

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

**NUMBER: 9554
VERSION: 1**

SUBJECT/TITLE: BOMB THREAT (CODE YELLOW)

POLICY: Olive View-UCLA Medical Center shall have an emergency response procedure to protect staff, patients, and visitors in the event of a bomb threat; or the discovery of a suspicious package, device, or item.

- A. The Sheriff Sergeant, Administrator in-charge, and Safety/Security Officer coordinate the bomb threat response procedures.
- B. Department managers are responsible for thoroughly acquainting themselves with the bomb threat procedure and training staff in their departments who receive calls from the public (e.g. telephone operators, receptionists, appointment clerks, etc.).
- C. The decision to evacuate is resolved through consultation between law enforcement and the hospital incident commander to balance the risk of a potential explosive versus the risk of moving patients.
- D. Do not touch or move a bomb or suspicious item.

PURPOSE: To provide an appropriate response in the event of a bomb threat or the discovery of a suspicious device or item.

DEPARTMENTS: ALL

DEFINITIONS: **Bomb Threat:** A bomb threat exists when any communication is received that a bomb or other explosive device has been placed/hidden in any public or private place.

Device/Package: A known or suspected explosive device/package (e.g., pipe bomb, backpack).

PROCEDURE: **A. BOMB THREAT**

If an employee receives a bomb threat by telephone, the following steps shall be performed:

1. Remain calm. Do not hang up.
2. Take note of the caller's exact words. Try to prolong the conversation and get as much information as possible; record specific details of the threat.

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3. Attempt to ascertain when the bomb will detonate, where the device is located, what it looks like, and why it was placed at this location.
4. When the call is over, notify your supervisor and Sheriff Dispatch immediately (x3409) and complete a Safety Intelligence (SI) report.
5. Stand by for further instructions. If it is deemed necessary to search your area or to evacuate, you will be notified by your supervisor or via the overhead paging system.

B. WRITTEN THREAT

If an employee receives a written threat, the following steps shall be performed:

1. Gather all materials as evidence, including any envelopes or containers.
2. Avoid further handling to prevent the contamination of evidence.
3. Notify supervisor and Sheriff Dispatch immediately (x3409).

C. SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE

If an employee notices or receives a suspicious letter/package, the following steps shall be performed:

1. Do not accept unsolicited packages. If a package is delivered under unusual circumstances, or is unexpected, the authenticity of the delivery should be verified with the sender, delivery person or service. If any doubts exist about a letter or package, treat it as a suspicious package.
2. Mail bombs have been contained in letters, books, and parcels of varying sizes, shapes, and colors. When examining suspicious packages, look for the following characteristics of a letter bomb:
 - No return address – sender is unknown.
 - Restrictive markings such as Confidential, Personal, Private, etc.
 - Endorsed with “Fragile – Handle with Care” or “Rush – Do Not Delay.”
 - Excessive postage.
 - Foreign mail, air mail or special delivery.
 - Misspelled words.
 - Handwritten or poorly typed addresses.
 - Addressed to title only, without specific names.
 - Incorrect titles with name.
 - Oily stains, discoloration, or crystallization on wrapper.
 - Excessive weight.
 - Rigid or bulky envelope.
 - Lopsided or uneven envelope.

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- Protruding wires or tinfoil.
 - Visual distractions.
 - Excessive securing material, such as masking tape, string, etc.
 - Strange odor.
 - Package makes a buzzing, ticking, or sloshing sound.
3. If you have a suspicious package as described above and are unable to verify the contents:
 - a. Handle the item with care. Do not shake or bump.
 - b. Do not open, smell or taste the article.
 - c. Isolate the mailing and secure the immediate area.
 - d. Do not put in water or in a confined space, such as a desk drawer or filing cabinet.
 - e. If possible, open windows in the immediate area to assist in venting potential explosive gasses.
 - f. Call Sheriff Dispatch immediately (x3409).
 4. If you receive a suspicious package containing an unidentified substance:
 - a. Do not handle the item.
 - b. Do not open, smell or taste the article.
 - c. Isolate the mailing and secure the immediate area.
 - d. Call Sheriff Dispatch immediately (x3409).
 - e. Ensure that all persons who have touched the item wash their hands with soap and water.
 - f. List all persons who have come into contact with the item. Include contact information and provide the list to authorities.
 - g. Place all items worn when in contact with the suspected item in plastic bags and have them available for authorities.
 - h. As soon as practical, shower with soap and water.
 5. If a letter or package is received that is not expected by the addressee and whose origin cannot be identified, but otherwise does not meet the characteristics of a suspicious package, the item should be referred to as "Mystery Mail." Once you identify mystery mail:
 - a. Isolate the item(s) from the building, its air supply, and critical areas.
 - b. Carefully open the item(s) and based on the mail contents; throw away, deliver, or treat as suspicious and call Sheriff Dispatch immediately (x3409).

