

**DEPARTMENT OF STATE HOSPITALS  
REGULATIONS TEXT  
ENTRY INTO PATIENT ROOMS AND OBSERVATION ROUNDS**

California Code of Regulations  
Title 9. Rehabilitative and Developmental Services  
Division 1. Department of Mental Health  
Chapter 16. State Hospital Operations  
Article 3. Safety and Security

**Section 4335. Entry into Patient Rooms.**

- (a) Patients shall not enter any single room or dormitory room (hereinafter referred to collectively as "room") which the patient does not reside except under the conditions of subdivision (b) of this section and overnights stays will not be permitted.
- (b) At the discretion of each state hospital, patients may be permitted to enter the room of other patients to visit under the following conditions:
- (1) All patients residing in the room approve the visit.
  - (2) The patients reside in the same unit.
  - (3) Upon observation by staff of any visits between patients that have known issues, staff are permitted to end the visit to ensure the health, safety, or security of all patients, staff, and public.
- (c) If staff observes a patient in a room that the patient does not reside in, staff shall ascertain whether the occupants of that room approved the visit.
- (1) If a patient does not have the approval of all residing patients to be in the room, or staff reasonably believes there may be a health, safety, or security concern, staff shall escort the patient out of the room or contact hospital police for assistance escorting the patient out of the room, if necessary.
- (d) Except in emergency situations, staff will either knock on the door or announce their presence before entering a patient's room.
- (1) Emergency situations are any situations that can negatively impact the therapeutic environment or safety of the patients or staff.

Authority cited: Sections 4005.1, 4011, and 4101 Welfare and Institutions Code.  
Reference: Section 4027 and 4312 Welfare and Institutions Code.

## **Section 4340. Observation Rounds.**

- (a) Observation rounds are when staff inspect, visualize, or otherwise monitor any area of the hospital.
  - (1) When there is a reasonable belief that a condition exists that poses a threat to the safety and security of the hospital, patients, and employees, staff may investigate the condition pursuant to California Code of Regulations Title 9 Section 4351 et seq.
- (b) Staff will conduct observation rounds of all areas that are occupied by patients, or may be occupied by patients, at least once every two hours except under emergency situations.
  - (1) When the entrance door to the unit is locked for the night, staff may inspect any area of the hospital to account for the location of patients.
- (c) Staff may perform observation rounds more frequently based upon the safety or security needs of the hospital.
- (d) During observation rounds, staff will identify each patient. If the patient is sleeping, staff will check the patient to observe movement and ascertain that the patient is breathing.
  - (1) Additional illumination, such as a flashlight, may be used when necessary and to the extent necessary for proper visualization of the patient to ascertain movement and that the patient is breathing.
- (e) Staff performing observation rounds shall be accompanied by a second staff member when entering patient rooms.

Authority cited: Sections 4005.1, 4011, and 4101 Welfare and Institutions Code.  
Reference: Section 4027 and 4312 Welfare and Institutions Code.