


COBB COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES BOARD

Policy # 8144	Safety Search/Body Search Behavioral Health Crisis Center (Receiving, Observation, Acute)	Service Delivery
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Related Policies	8149, 8151, 8152, 8153	
Approved:  Foster Norman, Executive Director		

POLICY:

It is the policy of the Cobb County Community Services Board’s Behavioral Health Crisis Center to conduct a **physical search of all individuals (and their belongings) upon entering the BHCC (Crisis Receiving, Temporary Observation and the Crisis Stabilization Unit), to ensure and maintain the safety of all individuals, staff and visitors. A body search, per physician order, may be conducted anytime it is suspected or reported that an individual may be in possession of an item that could cause harm to himself or the community.**

A. PROCEDURE FOR BHCC SEARCH/PAT DOWNS

1. As per DBHDD Policy 01-330, all staff who conduct Searches/Pat down will be trained on the search procedure with drills to simulate the procedure.
2. Staff will explain search procedure and reason for the same. Staff will conduct the procedure in a manner/fashion respecting the client’s dignity. Two same sex members should be present for the search. The second staff member will be present in the room. If there are not two same sex staff members on duty, an opposite sex staff member will remain outside the room within hearing range while the search is being conducted. The client will be apprised that the staff member is outside the room.

B. SEARCH/PAT DOWN DURING “INTAKE” - Personnel/Items Needed:

- 2 or more trained staff members (i.e. Security, Techs, Social Services, Nursing and/or Administrative)
- Metal detector/Wand
- Gloves
- Patient Individual Belongings Bags
- Valuables envelope (for the safe)
- Medication bags (provided to nurse conducting the assessment)

1. The individual is escorted from the lobby/Sally Port to the designated area in the Triage hallway (in view of Security cameras) for implementation of the "Search/Pat down" process.
2. Individual is required to offer consent before initiation of the search (Acknowledged by verbal consent). Staff will:
 - a. Gather necessary items (from the list above)
 - b. Apply gloves
 - c. Ask the individual to remove all contents from his/her pockets and place on a designated surface.
 - d. Isolate any medications that have been identified for placement in a Medication bag and provide to the RN at assessment. (If the RN is not immediately available for the Medication Handoff and Assessment, the Medication bag is labeled and placed in a designated locked/secure area until the RN initiates the Triage Assessment.)
3. Staff will ask the individual to "pull pockets out".
4. Staff will ask the individual if he/she have any sharp objects or items on his/her person that may cause injury or harm.
5. If pockets cannot be "pulled out", the front pockets will be searched by observation and the palm of the staff's hand.
6. Staff will then instruct the individual to remove shoes, socks, hat, and coat or jacket, placing them on a designated surface.
7. The individual will be instructed to a) stand facing the staff member, b) position feet shoulder-width apart, b) raise arms and extend outward (from their side).
8. Staff will inform and demonstrate for the individual the initiation of screening/wanding with the hand held metal detector.
9. The individual will be asked to turn around and face the wall for continued wanding and preparation for the "pat down".
10. Staff will initiate a "pat down search" for contraband.
11. Staff will verbally inform the individual that they are beginning a systematic head-to-toe "pat down" search.
12. The "pat down" search by staff begins as follows:
 - a. Close examination of the individual's hair is conducted, looking behind the individual's ears to locate any possible concealed items.
 - b. Observation is made for inappropriate bulges or areas that the individual may be reluctant to reveal.
 - c. Run hands under the individual's shirt collar.
 - d. Run hands across the shoulders (from the head outward).
 - e. Run hands down the upper and lower part of each arm, body to wrist (simultaneously).
 - f. Sweep back of hands down the individual's back from the shirt collar to the waist.
 - g. Sweep back of hands up the sides of the torso.
 - h. Using thumbs only, place thumbs into the waistband - moving from "front" to "back".

