

# MPC Contraband Policy



## EASTERN MISSOURI PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL SYSTEM

Metropolitan St. Louis Psychiatric Center

*POLICY  
NUMBER*  
**MPC.049.3**

<b>ASSIGNED REVIEWER</b> Clinical Executive Team	<b>SUBJECT</b> MPC Contraband Policy – Visitors in the Lobby	
<b>APPROVED BY</b> Anthony J. Cuneo, Chief Operating Officer	<b>ISSUED</b> September 5, 2008	<b>REVISED/EFFECTIVE</b> October 1, 2008

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

### PURPOSE

To provide guidelines for staff regarding contraband brought into the lobby by visitors.

### DEFINITIONS

Contraband – Any item that is not approved by MPC staff and 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 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, or any other tobacco products.

Food/Drink: Visitors are prohibited from bringing clients food or drinks.

Containers: Any glass, metal, wooden or aerosol containers and plastic bags.

Hygiene Items: Metal 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. Linens, pillows, and stuffed animals.

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.

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, jewelry, 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 greater than \$20.00 cash at one time.

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, 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 visitors, or in the immediate area surrounding a visitor. This includes a walk-through and/or hand-held metal detector search.

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 the Emergency Room or other secured area.

## PROCEDURES

- A. All visitors, except for authorized staff entering the MPC lobby, shall be subject to a Visitor Search performed by Security, which involves a hand-held metal detector search. When performing this type of search, a Security and/or MPC staff shall explain the basis for the search and will seek to enlist the visitor's cooperation.
- B. If a visitor fails the hand-held metal detector search after surrendering the contraband materials to security and claiming that no other metal objects are still on their person, that individual is to be denied admission to the facility and the Administrator on Call should be notified. Any legal item determined to be contraband will be returned to the visitor's vehicle or placed in a short term locker located in the lobby. Visitors will receive a key to lock the locker and are solely responsible for retrieving these items upon departure from the facility.
- C. Each visitor will be given the contraband information placard to read and shall agree to not bring contraband items on MPC grounds or into the facility. If a visitor is unable to read the placard, an MPC staff member will read it to him/her. Each visitor will indicate that he/she has read the placard on the visitor sign-in sheet.

If a visitor does not agree to read or have the placard read to him/her, and/or if after reading the placard the visitor insists on bringing contraband items onto the grounds or into the facility, he/she will be asked by Security to leave the facility and grounds. If the visitor refuses to leave, Security will call the Police to assist.
- D. All packages delivered to clients by visitors or others shall be searched by Security in the lobby/reception area. Security will place items allowed to enter the facility into MPC approved bags for transport to the unit. Staff on the unit will recheck these items prior to being given to the client.
- E. Any visitor caught attempting to give or giving a client contraband item(s) will be restricted from the facility as deemed appropriate to maintain client, staff, and visitor safety, and the Administrator on Call is to be notified.
- F. Security reserves the right to search any visitor or client vehicle on MPC premises they suspect contains contraband.
- G. Visitors will be escorted by MPC Staff at all times, once a visitor is in a secured area.