

**SUBJECT: Security and Law Enforcement**

1. **PURPOSE:** To state policy, rules, and regulations regarding medical center security and law enforcement.
2. **POLICY:** This medical center will protect the lives of our patients, visitors, and employees as well as government property. The VA Police's mission is to prevent acts of a criminal nature from occurring and to apprehend and prosecute violators when necessary.
3. **PROCEDURES:**
  - A. **Police Coverage.** The facility will be manned on a 24-hour basis with police officers on each shift. The alarm monitor located at VA Police Dispatch, which is also manned on a 24-hour basis, who will immediately dispatch police officers, as necessary, upon receiving a complaint or a request. Due to environmental crime conditions, total patient and employee population, and transient activities, no less than four police officers per shift will be assigned to carry out the security and law enforcement program.

All police officers on duty will carry a two-way radio and be in constant contact with all officers via a base radio located in the Police Dispatch Center. All police officers will be armed with a firearm, OC Pepper Spray and Expandable Straight Baton (MEB). They are empowered with arrest authority by Title 38, U.S. Code 1.218.

- B. **Police Duties.** When a police officer observes a criminal act, potential criminal act, or is summoned to respond to a situation where a criminal act has occurred, the officer will conduct a preliminary investigation and make timely reports of the crime to appropriate authorities. Should the crime involve an arrest, the officer is responsible for the apprehension and legally-correct handling of offenders, gathering and preserving evidence, and the expeditious transfer of offenders through appropriate law enforcement agencies. The police officer's functions in security and law enforcement also include courteously assisting beneficiaries, visitors, and employees, and safeguarding their welfare during emergencies.

C. **Procedures For Notifying Police and Security Service.**

- 1) Any employee is expected to notify the VA Police as soon as possible when a crime has been committed or is being committed. VA Police should be notified of the following:
  - a) Theft of government or personal property
  - b) Assault of patients, visitors, or employees
  - c) Suicides or attempted suicides
  - d) Use of a firearm
  - e) Disturbance of any kind
  - f) Suspicious person or group
  - g) Disorderly conduct, including unsolicited advances of a sexual nature
  - h) Introduction or possession of alcohol, drugs, or weapons
  - i) Bomb threats
  - j) Civil disturbance
  - k) Terrorist threat
  - l) Hostage/barricade situation
  - m) Drunkenness

- n) Threatening telephone calls
- o) Loitering
- p) Vandalism to government or private property
- q) Missing patient
- r) Elopement of a patient who is committed and is a threat or potential threat to self or others
- s) Active Threat Response

*Note:* Nursing personnel are primarily responsible for supervision of patients while on the wards, but may call VA Police for assistance when needed in an emergency.

- 2) The telephone extensions for the VA Police are 2007 and 3589. If these extensions cannot be reached, the caller should dial 1911 (Police Dispatch Center) and relay a message for police assistance.
  - 3) When reporting an incident, give as much detailed information as possible: the nature of the occurrence, exact area, a description of those involved, and any other pertinent information.
  - 4) For procedures concerning searches and the return of missing patients, see policy TX-16.
4. **RESPONSIBILITIES:**
- The *Chief of Police* is responsible for administrative and technical enforcement of federal laws and VA regulations for all offenses which occur at the medical facility.
  - *Employees* are responsible for notifying police of concerns listed in section 3(c), conducting their duties in a safe and legal manner, and paying fines issued by VA police.
5. **REFERENCES:** VA Directive 0730, JCAHO Standard EC 2.10.
6. **RESCISSION:** VA Medical Center Security and Law Enforcement Policy EC-03E, dated March 20, 2013.
7. **FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY:** Chief, VA Police Service (07B).

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