

HARBOR-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER

SUBJECT: PATIENTS IN POLICE CUSTODY

POLICY NO. 453

PURPOSE:

To guide the placement and law enforcement management of patients in police custody who require hospitalization.

POLICY:

At Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, medical care providers will provide patients with medical care and will not perform police custody functions. When it is determined that a patient in police custody requires hospitalization, staff shall follow established procedures.

PROCEDURE:

1. A patient who is medically able to be transported should be transported to LAC+USC Medical Center, where he/she can be admitted to the Jail Ward for treatment.
2. If it is determined by a physician that the patient is medically unable to be transported, he/she can be admitted to Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. Medical care providers must notify the Sheriff’s Department immediately if a patient in police custody is admitted to Harbor-UCLA.
3. The arresting police agency shall:
 - A. Post an identified police officer outside the patient's room. The Sheriff’s Department will orient the police officer temporarily assigned to guard the patient via the “Forensic Orientation for Law Enforcement Agencies Guarding or Transporting a Patient/Prisoner within Harbor-UCLA Medical Center” (ATTACHMENT A).
 - The “Forensic Orientation for Law Enforcement Agencies Guarding or Transporting a Patient/Prisoner within Harbor-UCLA Medical Center” includes: when and how to call for help; applicable infection-control practices; and emergency and disaster procedures.
 - B. Request that Harbor-UCLA notify it (the arresting police agency) when the patient is able to be transported, is ready for discharge, or has expired.
4. The Sheriff’s Department will flag the patient's medical record to indicate they are to be notified of the above events (i.e. item 3.b. above).
5. Nursing staff will notify the Sheriff’s Department as requested.
6. Patients in custody may be handcuffed at the discretion of the arresting agency. However, it is the policy of Harbor-UCLA to discourage the handcuffing of an in-custody patient unless, in the opinion of the arresting agency, the removal of handcuffs increases the risk of the prisoner’s escape or the potential for injury to others.

EFFECTIVE DATE: 7/21/86

SUPERSEDES:

REVISED: 9/89, 2/02, 6/06, 6/10, 1/14, 1/17

REVIEWED: 8/86, 8/89, 10/92, 2/96, 2/99, 2/02, 2/05, 6/06, 1/08, 6/10, 1/14, 1/17

REVIEWED COMMITTEE: N/A

APPROVED BY:

Kim McKenzie, RN, MSN, CPHQ
Chief Executive Officer

Anish Mahajan, MD
Chief Medical Officer

Patricia Soltero Sanchez, RN, BSN, MAOM
Interim Chief Nursing Officer

Signature(s) on File.

HARBOR-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER

SUBJECT: PATIENTS IN POLICE CUSTODY

POLICY NO. 453

7. **Under no circumstances shall arresting Police Agency or Sheriff leave a handcuffed prisoner/patient unattended.**
8. Patients may not be placed in leather restraints for police-custody purposes or in lieu of handcuffs. They must meet the hospital criteria for application of hard restraints.
9. Patients in police custody should not be admitted to the hospital for elective procedures. Such patients should be referred to the LAC+USC Medical Center Jail Ward for elective treatments.