

**OLIVE VIEW-UCLA MEDICAL CENTER
POLICY & PROCEDURE**

**NUMBER: 162
VERSION: 1**

SUBJECT/TITLE: USE OF PNEUMATIC TUBE SYSTEM

POLICY: Olive View-UCLA Medical Center employees whose job duties require them to use the hospital’s pneumatic tube system shall participate in a formal training in its use. Upon completion of the training, the employee’s shall be issued a personal identification number (PIN) enabling them to use the system.

PURPOSE: To implement and maximize effective use of the pneumatic tube system at Olive View-UCLA Medical Center.

DEPARTMENTS: All

DEFINITIONS:

PROCEDURE: I. Using the Pneumatic Tube System

- A. Department employees required to use the pneumatic tube system as part of his/her responsibilities must first receive training from a hospital trainer. A complete record of training must be kept on file in the BEAS Room and in the area specific to each station.
- B. Employees must follow written procedures when using pneumatic tube canisters for sending and receiving.
 - 1. Red and black canisters are to be used for sending laboratory specimens
 - 2. Blue and white canisters are to be used for sending pharmaceuticals
- C. The base station number shall be painted on the canister.
- D. The following hospital-wide priorities have been established for use of the pneumatic tube system:

PRIORITY RECEIVERS

- #1 Lab
- #2 Pharmacy

PRIORITY SENDERS

- #1 ER
- #2 ICU (Medical, NICU)
- #3 Pharmacy
- #4 Surgery
- #5 Labor and Delivery
- #6 Wards

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- E. All specimens sent through the tube system must be in leak-proof plastic containers, which are then placed in sealable plastic bags. (Glass blood vials are also placed in sealable plastic bags.)
- F. To assure proper functioning of the pneumatic tube system, certain restrictions must apply.
- G. Step by Step Pneumatic Tube Procedures

NOTE: UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE USERS TO PRESS ANY “F” KEYS ON THE KEYPAD. PRESSING THE “F” KEY WILL RENDER THE STATION INOPERABLE. If this occurs, call Facilities Biomedical Electronics at x6308 (Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) or x4100 (Monday-Friday and Holidays, 3:30 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.).

II. Restricted Items:

To ensure proper functioning of the Pneumatic Tube System, certain restrictions must apply. The following items must NOT be sent through the tube system:

A. LABORATORY ITEMS

1. Specimens that may leak (e.g., sputum, stools).
2. Specimens that are difficult or impossible to recollect (e.g., surgical specimens, body fluids procured from an invasive procedure, such as CSF).
3. Any critical Lab Test Specimen
 - a. Type and cross match
 - b. Other tests (e.g., hemogram, electrolytes, glucose)
4. Blood Bank specimens and transfusion products. Blood Bank specimens must be hand delivered directly to the Blood Bank, 1A143.
5. Blood culture bottles.
6. Blood from patients on chemotherapy
7. Antineoplastic admixtures
8. More than 250 cc of fluid or more than 2.5 lbs of weight.

FAILURE TO ADHERE TO THIS POLICY MAY DELAY TESTING, MAKE THE TEST PERFORMANCE IMPOSSIBLE, OR RESULT IN USER LOSS OF PRIVILEGES.

B. PHARMACY ITEMS

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- a. Chemotherapy Drugs
- b. Expensive Drugs (defined as investigational)
- c. Controlled Drugs

C. OTHERS

- a. Paper clips
- b. Personal items
 - i. Slippers
 - ii. Lunches/food/sodas
 - iii. Magazines/newspapers

DO NOT send more than 250 cc. of fluid or more than 2.5 lbs. or weight through the pneumatic tube.

III. Procedure for Sending Carrier

A. Visually inspect carrier for damage.

1. Ensure that latch is in proper working order and that carpet and padding are in place.
2. If carpet and padding are missing, **DO NOT USE**. Remove the carrier from system, call Facilities Biomedical Electronics for maintenance.

B. Load Carrier.

- All specimens must be in leak-proof containers, which are placed in sealable plastic bags.
- Once the specimens are in the sealed plastic bag, place them in the form lining and properly secure the zippered sleeve and place in the canister.
- Ensure that nothing is protruding from carrier and that carrier is latched and sealed.
- If canister will not latch, **DO NOT USE**. Remove from system and call Facilities biomedical Electronics for maintenance.

C. Insert carrier in send gate, making certain the carrier locks into place.

D. Read Instructions on the screen.

E. Enter you code number.

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- F. Enter the numeric code for the desired destination.
 - Ensure destination is correct by checking display on screen.
- G. Press SEND button.
 - If mistake has been made in the destination, press CANCEL before carrier begins moving.
 - If carrier begins moving before cancel button can be used, call the station it was sent to erroneously, and ask them to please forward the canister to the proper send station.
 - Give them the correct code.
- H. The canister will move to align itself with the tube when traffic has cleared and the path is available.
- I. After the carrier leaves the station, the **SEND** gate will return to either the **IDLE** or **STANDBY** position.
- J. Station is now available to send additional carriers.

