



EASTERN MISSOURI PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL SYSTEM

Metropolitan St. Louis Psychiatric Center
5351 Delmar Boulevard
St. Louis, MO 63112

**POLICY
NUMBER**
MPC.049.1

ASSIGNED REVIEWER Clinical Executive Committee	SUBJECT MPC Contraband Policy – Inpatient Units	
APPROVED BY Michael B. Anderson, Chief Operating Officer	ISSUED September 5, 2008	REVISED/EFFECTIVE September 18, 2015
This policy is scheduled for routine review in 2018		

POLICY

To promote the safety of clients, staff, and visitors at Metropolitan St. Louis Psychiatric Center (MPC).

PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for staff regarding contraband on the inpatient units.

DEFINITIONS

Contraband – Any item that is not approved by MPC Staff and/or is deemed a potential threat to client, staff, and visitor safety and/or privacy, or is illegal which is:

1. Discovered in the possession of a client on a unit or other secured area, or any area of the facility to which the clients have access after having been screened by staff, or,
2. Discovered on a unit or in an area of the facility to which the clients have access, or,
3. Discovered as a result of an attempt by a visitor to distribute the item(s) to a client, or,
4. Any object whose purpose is to inflict serious injury, regardless of the manner in which it is discovered, or,
5. Any neutral object that could be used to or has been modified for the purpose of inflicting injury to self or others.

Items Identified as Contraband at MPC:

Weapons: Firearms, ammunition, knives of any size, tasers, saws, box cutters, mace, handcuffs, brass knuckles, chains of any size, ropes, cords, clubs, chemical and/or poisonous agents, or explosives.

Medications: Prescription medications (including inhalants), over-the-counter medications, vitamins or supplements, herbal remedies, unmarked or unidentified powders or liquids, dried plant material.

Alcohol/Drugs: Any type of alcohol or items containing alcohol. All illicit/street drugs or drug paraphernalia of any type.

Sharp Objects: Knives of any size, razors, razor blades, scalpels, scissors, metal combs/picks, mirrors, mirrored compacts, nail clippers, metal or glass nail files, cans, can openers, ice picks, corkscrews, screwdrivers, hammers, or any other tools, sewing needles, craft needles/hooks, paper clips, safety pins, staples, tacks, pencils, pens that unscrew and have springs, wire ties, plastic silverware, plastic plates, or any other sharp or pointed object that could inflict harm.

- Tobacco: Cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, snuff, nicotine replacement products (patches, gum), pipes, rolling paper, lighters, lighter fluid, matches, electronic cigarettes, vaping products or any other tobacco products.
- Food/Drink: All food items or drinks (opened or unopened).
- Containers: Any glass, metal, wooden or aerosol containers and plastic bags.
- Hygiene Items: Metal or glass nail files, nail clippers, tweezers, razors, razor blades, scissors, safety pins, hairspray, mirrors, compacts with mirrors, curling irons, flat irons, hair dryers, hair clippers, metal combs or picks, combs with sharp "tails", wigs, hairpieces or hair accessories with metal parts, dental floss, and chemicals to dye, highlight, relax or perm hair.
- Clothing: Nylon stockings/pantyhose, scarves, belts, heavy shoes, boots, steel-toed footwear, high-heel shoes, short shorts, cropped tops, overly tight or obscene clothing items, draw strings, suspenders, robe sashes, cords, shoelaces, ribbons, headbands, sunglasses, chain necklaces, heavy gauge link necklaces/bracelets, dangling earrings, key chains, tongue or facial piercings, and clothing hangers (hangers = other than those provided by the facility).
- Bags/Purses: Any type of bag or purse, backpacks, briefcases, luggage, and umbrellas.
- Keys/ID: Keys, wallets, forms of identification, credit cards, debit cards, EBT cards, checkbooks, non-prepaid telephone cards and legal documents. (**These items and other valuables will be stored in the MPC safe, as per MPC admission.)
- Cash: Individual client possession of any amount of cash at any time. All client personal funds will be deposited into an individual account in the Accounting department.
- Mobility Aids: Crutches, canes, walkers, and wheelchairs. These items may be given to clients, as per Physician's order.
- Audio/Visual: Cameras, video cameras, cellular phones, pagers, PDAs, Blackberries, laptop computers, IPODS, MP3 Players, DVD players and DVDs, CD players and CDs; cassette players and cassettes, headphones with wires, Game Boys, radios, typewriters, portable TVs, electrical appliances, or any electrical items with cords.
- Sewing/Craft: Sewing kits, sewing needles, knitting needles, craft needles, seam rippers, crochet hooks, latch hooks, tacks, safety pins, glue, or any art supplies or craft items used outside of therapeutic groups.
- Recreational/Sports Items: Board games, balloons, pool sticks, bats, any type of ball (other than those approved by a Physician order, e.g., a stress ball), Frisbees, jump ropes, exercise bands, or any other type of recreational, sports or fitness equipment/items used outside of therapeutic groups.
- Reading/Writing Materials: Pencils, pens that unscrew and have springs, spiral notebooks, books/magazines with staples, explicit/provocative/pornographic books or reading materials/pictures, staples, paper clips, tacks, permanent markers.

Visitor Search – Staff will look for contraband by examining possible places of concealment either on a visitor, in items brought in by a visitor, or in the immediate area surrounding a visitor. This includes a walk-through and/or hand-held metal detector search.

