

Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital Policy and Procedure		
Hospital Access		
Effective: July 2014	Revised: September 2024	Due to Review: September 2026

POLICY

Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital (VPCH) recognizes the safety and security risks that can present in health care environments, particularly in involuntary, psychiatric settings. For this reason, VPCH identifies all areas of the facility as security sensitive and aims to control, limit, and/or restrict general access to and from. VPCH personnel shall be issued keys and/or state identification cards in accordance with the work expectations and responsibilities of the positions they hold.

DEFINITIONS

Personnel: For the purposes of this policy, *personnel* shall refer to hospital employees, contractors, students, and volunteers who access the facility independently. Individuals who are not permitted independent access are to be considered *visitors* of the hospital.


PROCEDURE

- After completing Agency of Human Services (AHS) required background/record checks, personnel shall be issued key(s) and state identification (ID) cards during their onboarding period. Issued keys/ID cards will provide access to designated areas of the facility in accordance with the expectations and responsibilities of the position they actively hold.
- A single point of entry, the hospital main entrance (Vestibule E1), shall be used by all visitors and personnel unless otherwise specified. When entering the building, all personnel must badge in. The practice of following other personnel who have badged in without badging in themselves (tailgating) is not permitted and is considered misconduct.
- Personnel may only retain key/ID cards that have been properly issued and are pertinent to their current position. Personnel who change position and have key/ID cards which permit access to designated areas of the facility which are no longer required to perform the functions of their position are responsible for returning key/ID to the Hospital Operations Director or requesting the necessary access changes.
- Duplication of hospital keys is prohibited.
- Personnel are to keep key/ID cards in their possession at all times while in the facility.
- Keys and ID cards shall not be joined together and shall not be secured to removable layers of clothing.
- It is not permitted to exchange or loan your keys or ID cards to others. If a key or ID card is needed to perform work responsibilities, the key or ID card should be requested from the Hospital Operations Director. The Hospital Operations Director, or their designee, which for this purpose is often the VPCH Staffing Office, may assign temporary sets of

keys and badges as to not unnecessarily interrupt safety processes or operational workflows while permanent replacement is obtained.

- Key/ID cards shall be kept in a secure location when not in use.
- Personnel are responsible for immediately reporting the loss of any key/ID card to the on-duty Nurse Supervisor and/or the Hospital Operations Director.
- Requests shall be made to the Hospital Operations Director, or designee, in the following instances: to deactivate ID cards as soon as possible when reported lost, when not returned post-employment, when personnel are placed on any sort of administrative leave, or if there are concerns that access poses risk to facility safety/security.
- Personnel may be held responsible for costs associated for any key/ID card lost.
- Upon termination of employment, ID cards are deactivated and personnel are advised to return all keys/ID cards to the Hospital Operations Director.

Personnel found to be in violation of this policy and procedure may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment and/or revocation of access privileges.

Approved by	Signature	Date
Emily Hawes, Commissioner, Vermont Department of Mental Health	 DocuSigned by: <i>Emily Hawes</i> C50275615A62462...	9/25/2024