



Memorandum

Date: January 3, 2022

Subject: DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVE ON SUSPENSION OF PATIENT ADMISSIONS
TO DEPARTMENT OF STATE HOSPITALS

The Director of the Department State Hospitals (DSH) is issuing this directive pursuant to Governor Gavin Newsom's Proclamation of a State of Emergency dated March 4, 2020, and Executive Order N-35-20 issued March 21, 2020. To ensure that patients with mental health disorders currently in DSH's custody continue to receive the services and support that are threatened by disruptions caused by COVID-19, in particular the emergence of the highly transmissible Omicron variant, and to protect the health, safety and welfare of those patients, the Director is suspending the admission of patients committed pursuant to Welfare and Institutions section 5358 (a)(2); Welfare and Institutions section 6600, et seq; Penal Code section 1370, et seq; and Penal Code section 1026 to Department of State Hospitals facilities through February 3, 2022.

This suspension is necessary due to the significant and rapid increase of DSH staff testing positive due to the significant increase in community transmission throughout California caused by the Omicron variant. With increased staff cases, a significant number of DSH's treatment units, including Admission Units, are quarantined. Additionally, DSH is also experiencing an increase in patients testing positive for COVID-19 and DSH must also suspend admissions to prepare for a potential surge in patient isolation needs.

DSH's suspension of admissions will also decrease the movement of patients throughout the state and help to reduce the potential for widespread introduction or transmission of the Omicron COVID-19 variant between the criminal justice partners (jails, prisons, and courts) that also serve DSH patients. This will further assist in decreasing the burden of additional COVID-19 serious infections on California's community hospital systems.

During the period of suspended admissions, if there is a patient who is currently committed to a DSH facility but out to court and ready to return, DSH will work with the sending jail on a case-by-case basis as to whether to re-admit these patients, if DSH can ensure re-admission will not threaten to introduce or transmit COVID-19. The DSH Director retains the sole discretion as to whether to re-admit such patients during this period of suspended admissions.

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During the period of suspension of IST patient admissions, if an IST patient currently designated for placement at DSH is psychiatrically acute, the Director may exercise discretion to admit that patient on a case-by-case basis, in accordance with Title 9, section 4717. The committing clinician responsible for that individual's clinical assessment should contact the DSH Medical Director, or designee, about the individual's psychiatric acuity and provide medical information and documentation that supports such acuity.

The points of contact for this process is:

DSH-Atascadero Forensic Department - (805) 468-2084
DSH-Coalinga Forensic Admission/Transfer Coordinator- (559) 580-0153
DSH-Patton Admissions Suite - (909) 425-7389 or (909) 286-2184
DSH-Metropolitan Admissions Suite - (562) 584-7032 or (562) 474 2583
DSH-Napa Admissions Suite - (707)253-5464
DSH-Sacramento Patient Management Unit - courtreferrals@dsh.ca.gov

The Director, or her designee, is the final authority for determining psychiatric acuity of an IST patient for purposes of granting an exception to the suspension of IST patient admissions to a DSH facility.

DSH will continue to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on its facilities and will resume admissions as soon as possible. This suspension of patient admissions will remain in effect until February 3, 2022, unless it is determined prior to that date admissions can resume or upon that date a further extension is necessary, and the Director issues a new directive accordingly.

Please contact DSH's Office of Communications if you have questions, at (916) 654-2410 or at OfficeofCommunications@dsh.ca.gov.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S Clendenin', is positioned above the printed name.

STEPHANIE CLENDENIN
Director