



Purpose

To provide clear guidance to staff, patients, family and visitors that the possession of weapons on any Skagit Regional Health property is strictly prohibited.

Policy

It is the policy of Skagit Regional Health that the possession of firearms or any other dangerous weapons as defined by Washington State law (RCW 9.41.270 and RCW 9.41.399), on any campus or facility, owned, leased or rented by Skagit Regional Health is strictly prohibited.

Staff found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Patients or visitors in violation of this policy will be removed from the premises and could be trespassed.

Definitions

Firearm - A weapon or device from which a projectile may be fired.

Dangerous knife - Any fixed-blade knife and any other knife having a blade length of more than three inches.

Fixed-blade knife - Any knife, regardless of blade length, with a blade which is permanently open and does not fold, retract, or slide into the handle of the knife, and includes, but is not limited to, any dagger, sword, bayonet, bolo-knife, hatchet, axe, straight-edged razor, or razor blade not in a package, dispenser or shaving appliance.

Switchblade knife - Any knife having a blade that opens automatically by hand pressure applied to a button, spring mechanism, or other device, or blade that opens, falls or is ejected into position by force or gravity or by an outward, downward, or centrifugal thrust or movement.

Common Pocket Knives and Personal Protection Spray Devices - Staff, patients and visitors may possess common pocketknives (folding blade not to exceed three inches) if not presented in a threatening manner. Similarly, any person over 18 years of age, may carry a personal spray device for self-protection. The actual discharge of such a personal spray device is subject to the laws or regulations current at the time of use in the jurisdiction of the location of use (it is the responsibility of the individual in possession to know the laws specific to their local jurisdiction).

Others - Black Jack, sling shot, billy club, sand club, metal knuckles

Exemption: This policy does not apply to:

- 1) A person engaged in military activities sponsored by Federal or State government, while engaged in official duties.
- 2) Law enforcement personnel while in the performance of their duties, while on duty, or when required by their respective agency.
- 3) Security personnel engaged in official duties who are authorized by Skagit Regional Health in accordance with any approved policy or under special authority for an approved event.
- 4) Office supplies used in the course of everyday work, such as scissors, letter openers, screw drivers, etc.
- 5) Knives used in connection with hospital food services.
- 6) Box cutters used by Material Management personnel in the performance of their normal duties.

Equipment

Weapon Transportation Cases - A closing/lockable case (Pelican Box) used for the transportation of a weapon from a unit to a weapons storage locker.

Weapon Storage Locker - A lockable container located in Security Services controlled or accessible areas for the temporary or long-term storage of weapons.

Procedure

"Weapons" prohibited signs shall be conspicuously posted at all public entrances of Skagit Regional Health facilities which are owned, leased or rented. Signage will at a minimum state "No weapons allowed inside this building".

Everyone who enters property owned, leased or rented by Skagit Regional Health is expected to leave any personal weapons at home. If a patient/visitor chooses to check-in their personal weapon, they may do so by contacting the on-duty Security Officer. The patient/visitor will be escorted to the weapons storage locker location where they will place their weapon into the weapon storage locker in its current state and without manipulation. The locker will be secured, the Security Officer will have the patient/visitor sign the receipt (a copy of which will be provided to the patient/visitor) and the patient/visitor will retain the key to the locker. Prior to departing the facility, the patient/visitor will contact the on-duty Security Officer via cell phone and meet the Security Officer at the weapons storage locker location where they will claim their weapon and depart the property immediately.

Non-Emergency Patients - Any patient found in possession of any firearm or other dangerous weapon as described above will be informed of the policy, and required to remove the weapon prior to obtaining any services. Skagit Regional Health Security, or Staff, may notify local law enforcement authorities if the patient fails to comply with the request to remove a firearm or dangerous weapon. Patients refusing to remove weapons after notice may be asked to leave the facility/property without obtaining services. Security Services is responsible for notifying local law enforcement authorities to obtain assistance at facilities where Security Services personnel are present.

Emergency Patients - Skagit Regional Health Security Services shall be notified when any patient seeking emergency treatment is found in possession of a firearm or other dangerous weapon. Patient's weapons will be checked in with Security Services for safekeeping in the following manner. Firearm or other dangerous weapon will be placed into a weapon transportation case and transported to the weapons storage locker where it will be stored until such time as it is returned to the owner, turned over to law enforcement, or legally disposed of.

Visitors - Staff or Security Services personnel shall request any visitor found in possession of a firearm or other dangerous weapon to remove it from the facility/property, and local law enforcement personnel may be notified. Security Services is responsible for notifying local law enforcement authorities to obtain assistance at facilities where Security Services personnel are present.

Employees - Employees will not bring any firearms or other dangerous weapons to work or any Skagit Regional Health facility or property. Employees in violation of this policy are subject to disciplinary actions up to and including termination.

For weapons retained by Security Services, the Security Officer on duty will take custody of the weapon in its received state and the weapon will be placed into the weapon storage locker. For firearms, the Security Officer WILL NOT manipulate the firearm in any way. At no point should a Security Officer attempt to "make a weapon safe" by unloading it. The firearm will be placed into the weapon storage locker in whatever state it was received (e.g. if in a holster, the firearm will remain in the holster and placed into the weapon storage locker).

Clinics & Facilities without Security Services Staffing - Anyone encountered with a firearm or other dangerous weapons at clinics or facilities without Security Services should be informed of the Skagit Regional Health Weapons Policy and asked to remove the weapon from the facility. Should the patient/visitor refuse to leave, staff should contact their local law enforcement agency for assistance in removing the individual/weapon. Staff should notify Security Services after the incident has been resolved or for additional assistance if needed.

Documentation

Omnigo Incident Report will be completed for each weapon placed into a weapon storage locker or for situations where a patient/visitor/employee is found to be in possession of a firearm or dangerous weapon.

References

RCW 9.41.270

RCW 9.41.399

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