process.

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3. Upon completion of the background investigation, the Director of Special Operations and the facility Director will select the most appropriate candidate.

D. Criteria to Remain a SERT Member:

1. Each SERT member must meet the following criteria to remain on SERT:
 - a) Pass an annual Physical Fitness Assessment;
 - b) Maintain job performance which is deemed suitable and compliant with DJJ policies and procedures, rules and regulations;
 - c) Maintain satisfactory mental and physical fitness for duty; and
 - d) In addition to Basic Juvenile Correctional Officers Training (BJCOT), selected members must successfully complete the following training within 12 months of hire to maintain a position as a SERT member:
 - i. Use of Force Technique;
 - ii. Specialized SERT; and
 - iii. Use of Force Munitions.
2. Any SERT member who does not satisfactorily meet the criteria to remain on the SERT team will be placed on a 90-day probationary period. At the end of the 90 days, the member will be reassessed to determine continued SERT team eligibility. Any member who fails to satisfactorily meet SERT team criteria at the end of the 90-day period will be removed from the SERT team.

E. The facility Director will establish a post order for SERT in accordance with DJJ 8.1, Security Management, which will include:

1. Number of staff assigned to the post;
2. Detailed description of duties, including any needed equipment;
3. When the post may be activated and de-activated and by whom;
4. Director's signature and date indicating approval of the post order;
5. Last review date and next scheduled review date; and
6. Staff signature sheet.

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- F. Members are responsible for being knowledgeable of the POST orders, all facility LOPs, DJJ policies, and all Emergency Management Plans (e.g., escape, riot, disaster, and fire plans).
- G. SERT will maintain and document its daily activities in a logbook.
- H. SERT will comply with uniform guidelines in accordance with DJJ 3.12, Dress Code for Uniformed Staff:
 - 1. Authorized black puncture resistant protective gloves will be issued. Gloves will not routinely be worn except when performing duty specific details (e.g. searches, room/cell extractions, etc.). However, during cold temperature, the wearing of the issued glove is authorized.
 - 2. Collar rank (JCO I, SGT, LT) will not be worn on the SERT uniform. Metal rank presents a safety concern for SERT members when responding to emergency situations. However, the cloth epaulets will be authorized.
- I. The duties of the SERT shall include, but not be limited to:
 - 1. Responding to incidents involving violent or uncooperative youth who refuse to comply with directives that threaten the safety and security of the facility;
 - 2. Coordinating and conducting systematic, yet unscheduled, searches of the facility for contraband;
 - 3. Preventing escapes, controlling contraband, and maintaining order within the facility;
 - 4. Escorting youth who display assaultive behavior patterns inside the facility;
 - 5. Responding to any leads pertaining to contraband in or entering the facility and taking action to remove and/or prevent contraband from entering the facility;
 - 6. Assisting with escorting selected youth for medical appointments, psychological evaluations, and other off-site appointments; and
 - 7. Assisting in the use of therapeutic restraints once ordered by mental health staff.

IV. GENERAL PROCEDURES:

- A. Each member of SERT will be trained in the Use of Force, receive additional specialized training, and receive training on the Use of Force Munitions. Additional specialized training will be provided as needed.

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- B. The SERT Commander will conduct drills and training with SERT team at least 8 hours per month.
- C. The Office of Training will coordinate and schedule quarterly trainings that are approved and will not replace the monthly SERT Commander training for that month.
- D. SERT members will use approved use of force techniques as taught by the Office of Training.
- E. The SERT Commander will document all training.
- F. SERT members will possess a body camera and a video camera at all times. Anytime the SERT team is involved in the anticipated use of physical interventions with a youth, the incident will be recorded with the lapel/body camera and video camera.
- G. SERT members who have successfully completed the OC Certification course shall be issued and carry a canister of OC Spray while on duty as part of his/her required equipment. All SERT members shall be authorized to use OC Spray in accordance with their training. (See DJJ 8.30, Use of Force.) All instances of OC Spray use will be documented using the assigned video cameras and an SIR will be completed.
- H. The inverted shield may be used while conducting a room/cell extraction on an aggressive youth in order to increase the safety and security of both the youth and staff. The inverted shield may also be used when a youth has some object or fluid in his/her possession that could cause physical harm to youth or staff.
- I. The Director of Special Operations will receive immediate verbal notification when any use of force is used.

V. LOCAL OPERATING PROCEDURES REQUIRED: NO