



Chapter: Hospital Operations
Subject: Emergency Code Designations for State Hospitals

Applicability: State Hospitals

Original Policy Effective Date: August 1, 2008

References: The Joint Commission

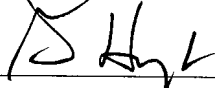
Revision #1 Effective Date: January 1, 2010

Scheduled Review Date: January 2012

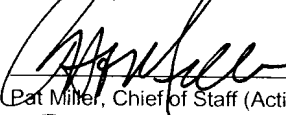
Attachments:

Attachment A - DBHDD Hospital Emergency Codes Quick Reference Sheet

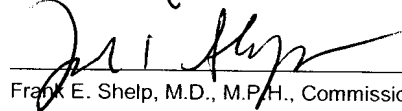
Approved:

 12.16.09
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EMERGENCY CODE DESIGNATIONS FOR STATE HOSPITALS

Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD) State Hospitals use standardized emergency codes to alert staff, consumers, and visitors of emergency and disaster events.

Emergency Code uniformity enables individuals at different facilities to respond consistently to emergencies, which ultimately enhances safety for consumers, staff and visitors. Creating a common language among hospitals improves communication and teamwork when emergencies occur.

Emergency Code Designations

The emergency code designations for DBHDD Hospitals are as follows:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Code Blue | Cardiac Arrest/Medical Emergency |
| Code Red | Fire |
| Code Yellow | Psychiatric Emergency – Additional Staff Needed |
| Code Black | Bomb Threat/Search |
| Code Orange | Hazardous Material Spill/Release |
| Code Brown | Campus-Wide Lock-Down/Limited Access |
| Code Pink | Infant/child Abduction |
| Code Green | Elopement |
| National Weather Service Alert | Various Severe Weather Events |

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Initiation of Codes

The reasons for initiating each type of code are as follows:

CARDIAC ARREST/MEDICAL EMERGENCY

Initiated when equipment (Crash Cart) and Specialized Personnel are needed in an area to assist a consumer in cardiac or respiratory arrest.

FIRE

Initiated when a real or suspected fire is observed.

PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCY

Initiated when employees need immediate assistance from additional staff in order to ensure the immediate physical safety of consumers and others.

BOMB THREAT/SEARCH

Initiated when there is a bomb (explosive or incendiary device) or discovery of a suspicious package and/or a complete search of the facility must be made to locate the device/package.

HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SPILL/RELEASE

Initiated when a hazardous spill/release is likely to cause injury, illness, and/or harm the environment.

CAMPUS-WIDE LOCK-DOWN /LIMITED ACCESS

Initiated when building entrances and facility access must be secured to prevent harm to the people inside a building.

INFANT/CHILD ABDUCTION

Initiated when an infant/child is missing or known to have been kidnapped

SEVERE WEATHER ALERT

Initiated when conditions of severe weather are observed.

ELOPEMENT

Initiated when a consumer is unexpectedly absent from hospital grounds, residential home, or other location where he/she is expected to be.

Life threatening weather emergency alert announcements include the following:

- Type of event and national severe weather event category (i.e. “tornado watch” or “hurricane warning”)
- Geographic area
- Anticipated severity
- Probability of Occurrence
- Safety instructions

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National severe weather event categories are:

- **Warning** – is an event that alone poses a significant threat to public safety and/or property, probability of occurrence and location is high, and the onset time is relatively short.
- **Watch** – meets the classification of a warning, but either the onset time, probability of occurrence, or location is uncertain.
- **Emergency** – is an event that, by itself, would not kill or injure or do property damage, but indirectly may cause other things to happen that result in a hazard. For example: major power outage or telephone loss.
- **Statement** – is a message containing follow up information to a warning, watch, or emergency.

This information about the codes is summarized on **Attachment A – DBHDD Hospital Emergency Codes Quick Reference Guide**.

Procedures and Drills

DBHDD Hospitals develop their own hospital specific procedures for announcing codes and handling emergency situations at their facility, so long as the original intent of the code is not altered.

Each hospital provides staff training on the emergency codes and establishes routine practice drills to ensure proper duty assignments and responses. At a minimum, hospitals conduct one **Code Blue** and one **Code Red** drill on each shift, for each living unit, during each quarter of the calendar year. **Code Yellow** events occur routinely with greater frequency than other codes and therefore no drills are needed. Drills for the remaining codes (**Code Black, Code Orange, Code Brown, Code Pink, Code Green, and National Weather Service Alerts**) are conducted for the facility as a whole at a minimum of once every other calendar year with at least two of these drills taking place each during each calendar year. Documentation of drills is maintained by hospitals.

DBHDD HOSPITAL EMERGENCY CODES

QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

Name of Code	General Description – refer to your hospital policies for specific duties and responses
CODE BLUE	CARDIAC ARREST/MEDICAL EMERGENCY Initiated when equipment (Crash Cart) and Specialized Personnel are needed in an area to assist a consumer in cardiac or respiratory arrest.
CODE RED	FIRE Initiated when a real or suspected fire is observed.
CODE YELLOW	PSYCHIATRIC EMERGENCY Initiated when employees need immediate assistance from additional staff in order to ensure the physical safety of the consumer and others.
National Weather Service ALERT Life threatening weather emergency alerts are announced by : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of event (tornado, hurricane, etc.) and national severe weather event category • Geographic area • Anticipated severity • Probability of Occurrence • Safety instructions 	SEVERE WEATHER EVENT Initiated when conditions of severe weather are observed. National severe weather event categories are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warning – is an event that alone poses a significant threat to public safety and/or property, probability of occurrence and location is high, and the onset time is relatively short. • Watch – meets the classification of a warning, but either the onset time, probability of occurrence, or location is uncertain. • Emergency – is an event that, by itself, would not kill or injure or do property damage, but indirectly may cause other things to happen that result in a hazard. For example: major power outage or telephone loss. • Statement – is a message containing follow up information to a warning, watch, or emergency.
CODE BLACK	BOMB THREAT/SEARCH Initiated when there is a bomb (explosive or incendiary device) or discovery of a suspicious package and/or a complete search of the facility must be made to locate the device/package.
CODE ORANGE	HAZARDOUS MATERIAL SPILL/RELEASE Initiated when a hazardous spill/release is likely to cause injury, illness, and/or harm the environment.
CODE BROWN	CAMPUS-WIDE LOCK-DOWN /LIMITED ACCESS Initiated when building entrances and facility access must be secured to prevent harm to the people inside a building.
CODE PINK	INFANT/CHILD ABDUCTION Initiated when an infant/child is missing or known to have been kidnapped.
CODE GREEN	ELOPEMENT Initiated when a consumer is unexpectedly absent from hospital grounds, residential home or other location where he/she is expected to be.