- i. Sweep back of hands down individual's buttocks.
- j. Ask the individual to "Turn around" (facing the staff member).
- k. Sweep the inside of the leg/groin area (up to the individual's genital area), paying close attention to the possibility of items taped to the individual's leg(s).
- l. Ask the individual to open his/her mouth, looking inside for additional contraband (Be aware of the following warning signs: Individual speaking without opening his/her mouth; Lips pursed; Cheeks bulging; or Known history of "cheeking" items).
- m. Sweep across the clavicle area (arms to center over sternum).
- n. Females – Ask the individual to pull the bottom edge of her bra forward, then run hands down between breasts, under breasts and down abdomen.
Males - Run hands straight down torso/abdomen.
- o. All visible evidence of trauma and body markings, scars, etc. will be reported to the nurse immediately and recorded in the clinical record.
- p. If the client is in need of a shower the staff will offer hygiene items and provide a hospital gown if the client does not have clean clothes.
- q. Escort individual to a designated chair to sit while personal items are being inspected.
- r. Prior to inspecting personal items, staff will ask individual: "Are there any sharps/items in these belongings that could cause harm?"
- s. Staff will inspect personal items previously removed from the individual (i.e. jacket, hat, socks, shoe, etc.), in the hallway, in view of the individual and camera.
- t. All items will be documented on **the waiver of responsibility effect** form in the individual's chart. When individuals come in with a large amount of personal belongings, a search of what they will keep with them will be done and excess personal belongings will be kept in designated storage. All items will be labeled clearly with the individual's initials and CID #.
- u. Staff will list/document belongings, place "valuables" in an envelope, to be stored in a locked safe, and other items in a general "Belongings bag" and labeled with the individual's CID # and initials.
- v. Indication will be made on the belongings list, that a valuables bag has been placed in the "safe".
- w. Staff will request/obtain the individual's signature, acknowledging the presence and storage of personal items/valuables.
- x. **Documentation of search is to be entered in the progress note** and should contain the following information: Sequential steps of the search, staff involved by name and title.
- y. Neither the BHCC nor the physician may require mandatory removal of clothing for individuals, or allow standing orders for personal searches of all individuals.
- z. Security staff/team member(s) will have the responsibility during "Intake" to:
 - 1) Observe,
 - 2) Identify,
 - 3) Intervene and

- 4) Correct variances from the aforementioned search process, to ensure the policy is being followed with all individuals who've entered Cobb BHCC.

The Security staff/team members will report to supervisor/manager any variances with the search process to ensure that necessary retraining can occur.

C. PROTOCOL FOR VISITORS

1. Visitors are encouraged, as feasible, to leave personal belongings outside the facility (i.e. in their car) while visiting the BHCC to facilitate transition to the visit and reduce the necessity of additional belongings searches.
2. The following items are prohibited from the facility:
 - a. Outside food and drink
 - b. Alcohol, drugs, weapons, fireworks, and explosives
 - c. All video cameras, cameras, and recorders
 - d. Plastic bags
 - e. Laptops and tablet computers.
 - f. Cell phones
 - g. Lighters and tobacco products
3. The visitor is escorted from the lobby to the designated visitation area in the Triage hallway (in view of Security cameras) for implementation of the "Search and Wanding" process.
4. The Visitor is required to offer consent before initiation of the search and metal detector wanding as outlined (Acknowledged by verbal consent).
5. Prior to inspecting personal items, staff will ask individual: "Are there any sharps/items in these belongings that could cause harm?"
6. Staff will inspect personal items brought in by visitor or on their person (i.e. jacket, hat, socks, shoe, etc.), in the hallway, in view of the individual and camera.

D. PROTOCOL FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

1. In the case of Sheriff's Deputies or Police Officers who require entrance into the BHCC, the BHCC policy requires that they leave their weapons outside triage, locked within the Sally Port.

E. SEARCH PRIOR TO "TRANSITION" TEMPORARY OBSERVATION (TEMP OBS) or CRISIS STABILIZATION UNIT (CSU) – FOLLOWING INTAKE & ADMISSION DETERMINATION BY NP

1. Once the Admission determination has been made, staff implement a second safety check, prior to transition to either Temp Obs. or CSU. (Note: The same tech should not be assigned to conduct the 1st and 2nd pat down/searches, to prevent errors due to over confidence in the initial search process.)
2. The individual will be provided with a set of paper scrubs and asked to privately disrobe (within their assigned intake room).

3. A second “pat down” search will be conducted (following the established guidelines).
4. The removed clothing will also be searched and added to the belongings list and storage bag for belongings.
5. Upon completion of the 2nd safety/pat down, the individual can be transported and handed off to licensed nursing staff in the designated area (Temp Obs. or CSU).

F. CONTRABAND/PERSONAL SEARCH - If contraband is found on the individual, the staff member must convey the information to the ordering provider (Physician/APRN) to see if a “Personal search” is warranted. **ALL** Personal searches must be ordered by the Ordering Provider.

