

# LAC+USC MEDICAL CENTER POLICY

Subject: <b>PATIENT IN CUSTODY OF A LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY</b>	Original Issue Date: 2/9/99	Policy # <b>182</b>
	Supersedes: 3/14/17	Effective Date: 04/18/23
Policy Owner(s): Administrator, Facilities Management Executive Sponsor(s): Chief Operations Officer		
Department(s) and Committee(s) Consulted: Environment of Care Nursing Services Emergency Medicine Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) Probation Department	Reviewed & Approved by: Attending Staff Association Executive Committee Senior Executive Officer	Approved by: (Signature on File) Chief Operations Officer
		(Signature on File) Chief Executive Officer

**PURPOSE**

To describe the method by which LAC+USC Medical Center facilities provide medical care to patients in custody of a law enforcement agency.

**POLICY**

To meet the needs of Los Angeles County, LAC+USC Medical Center provides inpatient, emergency, diagnostic services and outpatient specialty medical care to patients in custody of law enforcement agencies throughout the County. Security is maintained by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's (LASD) or Probation Departments.

Correctional Health Services (CHS), a different division of DHS, provides ongoing medical care for patients while in jail housing units – focusing on primary care and some specialty care services.

LASD or Probation Department activities must comply with Medical Center licensing, fire safety, and accreditation requirements. Security and safety of patients in custody, hospital staff, and members of the public coming into contact with patients in custody are the responsibility of the Sheriff's or Probation Department. LASD, which also provides police and security services to the Medical Center, is the official liaison with the Probation Department, and other law enforcement agencies as they relate to patients in custody.

Patients in custody are under the legal jurisdiction of LASD, Probation Department, or other law enforcement agencies involved in their arrest and transport. Each agency has the legal obligation to maintain custody of patients while the Medical Center delivers appropriate medical care.

**PROCEDURE**

**Inpatient Services**

**Adult Patients (18 years or older)**

To accommodate in-custody adult patients, a locked facility (Jail Ward) is located in the LAC+USC Medical Center. The Jail Service is medically administered by LAC+USC Medical

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Center staff. Supervision and security is administered by LASD, or by other law enforcement agencies in cooperation with the Sheriff's Department. Male and female patients are housed on the unit in gender specific rooms, and further security classification may be defined by LASD.

Patients are to remain housed on the Jail Ward unless space is not available, the medical condition of the patient prevents them from remaining on the ward, or they are in the process of obtaining specialized services not available on the Jail Ward itself. Patients housed off the Jail Ward are considered "off-jail-ward". LASD is responsible for surveillance of "off-jail-ward" patients and during transportation.

The Jail Services Medical Director together with the Department of Emergency Medicine are responsible for the overall management policies and procedures of the Jail Service. The Jail Services Medical Director or his or her designee is the medical liaison between LAC+USC Medical Center, the Sheriff's Department, and other law enforcement agencies. The Department of Emergency Medicine is also responsible for the medical care of patients within the emergency and admitting areas of the Jail Ward. Once a decision is made to admit a patient, the patient is admitted to a specialty service that assumes the responsibility for continuing medical management.

Custody and supervision within the Jail Ward is the responsibility of the LASD and is delivered in accordance with the policies and procedures developed by the Sheriff's Department. Law enforcement transporting patients remain with their patient until officially admitted to the Jail Ward as an inpatient, thereby allowing custody to transfer to the Sheriff's Department. Patients admitted outside the Jail Ward shall remain with the law enforcement personnel until custody is transferred to the Sheriff's Department.

### **Pediatric Patients (under 18 years of age)**

Inpatient care to pediatric patients in custody is provided by the Department of Pediatrics in consultation with specialty services. The responsibility for the safety and security of these patients, and that of the staff and members of the public in contact with these patients, rests with the Los Angeles County Probation Department in coordination with the Sheriff's Department where appropriate. The Probation Department is responsible for the constant surveillance of these patients while the patients are on LAC+USC Medical Center grounds.

For adolescents in the custody of the Probation Department seeking psychiatric care, see the Adolescent Unit Structure Standards and Department of Psychiatry policies.

### **Outpatient Services**

Specialty outpatient services for adult patients in the custody of the Los Angeles County jail system are provided within the Jail Service environment. Patients whose diagnostic and treatment needs cannot be met on the Jail Service receive services in regular ambulatory care settings. The Sheriff's Department is responsible for security of patients, staff, and members

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of the public, and must keep patients under constant surveillance.

Specialty outpatient services for pediatric patients are provided in the LAC+USC Medical Center's pediatric clinics. Security for patients, staff, and members of the public is the responsibility of the Probation Department or other law enforcement agencies transporting the patient to a LAC+USC Medical Center ambulatory care setting.

Should ambulatory care services not provided at LAC+USC Medical Center be required for in-custody patients, services may be provided in other DHS settings. The law enforcement agency transporting the patient is responsible for security of the patient, staff, and members of the public.

### **Safety**

To ensure patient's safety, physiological needs shall be assessed and addressed based on the level of care required.

For patients off the Jail Ward, the nursing staff shall ensure that a forensic restraint release key is immediately accessible at all times. Law Enforcement agency personnel must remain with incarcerated patients not housed in the Jail Ward at all times. The security of the key must be maintained under jurisdiction of the Sheriff's Department or probation. If there is an immediate threat to life, the medical/nursing staff will direct the Law Enforcement personnel to remove forensic restraints. When forensic restraints are removed, the appropriate law enforcement agency shall be immediately notified.

### **Patient Rights**

Visitation rights, telephone access, and other privileges are granted in consultation with LASD staff, and in accordance with usual hospital policy. Specific location of patient is not provided to guests or callers without authorization of LASD to support safety of patients, staff, and community. Usual LASD Process for friend/family to request visit, when patient is in Jail Ward, Inmate Video Visitation System Help Desk at IVVSPublicHelpDesk@lasd.org or call (213) 680-IVVS (4887), Monday through Friday, 7:00am – 2:00pm

Follow-up appointment time and location are not communicated to patient or community members, to ensure security of patients, staff and community members.

Restraints used by law enforcement for security purposes, termed Forensic Restraints, are monitored by law enforcement, and are unique from restraints placed by physician order for health safety purposes. Forensic Restraints should be placed in consultation with attending staff.

Hospital rules and regulations govern the right of custody patients to refuse medical care, receive medical care, consent for procedures, and all other applicable patient rights activities.

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**PROCEDURE DOCUMENTATION**

Attending Staff Manual  
Nursing Services and Education Unit Structure Standards  
Clinical and Non-Clinical Support Service Manuals

**REFERENCE**

California Code of Regulations, Title 15  
California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 70211(a)  
Joint Commission (CAMH LD 3.90)  
DHS Policy #154, Assisting Law Enforcement Agencies  
Medical Center Policy #903, Restraints and Seclusion

**REVISION DATES**

April 16, 2002; April 27, 2004; January 29, 2008; October 2, 2008; February 11, 2014; March 13, 2017; April 18, 2023