

LAC+USC MEDICAL CENTER POLICY

Subject: VISITATION POLICY, PATIENT	Original Issue Date: 5/1/69	Policy # 235
	Supersedes: 3/13/12	Effective Date: 7/14/15
Departments Consulted: Medical Administration Nursing Administration Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Epidemiology Patient Relations and Guest Services Spiritual Care	Reviewed & Approved by: Attending Staff Association Executive Committee Senior Executive Council	Approved by: (Signature on File) Chief Medical Officer (Signature on File) Chief Executive Officer

PURPOSE

To promote health restoration while maintaining family processes and social support systems.

POLICY

Visitation by family, friends and significant others is an important component of the restoration of health and the provision of comfort during hospitalization, recognizing both the need and right of patients to have visitors present.

Los Angeles County + University of Southern California Medical Center (LAC+USC) may not discriminate against or deny visitation privileges to any individual designated by the patient as a visitor based on a race, color, regional or national origin, religion or faith, socioeconomic status, sex, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability. All visitors designated by the patient shall be afforded visitation privileges unless a particular visitor possesses a safety risk for patients, staff, or other visitors. In order to ensure the well-being of patients, medical center staff, and other visitors, visitation privileges are given based on adherence to safety guidelines.

To maintain a high level of security, all visitors will obtain a visitor's pass to be issued at the Information Desk in the main lobby. The visitor's pass is to be worn for the duration of the visit in the medical center, and upon leaving the facility, deposited into the designated receptacles outside the main lobby.

Visitation policy guidelines are established to encourage the participation of family members, friends and/or significant others in the care of the patient. This policy takes into consideration the needs of the patient, the immediate family, significant others, and those who care for the patient's needs.

Exceptions and limitations to this policy may include but are not limited to: room restrictions, patient-roommate assignment, code status, safety violations, security breaches, disease or infection outbreaks, or internal/external emergencies, etc.

If the **Patient has decision-making capacity**, the patient may designate visitors of his/her choosing, unless:

- A. no visitor is allowed;

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- B. the facility reasonably determines that the presence of a particular visitor would endanger the health/safety of a patient, hospital staff, other visitors to the hospital, or would significantly disrupt the operations of the hospital.

LAC+USC staff must inform the patient or his or her representative, of the patient's right to visitation and any clinical restrictions or limitations the facility may need to place on those rights. The patient, or his or her representative or family, must be informed of these rights in advance for furnishing or discontinuing patient care, whenever possible.

DEFINITIONS

***Child-Visitor** – For the purpose of this document, a child is defined as anyone under the age of 12.

****Service Dog or Therapy Dog** – Any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including but not limited to, guiding people with impaired vision, alerting people with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.

PROCEDURE

I. GENERAL VISITATION GUIDELINES

- A. Daily visiting hours are from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., except as noted in defined patient care areas in this policy.
- B. Exceptions to the general visitation guidelines can be made on an individual basis by the nurse or physician caring for the patient.
- C. Visitors may be asked to leave the bedside during treatments, procedures or emergencies
- D. Visitors who violate hospital policies, disrupt patient care, or pose a concern or threat of criminal activity, are to be reported to Los Angeles Sheriff's Department (LASD) and the Information Desk.
- E. The number of visitors allowed in the patient's room at any one time is two (2). