



Section	Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF)	Effective:	4/6/2011
Sub-section	Nursing	Version:	DRAFT
Policy	Patients' Person and Property	Last Revised:	
Director's Approval	_____	Date	_____
	Alice Gleghorn, PhD		
PHF Medical Director's Approval	_____	Date	_____
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Supersedes:	Disposal of Illicit Contraband Drugs, Examination of Patient's Person and Property and Patient Property.		
Approvals:	PHF Medical Practice Committee: PHF Governing Board:		

1. PURPOSE/SCOPE

- 1.1. To safeguard patient property, maintain unit safety, and assure any items that might pose a threat are identified and safely secured.
- 1.2. To assure that the physical status of all newly admitted patients is securely and accurately recorded and that injuries are identified.

2. DEFINITIONS

The following terms are limited to the purposes of this policy:

- 2.1. **Valuables** – include, but are not limited to: cash, checks, cards of monetary value, jewelry, and identification documents.
- 2.2. **Licensed Nursing Staff (LNS)** – an individual employed or contracted by the Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF) who holds a valid California license as a registered nurse, licensed vocational nurse, or licensed psychiatric technician.
- 2.3. **Illicit Drugs** – a drug or substance that is considered an illegal substance under federal or state law, or cannot be obtained by prescription, or has not been prescribed to a patient.
- 2.4. **Drug Paraphernalia** – Medical apparatus or over-the-counter items that are commonly used in Illicit Drug activity such as syringes, needles, drug pipes, hemostats, etc.
- 2.5. **Contraband** – materials, articles, or goods that patients are prohibited from having in their possession due to the potential to cause harm to self or others, or to interfere with

patient or staff safety and treatment, such as sharps (including knives and other potentially hazardous objects), Illicit Drugs, or Drug Paraphernalia.

3. POLICY

- 3.1. Patients may have two changes of clothing, identification, reading material and small personal effects not of a hazardous nature.
- 3.2. PHF staff will closely check each patient's person, clothing, and belongings for Contraband upon admission.

4. ADMISSION PROCEDURE

- 4.1. Upon admission, two PHF staff members will:
 1. Escort newly admitted patients to a room where maximum privacy possible is provided;
 2. Limit the patient's movement about the unit until an inventory and review is completed;
 3. Have the patient change into a gown;
 4. Perform the inspection and check-in during the shift in which the patient arrives;
 5. Perform a review of the physical status of the patient and document any physical injuries and/or marks in the nursing assessment;
 6. Thoroughly inventory and record all belongings on the patient property sheet and place sheet on the designated clipboard in the nursing station for reference (see sections below for additional procedures on inventorying Valuables and Contraband); and
 - a. The patient property sheet should be signed by one of the PHF staff members and the patient. If patient is unwilling to co-sign, another PHF staff member will sign as a witness.
 7. Place belongings in a sack or bag, secure it shut, include the patient's name on it, and store it in a designated locked area on the unit.
 - a. Storage on the unit is limited; when at capacity, alternative arrangements will be made.
- 4.2. For all items identified as Valuables, PHF staff will:
 1. Inventory them in front of the patient and list them on a Valuables envelope;
 2. Seal, sign and have the patient sign the Valuables envelope; and
 3. Immediately deliver the Valuables envelope to the Administrative Office Professionals (AOPs) on duty (or Team Lead during nights, weekends and holidays). The AOP or Team Lead on duty will:
 - a. Log the Valuables envelope on the "Valuables" log sheet;
 - b. Lock the Valuables envelope in a safe; and

- c. Inventory all Valuable envelopes stored in the safe each day.
- 4.3. For any item suspected to be illegal or dangerous Contraband, PHF staff will:
1. Inventory it, log it on the patient property sheet, and place it in the designated locked cabinet; and
 2. Contact Santa Barbara County Law Enforcement to inform them of suspected illegal or dangerous Contraband and request pick-up.
 - a. Unless legally required to be disclosed, the name of the patient in possession of the illegal or dangerous Contraband shall not be released to Law Enforcement;
 - b. Upon releasing the item(s) to Law Enforcement, a Law Enforcement officer and PHF staff member will sign a Contraband release form to indicate the acceptance and release of the item(s).
 - c. If Law Enforcement does not accept the designated item(s), PHF staff will request further directions from the officer.
 - d. Illicit Drugs or Drug Paraphernalia will not be returned to the patient, but other Contraband will be assessed on a case-by-case basis if appropriate to be returned to patient at the time of discharge.
- 4.4. For medications brought to the PHF by a patient and/or family, please see *the Patients' Own Medications* policy.
- 4.5. Patient cell phones are not allowed on the unit but may be stored in the patient's property drawer in the nursing station to ensure easy access to necessary phone numbers with staff assistance.
- 4.6. Electronic devices are not permitted with exceptions to be considered on a case by case basis.
- 4.7. Outside food is not allowed. See PHF policy *Outside Food*.
- 4.8. Patients returning from appointments off unit may require an additional review of the physical status of the patient and the patient's clothing and belongings on a case by case basis.
- 4.9. Periodically and as indicated by reports or patient behavior, PHF staff may conduct a random, focused safety search of the facility for Contraband and other materials that have the potential to cause harm to self or others or to interfere with patient or staff safety and treatment.
- 4.10. Patient's belongings brought to them after admission will be inventoried, properly stored and logged on the patient property sheet.

5. **DISCHARGE PROCEDURE**

- 5.1. During discharge, the Team Lead or AOP will retrieve and log out the "Valuables" envelope from the safe. PHF staff will:
 1. Break the envelope seal in the presence of the patient;

2. Review the patient property sheet and return all items listed, including property not defined as Valuable;
 3. Co-sign the patient property sheet with the patient; and
 - a. If the patient refuses to sign, it will be noted on the property sheet and co-signed by a second PHF staff.
 4. File the patient property sheet in the patient's chart.
- 5.2. If during regular AOP inventory checks, Valuables or other property are discovered for a patient who has been discharged, the AOP will contact the patient to return the property immediately.
1. If this is not possible the Clinical Director will be notified for alternative arrangements to be made.

ASSISTANCE

Nursing Supervisor

RELATED POLICIES

Outside Food
 Patients' Own Medication

REVISION RECORD

DATE	VERSION	REVISION DESCRIPTION
DRAFT	2.0	Updated policy to reflect current practices and procedures and to combine the following policies into one: Disposal of Illicit Contraband Drugs, Examination of Patient's Person & Property, and Patient Property.

Culturally and Linguistically Competent Policies

The Department of Behavioral Wellness is committed to the tenets of cultural competency and understands that culturally and linguistically appropriate services are respectful of and responsive to the health beliefs, practices and needs of diverse individuals. All policies and procedures are intended to reflect the integration of diversity and cultural literacy throughout the Department. To the fullest extent possible, information, services and treatments will be provided (in verbal and/or written form) in the individual's preferred language or mode of communication (i.e. assistive devices for blind/deaf).