Client Search – Upon admission, the client will be asked to change out of his/her street clothing and put on a hospital gown. The clients may also be searched upon return from Gate Pass (as outlined below in A.). During the search, the client's clothing is inspected for concealed items, including pockets, shoes, collars, cuffs, shirtsleeves, pant legs, etc. Staff shall also examine the client's hair, mouth, and any other articles in

the client's possession. Lastly, staff would perform a metal search of the patient by using a hand-held metal detector.

Staff – Shall include employees of MPC, contract employees, professional emergency personnel (e.g., EMS technicians, ambulance drivers, and police officers responding to emergency situations, etc.) whose duties necessitate their accompanying a client into secured areas.

PROCEDURES

- A. Upon arrival to the unit during the unit admission process or return from a Gate Pass (only if the client has not been in line-of-sight observation throughout the entire gate pass) (MPC.050), the client's personal belongings are again checked by the Unit Staff (this includes a metal detector wand search). An Inventory of Personal Effects form is completed upon a client's admission to a unit and items brought in by clients returning from a Gate Pass should be added to that client's existing Inventory of Personal Effects form. If during this screening process, any items found are determined to be lethal/dangerous or legal or illegal contraband, these items are to be removed immediately, stored in a short-term security locker, and/or disposed of according to the procedures contained in this policy. The staff member who conducted the inventory shall notify the Unit Manager or Designee, and will complete an Incident Report. The Unit Manager or Assigned Designee will contact Security as indicated.
- B. Matches and food or drink items shall be disposed of immediately by staff.
- C. Containers of alcoholic beverages will be discarded in the presence of two staff members.
- D. Upon seizure of weapons, illegal drugs, and/or other lethal/illegal contraband, Security is to be contacted immediately. These items are to be clearly marked by Security with the client's name, date, time, and place discovered. Security will prepare a report, notify the Police, and notify the Administrator on Call.
- E. After advising the Unit Manager or Assigned Designee and the Administrator on Call, Security will contact local police when a client is discovered to have a firearm, illegal knife, or other weapon. Please note that if a client is found to possess a controlled substance or other illegal drug, the necessity to notify the police will be determined on a case by case basis. Staff will work directly with police upon their arrival, turn over any illegal items to them, and report to them any pertinent information explained above. Staff discovering any such illegal items shall complete an Incident Report. The Incident Report should include a general description and serial number (if applicable or available) of each item. Upon discharge, it will be the client's responsibility to contact the local police department to claim any confiscated contraband which was turned over to them.
- F. Contraband not turned over to the Police by the facility (e.g., drugs and drug paraphernalia and any live rounds of ammunition) shall be marked and secured in a short term locker and then destroyed by the Director of Security and visually verified by the Chief Operating Officer or Designee.
- G. Legal items, which may be deemed contraband at MPC, will be taken and stored in a locked cabinet in the Client Clothing Room (Rm. #1652) or in the MPC safe in the Cashier's Office. (These items are also listed on the patient's Inventory of Personal Effects form and as needed on the MPC 50-10.) At the time of discharge, these items can be returned to a responsible third party. If no responsible third party is available, it will be at the discretion of the Treatment Team whether to return items to the patient, based on safety concerns for the client and others.
- H. Prescription and over the counter drugs shall be sent home with the patient's family if possible. If the family is not available, the medications shall be placed in a bag with an attached "Medication Identification and Disposition" form and sent to the MPC Pharmacy for storage. When the client is discharged the Physician must write an order for the client to receive this stored medication.
- I. Money/Valuables deemed contraband are to be stored and secured in the Cashier's vault. These items include EBT cards, Debit Cards, Credit Cards, Jewelry, Checks, Cash, any/all forms of

identification, legal documents, and Non-Prepaid Phone Cards. The items are recorded on form MPC 50-10. This form requires the signature of 2 staff and the client.

- J. Clothing articles (that are not deemed contraband as described above) shall be stored in the drawers or lockable wardrobe available in each client room. The client shall be allowed access into the locked wardrobe by Staff and only with Staff present.
- K. Each client will be allowed only seven (7) changes of clothing at a time while on the unit. Additional clothing items will be stored in the Client Clothing Room (Rm. #1652).
- L. Clients will be given one set of linens and one set of towels. Clients asking for replacement linens or towels must first turn in the used/damaged linens to Staff before being given replacements.
- M. Staff shall confiscate and report to the Unit Manager or Assigned Designee any clothing and/or bed linens that are torn or altered for potential harm. The Unit Manager or Assigned Designee shall complete an Incident Report as needed.
- N. All packages delivered to clients by visitors or others shall be searched by Security in the lobby/reception area and again by Staff on the unit prior to being given to the client.
- O. Personal items of value that the client chooses to keep on the ward (i.e., Wedding Rings, etc.) require a "Release of Responsibility" form to be completed by Staff and placed in the client's chart. Staff shall also inform the client that MPC cannot be responsible for personal items on the unit and that MPC will not replace lost, stolen, or broken belongings.
- P. Client mail must be opened by the client in the presence of staff to assure no contraband or money is contained within.
- Q. Upon discovery of contraband, theft, or missing Staff keys/access card, a search will be conducted (Refer to policy MPC.003 CLIENT SEARCH for proper procedure).

Contraband Policy Exceptions

1. Clients may be allowed access to certain limited items, which are deemed contraband as outlined in the definition section of this policy. Exceptions will be made on a case by case basis and approved by each client's treatment team/physician, Unit Manager or Assigned Designee, and the facility COO.
 2. Clients, staff, and visitors will adhere to all other provisions made in this policy unless exceptions are authorized by the patient's treatment team/physician, Unit Manager or Assigned Designee, and the facility COO.
- ***For information regarding Contraband pertaining to Visitors in the Lobby, please refer to policy number MPC 049.2.***