

Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital Policy and Procedure		
Staff Use of Personal Cell Phones and Technological Devices		
Effective: May 2015	Revised: April 2024	Due to Review: April 2026

POLICY

It is the policy of the Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital (VPCH) to limit the use of personal cell phones and other non-work-related technological devices to non-designated care areas during designated break times. In addition, it is the policy of VPCH to limit the use of smart watches to the watch functions only while in designated care areas.

PROCEDURE

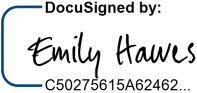
VPCH staff are encouraged to lock their personal cell phones and other non-work-related technological devices in VPCH lockers prior to starting their shifts. If staff choose to carry their personal cell phones/devices with them on their shifts, the following rules must be followed:

- Personal cell phones/devices and smart watches must be turned off or placed on watch only/vibrate mode at all times while in designated care areas (any location you could expect to have contact with a hospitalized individual or protected health information)
- Staff may not use their personal cell phones/devices for any reason while on duty. Phones/devices may only be checked during breaks in non-designated care areas. Smart watches may only be used for the watch functions.
- Individuals requiring the use of personal phones/devices for medical conditions should discuss this with their supervisor to be considered for reasonable accommodation per the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- The confidentiality and safety of hospitalized individuals and staff is of utmost importance to VPCH. Under no circumstance shall staff use their phones/devices or smart watches for the photographing, videotaping or recording hospitalized individuals, their interactions, any information pertaining to hospitalized individuals, or take photos in patient care areas. Such use will result in immediate disciplinary procedures, up to and including dismissal.

Individuals who choose to carry personal cell phones/devices or use smart watches are responsible for any loss, breakage or adverse consequences that arise from carrying the personal cell phone/device. VPCH assumes no responsibility or liability for any loss, damage or harm to a personal cell phone/device.

Unauthorized use of personal cell phones/devices or smart watches that does not align with these expectations and staff who become aware of such violations and fail to report them may result in progressive disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Individuals in violation of this policy may be asked to remove their personal phone/device to a locker or personal vehicle at a supervisor's discretion for the remainder of their shift. Personal phones/devices that are left unattended will be removed by supervisors and can be claimed at the end of shift.

Approved by	Signature	Date
Emily Hawes Commissioner Vermont Department of Mental Health	 DocuSigned by: <i>Emily Hawes</i> C50275615A62462...	4/30/2024