IV. Procedure for Receiving Carriers

- A. Make certain receiver bin is clear and unobstructed. Keep bin clear of purses, newspapers, lunches and magazines.
- B. Once **canister arrives, remove it from receiver bin** and press **CLR ARVL**.
 - If not pressed, station overload condition will occur and station will become inoperable. If the station is inoperable, call Facilities Biomedical Electronics.
- C. If carrier arrives and can be seen visually, but will not drop down, hold the carrier, push it up, and then pull it down.
- D. Remove contents from carrier carefully.
 - Inspect carrier for damage. (See #1 of “Send Instruction.”)

RETURN IT TO SENDER using **SEND CARRIER** instruction.

If after following step #1 of SENDING PROCEDURE, a user (sender/receiver) determines that a carrier must be removed from the system,

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the user will inform Facilities Biomedical Division that the carrier can no longer be used. Store the Canister temporarily until it is picked up by Facilities.

V. Procedures for Internal Spill (Carrier NOT Leaking)

The following procedures are to be followed by all appropriate personnel.

A. Receiving Area – Pathology

1. Before opening an arriving carrier, examine it carefully for any sign of breakage or leakage. DO NOT OPEN it without taking the proper precautions. Proper personal protective equipments must be used.
2. Carefully open the carrier and examine the red liner for leakage. If liner is leaking, carefully remove the specimen and place both liner and carrier into a red biohazardous waste bag, and notify the Specimen Procession.
3. Notify the Environmental Health & Safety Officer of the spill by dialing ext. 3405. After hours, leave a message on the answering machine.
4. Fill out Section I of the Pneumatic Tube Spill Report Form. Give a copy of the completed Form to the Specimen Processing Supervisor, and send the original to the Environmental Health and Safety Office at Cottage “I” within 24 hours.

VI. Procedure for External Spill (Carrier IS Leaking)

The following procedures are to be followed by all appropriate personnel.

A. Receiving Area – Pathology

1. Isolate the contaminated area, and post a contamination warning sign. DO NOT REMOVE the carrier from the station.
2. Notify the BEAS Room Operator of the spill by dialing ext. 4100.
3. Notify the sending area of the spill, and instruct them to fill out the Event Notification Form.
4. Wearing proper personal protective equipment, carefully place the carrier into a red biohazardous waste bag.
5. Carefully open the carrier and remove the specimen from the red liner.
6. Seal the red biohazardous waste bag with the liner and carrier inside, and notify the Specimen Processing Supervisor for decontamination. The Specimen Processing Supervisor is responsible for oversight of decontaminating all contaminated carriers and liners.

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7. Notify the Environmental Health & Safety Office of the spill by dialing ext. 3405. After hours, leave a message on the answering machine.
8. Fill out Section I of the Pneumatic Tube Spill Report Form. Give a copy of the completed Form to the Specimen Processing Supervisor, and send the original copy to the Environmental Health and Safety office at Cottage "I" within 24 hours.
9. Upon completion of decontamination process, promptly remove contamination warding sign, barricades, etc.

B. Sending Area

1. Upon notification, the sending area shall isolate the pneumatic tube station and post a contamination warning sign.
2. Initiate the Event Notification Process.
3. Upon completion of decontamination process, promptly remove contamination warning sign, barricades, etc.

C. BEAS Room Operator

Upon notification, the BEAS Room Operator shall:

DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS:

1. Notify Facilities Division of the spill location and stations contaminated by dialing ext. 6308 or ext. 3325. Instruct them to shut down the pneumatic tube system and initiate the decontamination process.
2. Notify the hospital operator to make the following announcement over the public address system: "The pneumatic tube system will be out of services until further notice."
3. Notify Environmental Services of the spill location and stations contaminated, and instruct them to initiate the decontamination process for the stations.

AFTER HOURS:

1. Instruct the General Maintenance worker to shut down the system.
2. Notify the hospital operator to make the following announcement over the public address system: "The pneumatic tube system will be out of service until further notice."
3. Notify Environmental Services of the spill location and stations contaminated, and instruct them to initiate the decontamination process for the stations.
4. Call back the Facilities Division Decontamination Team to clean the

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- tube system.
5. Notify the following Divisions of the spill location and stations contaminated:
 - a. Nursing Administration, ext. 3150
 - b. Facilities Division AOD
 - c. Environmental Health and Safety Office, ext. 3405. Leave a message on the answering machine.

D. Facilities Division/Environmental Services

Facilities Division is responsible for the decontamination of the pneumatic tubes while Environmental Services is responsible for the decontamination of the stations.

Upon completion of the decontamination process, fill out Section II of the Pneumatic Tube Spill Report Form. Give a copy of the completed Form to the immediate supervisor, and send the original to the Environmental Health and Safety Office at Cottage "I" within 24 hours.

References:	
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