



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DOJ OIG Releases Management Advisory Memorandum of Concerns Regarding the Federal Bureau of Prisons' Policies Pertaining to the Use of Restraints on Inmates

Department of Justice (DOJ) Acting Inspector General William M. Blier announced today the release of a Management Advisory Memorandum to the Director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) regarding the BOP's policies and practices pertaining to the use of restraints on inmates.

The OIG identified these concerns in connection with our investigators' reviews of allegations by multiple BOP inmates at multiple BOP institutions that they were placed in restraints while confined to a bed or chair for extended periods and were assaulted or otherwise mistreated while in restraints. Some of these inmates were placed in four-point restraints, which are restraints using four points of contact—both wrists and both ankles—to confine an inmate to a bed, and others were placed in restraints on both wrists and ankles while confined to a chair. Some inmates reportedly suffered long-term injuries after prolonged placement in restraints. For example, one inmate suffered injury requiring the amputation of part of the inmate's limb after being kept in restraints for over 2 days. We found that shortcomings in BOP's policies and practices contributed to the concerns we identified and limited the availability of evidence that could either corroborate or refute inmates' accounts of what happened while they were in restraints, thereby impairing the OIG's ability to investigate allegations of misconduct by BOP employees. Specifically, we identified the following shortcomings:

- Lack of clarity in BOP policy as to the meaning of four-point restraints and lack of clear guidance regarding restraint, medical, and psychology checks of inmates in restraints that are not considered four-point restraints;
- Policies and practices that allow inmates to be kept in restraints for prolonged periods, sometimes leading to long-term injuries, and that require only limited oversight by BOP regional office staff while inmates are in restraints;
- Inadequate guidelines to memorialize what occurred during restraint checks, including the absence of a requirement that BOP staff video and audio record restraint checks; and
- Inadequate guidelines to document medical checks of inmates in restraints.

Clearer and more robust policies would assist the BOP in protecting inmates from abusive treatment, shielding staff from false allegations, deterring misconduct by staff, and holding staff who engage in misconduct accountable. Separately, the OIG is continuing to conduct an audit related more broadly to the BOP's oversight of its use of restraints.

The DOJ OIG made six recommendations to the BOP to address the concerns we identified. The BOP concurs with the recommendations.

Memorandum: Today's memorandum is available [on our website](#).