


Name of Policy: Search, seizure and disposition of drugs, weapons, and potentially harmful items		 Effective date: 4/2026 Original effective date: June 1, 2014	
Policy Number: 3364-120-70			
Approving Officer: Chief Executive Officer Chief Nursing Officer Service Chief			
Responsible Agent: Chief Nursing Officer Service Chief			
Scope: The University of Toledo Medical Center			
Key words: safe environment, behavior, unauthorized substance, harmful object, documentation			
	New policy proposal	X	Minor/technical revision of existing policy
	Major revision of existing policy		Reaffirmation of existing policy

(A) Policy statement

All personnel have the responsibility of maintaining a safe and therapeutic milieu for patients, visitors, and staff members. When there is a reasonable cause to suspect that a chemical substance, weapon, or harmful object is present on the unit, nursing personnel on duty evaluate the situation and take necessary measures to remove those objects which compromise the health and safety of the patient or those in contact with the patient.

(B) Purpose

To provide a safe, therapeutic milieu for all patients and a safe environment for the staff and others.

(C) Procedure

A search may be authorized by the charge nurse when nursing staff observe incidents or behavior that reasonably indicates the patient is in possession of a substance and/or objects that are potentially dangerous to him/her or others.

- (1) Room and clothing search.

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- (a) Notify the patient of the search prior to the search. The patient may remain in the room.
 - (b) A minimum of two staff members are assigned to search the area.
 - (c) The patient may be requested to change into hospital gown to have clothes searched.
 - (d) The physician and charge nurse on duty are informed of any objects found.
 - (2) Body search.
 - (a) A body search is conducted only if a nursing assessment indicates a need for this search.
 - (b) The attending physician is notified immediately of a suspected ingestion.
 - (c) A body search is done only by a member of the same sex and with a witness present.
 - (d) An internal, physical body search is done only by a physician, per UTMC policy.
 - (3) Disposition of unauthorized substance/harmful object.
 - (a) Contact campus security.
 - (b) Notify medical provider, as well as family/guardian if appropriate.
- (D) Documentation
- (1) Progress notes include:
 - (a) Reason for conducting the search.
 - (b) Description of substance/object found and its disposition.
 - (c) Observation of patient's behavior and condition if there is suspected ingestion.
 - (d) Notification of provider/family/guardian.

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- (2) Incident report is completed, including all details and outcome of the incident.
- (3) Formal notice must be provided to the patient if there has been a restriction of rights.

<p>Approved by:</p> <p><u>/s/</u> Daniel Barbee, MBA, BSN, RN, FACHE Chief Executive Officer</p> <p><u>4/6/2026</u> Date</p> <p><u>/s/</u> Kurt Kless, MSN, MBA, RN, NE-BC Chief Nursing Officer</p> <p><u>4/3/2026</u> Date</p> <p><u>/s/</u> Tanvir Singh, MD Service Chief</p> <p><u>4/2/2026</u> Date</p> <p><i>Review and Revision Completed By: Inpatient Behavioral Health Administration</i></p>	<p>Policies superseded by this policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>None</i> <p>Initial effective date: June 1, 2014</p> <p>Review/Revision Date: <i>June 2017</i> <i>June 2020</i> <i>April 1, 2023</i> <i>April 2026</i></p> <p>Next review date: 4/2029</p>
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