1. Once an order is obtained from the provider, the “Search Team” will be assembled. The “Search Team” will consist of:
 - a. at least two staff members of the same gender as the individual and
 - b. at least one staff member who is a licensed nurse.
2. Staff will provide the individual with a set of paper scrubs.
3. Staff will inform the individual that a non-invasive “Personal search” will be conducted.
4. Client will be instructed to change from his/her personal clothing – removing all items of clothing – and replacing them with the paper scrubs, in anticipation of the Personal search.
5. Each item of “removed” clothing is examined by the Search Team.
6. The actual physical examination of the individual is initiated as follows:
 - a. Hair - Staff conducts observation of individual completing requested action - Running his/her hands through his/her own hair in a systematic motion, moving from front of the head to the back.
 - b. Observation/Inspection will continue with visualization of the following areas:
 - i. Ears - Interior and exterior ear areas
 - ii. Nostrils
 - iii. Mouth cavity (including the cheeks and under the tongue)
 - iv. Arm pits
 - v. Between fingers
 - vi. Buttocks
 - vii. Genital areas
 - viii. Between toes

G. CONTRABAND/PERSONAL BELONGINGS/CLOTHING CHECK

1. All belongings/clothes are collected and searched “thoroughly” – including the 2 -3 changes of clothing that are requested to be taken onto the unit.
2. All items are visualized, handled and inspected (i.e. pulling out/searching all pockets, checking inside of the collars, looking for hidden pockets inside the inseam and pant leg cuffs) to ensure we continue to maintain the integrity of a safe environment..

H. WANDING (METAL DETECTOR) SCREENING PROCESS:

1. Ask the Individual to place all carried items, plus any caps or headgear on a chair or table (procedures for manual search of personal items would be followed). The individual should stand with his or her feet about 18 inches apart, facing straight ahead. Ask the individual to hold his or her arms out to the sides, parallel to the floor.
2. Quickly run the hand-held detector across some piece of conductive material on your own body, such as a belt buckle. The ensuing squeal of the detector will assure you that the scanner is still operating properly.
3. Start at the top of one shoulder of the individual. With the paddle of the detector held horizontally and parallel to the front of the body, sweep down one side of the front of the torso, down the leg to the ankle, then move to the other ankle and sweep back up the front of the opposite leg and torso, ending with the opposite shoulder.
4. Sweep the detector paddle over the outside top of the arm from the top of the shoulder to the bottom of the wrist, then up the inside of the arm to the armpit. Sweep down that side of the body to the ankle, then up the inside of that leg and down the inside of the opposite leg, then back up the other leg from the ankle to the underarm. Repeat the sweep of the inside and outside of this arm. (Note: It is very important to avoid touching the paddle up against the individual's body when scanning up and down between the legs).
5. Ask the individual to turn around. Arms can be put down now. The pattern used to scan the front of the body should now be repeated over the back of the body.
6. Ask the individual to grab the chair for support,, then have the individual to lift one foot up in back of him- or /herself. Scan across the bottom of the shoe. Repeat for the other foot. The operator should expect to hear a short squeal from the detector when scanning the bottom of shoes or boots with steel shanks or steel toes. Both shoes should cause equivalent squeals.
7. For the head area, start at the top of the forehead and scan around the top of the head down to the back of the neck.

Policy is referred to in Policies: 8149, 8151, 8152, and 8153.

STAFF ATTESTATION

I understand I can seek support and guidance if at any time I have questions/concerns regarding the procedures for any of the processes above through an e-mail request to my Supervisor.

By signing this document, I confirm my understanding, agreement and accountability of processes and procedures at Cobb and Douglas Community Services Board.

I also understand that periodic, quality assurance checks and observations (face to face and via video surveillance system) will be conducted on my search procedures, to determine need for provision/receipts of additional training.

I understand that:

- 1) I must maintain and demonstrate knowledge of these BHCC Search Procedures.
- 2) Demonstration of this knowledge, through performance, is an expectation of my position.
- 3) It is my responsibility to ensure I adhere to these procedures to maintain employment with the agency.
- 4) Failure to adhere to these procedures may result in disciplinary action.

Employee Name: _____
Print
Signature
Date

Approved by: _____
Supervisor
Date

Trainer
Date