

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SYSTEM
POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

SUBJECT:	POLICY NO.:	5301.03
	APPROVED DATE:	09/12/06
DISPOSITION OF UNLAWFULLY POSSESSED WEAPONS, CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES OR OTHER ITEMS FOUND ON PATIENTS, VISITORS OR STAFF WHILE AT THE VCU HEALTH SYSTEM	EFFECTIVE DATE:	10/12/06
	REVIEWED DATE:	11/01/93 07/01/96 07/27/06
	SUPERSEDES NO.:	5301.02
	REPLACES NO.:	4511.00

I. PURPOSE:

To establish a uniform process for disposition of unlawfully possessed weapons, substances or other items deemed a safety or security risk that are found on patients, visitors or staff while at the Virginia Commonwealth University Health System (VCUHS).

II. POLICY:

- A. To provide a safe environment for patients, visitors and staff, the carrying or use of any weapon, controlled substance or other item that is unlawful or deemed a safety or security risk is prohibited while at any VCUHS facility.
- B. The weapons prohibition extends to all persons, including persons with approved Commonwealth of Virginia handgun permits but excluding sworn officers of public law enforcement agencies and Department of Corrections officers.
- C. Under no circumstances are handguns permitted within the psychiatric treatment areas without approval of the director of the VCU Health System department of Safety and Security or his designee in consultation with the chief operating officer and the administrator on call.
- D. Violation of this policy could result in seizure of the prohibited item, arrest and/or appropriate disciplinary action to include termination of employment.
- E. Any VCUHS employee who is suspected of being in violation of VCUHS Policy 2137.00 Probable Cause Alcohol and Drug Testing, may be subject to drug and/or alcohol testing as appropriate to the violation.

III. DEFINITION:

Weapon - any item that is readily capable of lethal use and possessed under circumstances not appropriate for lawful activity. Items deemed a safety or security risk may include but are not limited to the following: firearms, razors, knives, metal knuckles or any other device or substances that may be used to threaten, menace or injure.

Controlled Substance - medication classified by the Drug Enforcement Agency and/or the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Health Professions in Schedules I through V or other medication, as identified by the Department of Pharmacy Services. For purposes of this policy, the use of the term "Controlled Substance" will refer only to those substances for which the individual does not have a legal right of possession.

IV. PROCEDURE:

- A. VCUHS reserves the right to inspect any company property and anything on company premises at any time, whether locked or unlocked.
- B. Any VCUHS staff person who believes that a patient, visitor or other staff member is in possession of a Weapon, Controlled Substance or other substance or device that may be a safety or security risk will notify VCUHS Safety and Security Department or VCU Police Department.

- C. Any clearly identified Weapon, Controlled Substance or other substance or device that is deemed to be a safety or security risk and suspected of being illegally possessed, shall be seized by the VCUHS Safety and Security Department or the VCU Police Department.
- D. If this Controlled Substance or Weapon is suspected of being illegal or evidentiary in nature, responsibility for custody shall remain with the VCU Police Department until it is released to proper authorities or owner (see VCUHS Policy 5300 Maintenance of "Chain of Custody" of Criminal Evidence).
- E. The VCU Police Department will conduct the appropriate investigation and dispose of the item in accordance with established procedures.
- F. The Director of Pharmacy Services or Pharmacist-in-Charge will provide consultation to the VCU Police Department upon request

V. REFERENCES:

- A. VCUHS Policy 2134 Prohibition Against Workplace Violence
- B. VCUHS Policy 2137 Probable Cause Alcohol and Drug Testing
- C. VCUHS Policy 5300 Maintenance of "Chain of Custody" of Criminal Evidence
- D. VCUHS Policy 2104.01 Terms of Employment

VI. RESOURCES:

- A. VCU Police Department - 828-1234
- B. VCUHS Safety and Security Department - 828-4300
- C. VCUHS Human Resources Department - 628-4748
- D. VCUHS Department of Pharmacy Services, Pharmacist-in-Charge - 828-0364

VI. REVIEW REQUIREMENTS:

- A. VCUHS Safety and Security Department - Director
- B. VCU Police Department
- C. VCUHS Human Resources, Director

APPROVED:

DATE:

Signature on File
Sheldon M. Retchin, MD, MSPH
Chief Executive Officer
Virginia Commonwealth University Health System

9/12/06