

HARRIS HEALTH SYSTEM

POLICY AND REGULATIONS MANUAL

Policy No: 3.66
Page Number: 1 of 4
Effective Date: 12/2015
Board Motion No: NA
Last Review Date: 07/31/2019
Due For Review: 07/31/2022

TITLE: WEAPONS

PURPOSE: To state Harris Health System's position regarding the possession of weapons on Harris Health System's premises, Harris Health owned or leased vehicles, and in other restricted areas.

POLICY STATEMENT:

As permitted by the Texas Penal Code, Harris Health System (Harris Health) employees are prohibited from possessing weapons on Harris Health premises or in Harris Health vehicles. Other individuals, including contractors, patients, visitors, vendors, and volunteers, are prohibited from possessing weapons in restricted areas.

POLICY ELABORATIONS:

I. DEFINITIONS:

- A. **HARRIS HEALTH PREMISES:** All buildings or portions of a building owned or leased by Harris Health. The term does not include any public or private driveway, street, sidewalk or walkway, parking lot, parking garage, or other parking area.
- B. **HARRIS HEALTH VEHICLES:** All vehicles owned or leased by Harris Health.
- C. **POSSESS:** Carrying on your person (*e.g.*, holster, purse, bag, briefcase, etc. under your exclusive control), or storing on Harris Health Premises (*e.g.*, desk, filing cabinet, or other location under the person's exclusive control) or in a Harris Health Vehicle.
- D. **RESTRICTED AREAS:** Any portion of Harris Health Premises, which is not accessible to the public without prior approval. This includes buildings where Weapons are expressly prohibited by law (*e.g.*, hospitals and school-based clinics), areas beyond the reception areas, and other areas where access is restricted to the public without prior approval (*e.g.*, exam rooms, offices, storage areas, mechanical rooms, etc.).

- E. **WEAPON:** Includes a club (*e.g.*, blackjack, nightstick, mace, and tomahawk), explosive weapon (*e.g.*, bomb, grenade, rocket, and mine), firearm (including a firearm silencer), handgun, knife (including a switchblade knife), knuckles, machine gun, short-barrel firearm, armor-piercing ammunition, chemical dispensing device, zip gun, or tire deflation device, as more specifically defined in TEX. PENAL CODE § 46.01. This term does not include pocket knives with blades under five and one-half inches in length or folding or utility knives (such as box cutters) used by employees in conducting their assigned job duties, as approved by Harris Health or contractors in providing their services. This term also does not include a small chemical dispensers sold commercially for personal protection that are designed, made, or adapted for the purpose of dispensing a substance (*e.g.*, pepper spray) capable of causing an adverse psychological or physiological effect on a human being.

II. GENERAL PROVISIONS:

- A. Employees are prohibited from possessing Weapons on Harris Health Premises or in Harris Health Vehicles.
- B. Restricted Areas will be identified with signage.
- C. No individuals, except those granted prior approval by Harris Health's President and Chief Executive Officer, may Possess a Weapon in a Restricted Area.
- D. Prior to entry into a Restricted Area, all individuals, except those granted prior approval, must remove any Weapons from Harris Health Premises.
- E. This policy does not apply to licensed peace officers acting within the course and scope of their job duties or authorized third parties (*e.g.*, armored car service personnel) who are on duty, acting within the course of their job duties, and conducting official business with Harris Health.

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II. REPORTING:

- A. Any contractor, employee, vendor, or volunteer who observes or has knowledge that an individual Possesses a Weapon in violation of this policy must immediately notify Harris Health Department of Public Safety (Security) or the school district's or facility's security personnel, as applicable. If the school district's or facility's security personnel is not available, the contractor, employee, vendor, or volunteer should contact law enforcement.
- B. Harris Health encourages patients and visitors who observe or have knowledge that an individual possesses a Weapon in violation of this policy to immediately notify Security or the school district's or facility's security personnel, as applicable. If the school district's or facility's security personnel is not available, the patient or visitor should contact law enforcement.

III. ENFORCEMENT:

- A. Employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including, termination.
- B. To the extent permitted by law, Harris Health will take action to enforce this policy.

REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY:

18 U.S.C. § 922(q)

TEX. GOV'T CODE §§ 411.203, 411.2031, 441.209

TEX. PENAL CODE §§ 30.05-.07, 46.01, 46.03-.035 (Note: TEX. PENAL CODE § 30.07 effective January 1, 2016)

Harris Health System Policy and Procedures 6.20 Employee Discipline

Harris Health System Policy and Procedures 2235 Reporting Suspicious Behavior

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OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY:

Harris Health System Department of Public Safety

REVIEW/REVISION HISTORY:

Effective Date	Version # (If Applicable)	Review/ Revision Date (Indicate Reviewed or Revised)	Approved by:
12/08/2015	1.0	Approved 12/08/2015	Operations Policy Committee
		Approved 12/08/2015	Interdisciplinary Clinical Committee
	2.0	Reviewed 07/22/2019	DPS Policy Review Committee
		Approved/Renewed 7/31/2019	Structure and Organizational Standards Committee