D. NOTIFICATION AND ACTIVATION "CODE YELLOW"

When a Code Yellow is announced, all workforce members are to:

- Remain calm.

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- Develop a heightened sense of awareness.
- Report observations to your supervisor and await direction.

1. Alerting and Notification

- a. Should a search of the premises be warranted, or if a suspected explosive device is found, the Sheriff Sergeant, Administrator in-charge or Safety/Security Officer will call x111 and instruct the hospital operator to announce “Code Yellow” three (3) times over the page system; and shall be repeated every three (3) to five (5) minutes.
- b. The Administrator in-charge will then initiate the facility’s Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) and establish the Hospital Command Center (HCC). Ensure the HCC location is searched before setting up operations.
- c. The Administrator in-charge, by policy, will assume the role of incident commander or will delegate the responsibility to the most qualified individual.
- d. Each department will report in to the HCC and accept duties as delegated by the incident commander.
- e. The incident action plan (IAP) objectives may include:
 - i. Evaluate the threat.
 - ii. Determine if an actual device is present.
 - iii. Protect all staff, patients and visitors.
- f. All workforce members are to be on alert for persons acting in a suspicious manner and for any suspicious objects and report those to Sheriff Dispatch immediately (x3409).

2. Building Search

- a. During the search for a potential explosive device, it is recommended that a low profile be maintained because it can be potentially dangerous to unnecessarily alarm people. A discreet search can be accomplished by search teams without evacuating the facility.
- b. If a Code Yellow was activated, or if the facility was evacuated prior to the search, the building should be systematically and cautiously searched beginning with exterior and public areas. When possible, persons familiar with the area should conduct the search accompanied by law enforcement. Search teams will vary in size depending on the number appropriate for the area being searched. (Two (2) person teams minimum).
- c. If the Sheriff’s department has a trained explosives detection K-9 team present, they should be used in the search process. If the K-9

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team is used, the K-9 handler must give direction regarding the mechanics of the search.

- d. Department managers are responsible for searching their entire area as well as any areas assigned. Available deputies, security guards, and other hospital staff will be assigned to help search public access areas and any other areas as assigned.
- e. The incident commander may request that Security restrict building entry points with additional staff posted, to screen anyone entering with a package. If a suspected device is located, the incident commander may request a complete hospital lockdown until the device is rendered safe.
- f. Teams entering areas to be searched should stop, look and listen. By remaining quiet and listening for audible sounds, they may hear a timing device. All machinery which could create extraneous sounds should be shut off (computers, copy machines, electric typewriters, etc.). A visual examination can also reveal any items that are foreign to a particular area which should be considered suspect.
- g. The room should be mentally divided for search purposes. Search the room one level at a time. The first level should include the floor, rug, furniture, etc., to a level reaching the waist of the searcher. The next level of the search should be any area or item that is present in the room from the waist of the searcher to the top of their head. The next level of the search should be any area or item on a level from the top of the head of the searcher to the ceiling and above. The ceiling panels should be checked to ensure no false ceiling is present and that no foreign item has been hidden in the ceiling space.
- h. The search should begin at one side of the room and work toward the center. Inspect furniture, cabinets, closets, clocks and wall fixtures, sinks and other lavatory facilities, loose clothing, light fixtures, water coolers, trash receptacles, vending machines, public telephone booths, and window coverings, such as venetian blinds and drapery fixtures.
- i. Anyone involved in the search must be admonished NOT to handle, move, or disturb objects suspected of being bombs, or activate light switches, thermostats or other mechanisms that might trigger an explosive device. This includes any unfamiliar or out-of-place objects.

