



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## *Board of Local and Regional Jails*

(804) 887-7850

P.O. BOX 26963  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23261

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August 20, 2024

### **MEMORANDUM**

To: Commonwealth of Virginia Local and Regional Jails

From: Charlie Jett  
Chair of the Board of Local and Regional Jails

Cleopatra Lightfoot-Booker  
Vice Chair of the Board of Local and Regional Jails

Subject: 6VAC15-40-1045 Supervision of Inmates

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide all facilities under the purview of the State Board of Local and Regional Jails (BLRJ) with guidance on [6VAC15-40-1045](#)., Supervision of Inmates.

The intent of this guidance is to provide clear and concise operational expectations on security checks and rounds that when completed properly mitigate the risk of escapes, harm to people and property, and exposure to liability.

6VAC15-40-1045., Supervision of Inmates currently reads, "*All inmate housing areas shall be inspected a minimum of twice per hour at random intervals between inspections. All inspections and unusual incidents shall be documented. No obstructions shall be placed in the bars or windows that would prevent the ability of staff to view inmates or the entire housing area.*".

The following interpretation and guidance have been approved by BLRJ at its March 13, 2024, meeting.

The BLRJ views 6VAC15-40-1045 as being based upon the underlying principle of ensuring the general welfare and safety of inmates. Inspections required by this

regulation shall therefore at a minimum, at least twice per hour, directly observe and verify that there is no visual evidence of the inmate being in distress. A complete security check of all housing areas occupied by inmates includes observing inmate behavior, checking on inmate well-being, and identifying any reasonably detectable maintenance, safety, and security issues.

During inspection, staff shall not allow any obstructions which prevent the ability to view the inmates and entire housing area. Inspections shall be completed by staff having a direct line of sight of inmates. Inspections shall visually verify the presence, safety, and levels of distress of an inmate.

While video surveillance and other current and future technologies are valuable supplementations and augmentations of the minimum requirements, they do not satisfy the requirements of 6VAC15-40-1045. In-person observation of each inmate by jail staff is required.

All sheriffs and superintendents will please ensure that all jail personnel are aware of and understand the BLRJ's interpretational guidance of 6VAC15-40-1045. Effective, August, 2024, the BLRJ will be utilizing this interpretational guidance. Please address any questions to Tawana Ferguson, Regulatory Compliance Supervisor, at [tawana.ferguson@vadoc.virginia.gov](mailto:tawana.ferguson@vadoc.virginia.gov).

cc: Board of Local and Regional Jails  
John Jones, Executive Director of Virginia Sheriff's Association  
Derek Almarode, President of Virginia Association of Regional Jails  
Brian Flaherty, Executive Director of the Board of Local and Regional Jails