

Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital Procedure

Transporting Patients

Revised: X

Date: 7/7/16

I. Transport to Appointments or Transfers to Other Hospitals

When a patient requires transport, the attending or on-call physician shall determine whether the patient shall be transported by hospital staff or law enforcement personnel.

When the physician decides an individual is in need of transport by law enforcement personnel, the reasons for such determination shall be documented in writing.

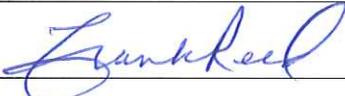
II. Transport to Off-site Legal Proceedings

Transportation to and from criminal court shall be authorized and scheduled by employees of the court, rather than by a VPCH physician and a VPCH Admissions Specialist.

III. Guidelines for Transport by VPCH Staff

- A. In general, a minimum of one non-driving staff person must be assigned to supervise each patient being transported unless otherwise ordered by a physician (*see items H., I and J. in this Procedure*). When two staff transport, staff shall ensure that the patient does not sit in the front seat or behind the driver. Staff shall comply with the *Escorting Patients Policy and Procedure* when they are transporting patients. A staff person assigned to an individual patient must keep the patient generally within arm's length at all times during the transport.
- B. In the event that the patient needs to use the restroom, the staff shall take reasonable steps to maintain the safety of the patient and others in the environment of the restroom. When the patient is in the restroom, staff member shall at a minimum maintain voice contact with the patient.
- C. Staff shall use VPCH Fleet Vehicles to transport patients; those vehicles shall be scheduled with the VPCH Staffing Office. Personal vehicles may not be used for patient transport.
- D. Each time a staff member signs out a State vehicle for the purpose of driving a patient the staff member shall show a current valid driver's license to a Staffing Coordinator, who shall document having viewed the staff member's current driver's license
- E. Whenever possible, staff shall obtain a bag lunch for the patient prior to departure. If bag lunches are not available, or if the trip may take longer than expected, staff may use a drive-through to obtain a meal for themselves and the patient. Other than stops required to obtain drive-through meals, stops may only be made to refuel the vehicle or to use a restroom

- F. Smoking is prohibited in VPCH vehicles and at any time during the transport.
- G. When a VPCH patient is being transported to another hospital via ambulance, the Nursing Supervisor shall collaborate with ambulance staff to determine whether VPCH staff shall ride with the patient in the ambulance, follow the ambulance in a VPCH vehicle, or both.
- H. An individual staff member may transport a patient in a VPCH vehicle without a second accompanying staff person only when this has been specified in a physician order. As stated in D. above, each time a staff member signs out a State vehicle for the purpose of driving a patient, the staff member shall show a current valid driver's license to a Staffing Coordinator, who shall document having viewed the staff member's current driver's license
- I. When part of the discharge planning process, staff from a Designated Agency or other community program may transport a VPCH patient if this has been ordered by a VPCH physician. Staff of the community agency or program are expected to abide by their organization's transportation policy.
- J. Each VPCH employee providing patient transport shall review, in the Staffing Office, and document knowledge and willingness to comply with the following policies and procedures before transporting: *VPCH Transporting Patients Policy and Procedure*, *VPCH Escorting Patients Policy and Procedure*, and the *VPCH Elopement/Late Return Policy and Procedure*. The most recent copies of each document shall be maintained.
- K. All staff members transporting patients off hospital grounds shall carry a cell phone that shall be turned on at all times. Fully charged cell phones shall be obtained from the Admissions Office.
- L. If a patient elopes during transport, the VPCH staff member shall follow the *VPCH Elopement/Late Return Policy and Procedure*. The staff member shall immediately call 911 to report the patient elopement and provide patient information as outlined in the Elopement Procedure. The staff member shall then contact the VPCH Admissions Office to notify the hospital of the patient elopement.
- M. The driver is responsible for leaving the vehicle clean and with a full tank of gas.
- N. Following transport, the driver shall complete the vehicle log.

Approved by	Signature	Date
Frank Reed, Commissioner of DMH		11/29/16