Auditor, Sheriff's Department Disagree on Handcuffing Best Practices

"If an inmate is assaultive toward staff, then best practice is to handcuff from behind," says Sanders, a former captain of a Louisiana sheriff's office who has testified about correctional facility procedures in numerous court cases.

Sanders say that handcuffed detainees being transported within a jail should also have ankle restraints, or a chain linking him to other detainees if there are multiple people being moved at once, much like the Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office does when...

"Our disagreement with the auditor is that there is no national standard practice for restraining. There are no agencies that put out these best practices when restraining inmates," says Firman.

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Pregnant women are handcuffed from the front, so that if they fall they won't land directly on their bellies.

"There are other agencies that do things differently," Firman acknowledges. "We don't necessarily think that because a lot of other agencies are doing something one way that we need to follow suit."

The Denver Sheriff Department has a checkered past when it comes to detainee well-being. In both 2010 and 2015, a detainee died in jail custody.