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Verifying Identities When Booking or Citing Subjects
(Re-issue DB 15-013)

Frequently, individuals give false names during traffic stops or when being booked or cited. Those subjects often memorize the address and date of birth of other persons to hide their criminal record or lack of a valid driver license. When officers use that name on an incident report, on a booking card or on a citation, it creates problems for the person whose identity was used.

General Order 9.01 (B.4.) states "...when issuing a moving violation, an officer shall reasonably ascertain the true identity of the violator..." or "...the violator shall be booked." Verbal information should not be accepted as identification unless it can be independently verified.


As a reminder, under Penal Code 853.5(a), a person arrested for an infraction may be taken into custody only if the person:

- (a) Refuses to sign the written promise to appear contained on the Notice to Appear:
or
- (b) Has no satisfactory identification and refuses to provide a thumbprint or fingerprint.

When citing or booking for a misdemeanor, General Order 5.06 (B.5.) requires members to book instead of cite when a suspect does not, "...provide satisfactory evidence of his/her identity." If a member cannot verify a subject's identity, he or she should make use of the PID system or Cal. Photo to assist in that determination.

Based on verified identity, officers shall enter the verified name on the Field Arrest Card and Incident Report. If an alias is given, officers shall enter the alias name on the alias field of the Field Arrest Card and Incident Report. If the subject's true identity cannot be established to the officer's satisfaction prior to booking, the subject shall be booked under either the name John or Jane Doe with the case number as the middle name. Officers shall follow this protocol on the Incident Report and Field Arrest Card.

Airport Bureau will follow protocol as established by the San Mateo County Sheriff's Department.


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