

Policy

Policy Title:	Unauthorized Patient Leave Communications				
Policy Number:	DHS-120-002	Version:	1.0	Effective Date:	06/17/2005

DHS Chief Administrative Officer

06/17/2005

Approved By: (Authorized Signer Name)

Date Approved

Overview

Description:

This policy describes the responsibilities for DHS in communicating about unauthorized leaves of patients and residents from state facilities.

Purpose/Rationale:

The purpose of the policy on Unauthorized Patient Leave Communications is to ensure DHS follows a consistent statewide policy for publicly reporting unauthorized leaves of patients and residents from its three State Hospital campuses in Salem, Pendleton, and Portland, the Eastern Oregon Training Center, and state-operated group homes.

Objectives:

- To avert a serious and imminent threat to the safety of the public when a patient is on unauthorized leave;
- To avert a serious and imminent threat to the safety of the patient who is on unauthorized leave;
- To inform law enforcement about the missing person.
- To warn the public or identify a concern for the missing patient's welfare by issuing public notices to help secure the patient's return to care, safety and treatment.

Applicability:

This policy applies to all DHS employees and contractors who work in or with these facilities.

Failure to Comply:

Failure to comply with the policy may result in disciplinary action.

Policy

1. Notification Responsibilities

- a. DHS Office of Public Affairs (OPA), working with appropriate State Hospital, Office of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OMHAS) or Seniors and People with Disabilities (SPD) representatives, notifies law enforcement and the news media when a patient or resident is determined to be on an unauthorized leave from one of Oregon's three state hospital campuses or from a state-operated group home.

- b. The hospital or group home has a reasonable belief that such notification is necessary to prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of a person or the public.
- c. Notification is made after the individual has been on unauthorized leave for more than one hour, or immediately if the individual poses a more imminent danger to self or others.
- d. As a part of the public notification, the client should not be identified as a participant (past or present) of an alcohol or drug treatment program, but rather indicate at most, if necessary, that the client was receiving health care services or treatment.

Procedure(s) that apply:

[DHS-120-002-01, Unauthorized Patient Leave Communications](#)

Form(s) that apply:

None

Definition(s):

Unauthorized Leave: A patient or resident who leaves a state-operated hospital or group home, outing, or pass without authorization.

Also see [Common Terms](#) for department-wide support service policies

Reference(s):

None

Contact(s):

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Policy History:

- **Version 1.0:**
 - 06/17/2005 Initial Release

Keywords:

(List keywords here that might be used by someone to search for this policy on the internet)