

University of Pennsylvania Police Department 4040 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, Pa 19104		 
Directive: 89	Subject: Weapons Discovered by University of Pennsylvania Health System Staff	Effective Date: 02/01/2008
Order of: Gary Williams, Chief of Police		Amended Date: 08/01/2023

I. Purpose

The purpose of this directive is to define the law enforcement role of the University of Pennsylvania Police Department (UPPD) as it pertains to weapons discovered by University of Pennsylvania Health System (UPHS) Staff affiliated with The Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (HUP) and The Penn Presbyterian Medical Center (PPMC) staff.

II. Policy

The Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (HUP) and The Penn Presbyterian Medical Center (PPMC), both affiliated with the University of Pennsylvania Health System (UPHS), utilize metal detectors for the purpose of conducting a weapons scan of all persons entering their respective Emergency Departments. Both HUP and PPMC utilize gun vaults and portable bullet traps in the emergency department/ trauma bays for the purpose of safeguarding weapons spontaneously discovered while treating emergency and/or acute trauma patients.

Individuals attempting to enter the Emergency Department (ED) at either HUP or PPMC must comply with the scanning requirements or will not be permitted entry into the facility. HUP and PPMC Security Officers are bound by their Operational Directives to contact the University of Pennsylvania Police Department (UPPD) when “a weapon in violation of state code is discovered”.

Weapons spontaneously discovered by either HUP or PPMC ED medical personnel will be placed in a designated gun vault if police personnel are not on location. HUP and PPMC Medical personnel are bound by policy to contact the University of Pennsylvania Police Department whenever a weapon is discovered and placed in a gun vault. Weapons discovered by HUP and/or PPMC medical personnel when police are present, shall be submitted directly to the officer on location.

It is the policy of the University of Pennsylvania Police Department (UPPD) that all personnel adhere to the provisions herein, and to the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the Code of the City of Philadelphia with respect to weapons within the Emergency Department of the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and the Penn Presbyterian Medical Center.

III. Scope

This directive shall affect all sworn employees.

IV. Procedures

A. PennComm Center Responsibilities

1. PennComm Center personnel, upon receipt of a call from HUP or PPMC Security regarding a discovered weapon shall:
 - a) Dispatch the officer assigned to the “HUP-1”, “HUP-2”, “HUP-3 or Presby-1, Presby-2” detail (or, if the detail officer(s) is not working or unavailable, the closest available officer);
 - b) Dispatch a back-up officer;
 - c) Dispatch a patrol supervisor.
 - (1) In instances where a weapon is discovered as a result of the metal detector, the dispatcher shall obtain specific information relative to the type of weapon (i.e. firearm (type), knife, chemical agent, electroshock weapons, etc.) and will relay such information directly to all responding officers.
 - (2) If the individual in question has left HUP or PPMC prior to the officer’s arrival, the officer will obtain a description of the individual from HUP or PPMC Security. The description of the individual will be broadcast via police radio to PennComm.
2. The PennComm Police Supervisor will ensure that Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras in the immediate area of the HUP and/or PPMC ED are trained upon the entrance to HUP and PPMC ED for the duration of the assignment.
3. Should PennComm Center Personnel receive information from any source that a shooting victim is en route to HUP and/or PPMC ED, the UPPD detail officer (or closest available officer) will be notified via radio. Responding officer(s) will be cognizant of any possible evidentiary issues, such as other private vehicles, their occupants, etc. that may also arrive at the HUP or PPMC ED.

B. First Responding Officer’s Responsibilities

1. Weapons discovered by HUP and/or PPMC security utilizing the metal detector:
 - a) If the weapon is a firearm, request that a valid “License to Carry Firearms” be presented from the individual in possession of the firearm. If the license is determined to be valid, those individuals must be informed of the hospital’s reporting and securing of weapons

policies. HUP and/or PPMC security will take into custody any legally possessed weapon(s) and will store them for the duration of the individuals visit or stay at HUP or PPMC. This includes weapons in the possession of off-duty personnel. UPPD Officer will remain on location until all firearms/weapons are safely secured.

- b) If the weapon is not a firearm, but is a weapon that is otherwise legal to possess (such as a knife with a blade less than four inches in length, or a chemical agent), HUP and/or PPMC Security Officers will allow the individual to securely store the weapon or return the weapon to their vehicle for the duration of their business within the HUP and/or PPMC ED.
- c) In every case where responding officers determine that a weapon discovered by HUP and/or PPMC Security is either a prohibited weapon or the carrier of the weapon does not possess a valid "License to Carry Firearms", the UPPD will confiscate said weapon and charge the holder of the weapon as appropriate.
- d) Document the police response, and all actions taken, on a UPPD Incident Report (UPPD-10).

2. Weapons spontaneously discovered by HUP and/or PPMC medical staff:

- a) HUP and/or PPMC medical staff will secure all spontaneously discovered weapons in a designated gun vault then immediately contact the UPPD.
- b) Responding UPPD officers shall take possession of any weapon(s) stored in the emergency department or trauma bay gun vaults and place the weapon(s) on a PPD property receipt; UPPD shall follow current PPD firearms handling and processing guidelines.
- c) Document the police response, and all actions taken, on a UPPD Incident Form (UPPD-10).

C. Supervisory Responsibilities

1. The first responding Supervisor on location shall ensure (in addition to the above) that:

- a) Sufficient UPPD personnel are on location to respond to the situation at hand.
- b) The civilian ED Supervisor is aware of the UPPD response, and
- c) The confiscation of any firearms is conducted within the scope of UPPD Directives.

(1) If the confiscated firearm cannot be made safe by the responding officers, a member of the UPPD's Emergency Response Team (ERT) shall be called to the scene to render the firearm safe prior to being transported to the Firearms Identification Unit (FIU).

If no members of the ERT are available, the decision to notify the Philadelphia Police Department SWAT team will be the responsibility of the responding supervisor.

D. Compliance

Violations of this directive, or portions thereof, may result in disciplinary action.

E. Officers Assigned To Other Agencies

Officers of this department assigned to or assisting other law enforcement agencies will be guided by this directive.

F. Application

This directive constitutes department policy, and is not intended to enlarge the employer's or employee's civil or criminal liability in any way. It shall not be construed as the creation of a higher legal standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense with respect to third party claims insofar as the employer's or employee's legal duty as imposed by law. Violations of policy will only form the basis for departmental administrative sanctions. Violations of law will form the basis for civil and criminal sanctions in a recognized judicial setting.