3. If Nothing Out Of The Ordinary Was Found:

- a. If no device is located, all parties who are aware of the search should be notified that a device was NOT found, especially the

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incident commander. Appropriate hospital management should tell the parties involved that “NOTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY WAS FOUND.” Do not tell the parties that the location is safe.

An incident report should also be completed to document the event. If the area is clear, contact the Hospital Command Center (HCC) immediately, and inform the incident commander that the area is clear.

- b. The appropriate security authority and the incident commander will assess the situation and make a decision about whether to evacuate.

4. If A Suspicious Device is Located:

- a. If a device or suspect device is located – do not touch it! Note its location, description and proximity to utilities, gas lines, water pipes and electrical panels.
- b. Report this information to the Hospital Command Center (HCC) then clear and secure area.
- c. Law enforcement will take charge of the area and direct any needed evacuation. The decision to evacuate should be made through a unified command consisting of the hospital’s incident commander and law enforcement’s incident commander.
- d. A discovery of one suspected device does not end the search. More devices may be present and search efforts should continue until the entire facility has been checked.

E. EVACUATION

The most serious decision management must make in the event of a bomb threat is whether or not to evacuate the building. Evacuating when the threat is a hoax can result in serious implications to patient care and can be very costly. Choosing not to evacuate the building then learning that a device was present could be even more costly.

1. An evacuation decision should be made only if an actual device has been located or substantiated through clear and reliable information provided by the caller based on the threat criteria. An evacuation order can only be instituted by the Incident Commander or Uniform Command.
2. Prior to evacuating, employees should check their immediate work area for suspicious packages or items that do not appear to belong. If a suspicious item is located, they should not touch the item and call Sheriff Dispatch immediately (x3409).
 - a. Notify supervisor and staff members in the area (do not use radios or cellular telephones).

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- b. Post a temporary guard/barrier near the device to protect it from inadvertent contact by employees until the area can be successfully vacated.
- c. Evacuate the area.
- d. Check to see that all doors and windows are open to minimize damage from a blast and secondary damage from fragmentation.
- e. Establish a minimum 300-foot cordon around, above and below the object. Secure the area until authorities arrive by posting sentries and/or using crime scene tape to prevent access to the danger area. Law enforcement may choose to evacuate to a greater distance depending on the location or size of the suspected device.
- f. Do not permit re-entry into the area until the device has been removed or disarmed and the building has been declared safe for re-entry.
- g. Report the location and an accurate description of the object to the Hospital Command Center or sheriff dispatch.
- h. Reentry into the facility, relocation to another facility, and a decision to send employees home should be made by the incident commander.

F. EXPLOSION

If an explosion occurs:

1. Code Triage – Internal will be initiated.
2. Evacuate the area immediately – secondary devices may exist.
3. Establish a 1,000-foot cordon around, above and below the blast area. Secure the area until authorities arrive by posting guard/barrier and/or use caution tape to prevent access to the blast site. Law enforcement may choose to evacuate to a greater distance depending on the location or size of the device.
4. Treat injured in an area away from the blast site.
5. Record the names and contact numbers of potential witnesses.
6. Support law enforcement efforts as requested.

G. ALL CLEAR

When it has been determined that there is no evidence of a device in the facility, or the suspected device has been rendered safe, the incident commander will notify the operator to announce, “All Clear Code Yellow” three (3) times.

All workforce members will return to their normal work duties.

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The Sheriff Sergeant and Safety/Security Officer will conduct a root cause analysis or similar review of the incident to identify areas for improvement and then implement those improvements.

H. OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

- If a known or suspected device is in a vehicle: do not attempt to search for it.
- Upon notification of a Bomb Threat all wireless devices are to be turned off immediately.
- Should press or other news media be present, take firm position not to allow use of satellite dish for transmitting or reporting purposes. This is a possible source of detonation.
- Be prepared to conduct crowd control should the “bomb squad” arrive.
- Avoid use of the term “bomb” – use the term “device.” Have available supplies such as flashlights, mirrors, knives, screwdrivers, tape, ladders, etc., to assist in search efforts.

References:	
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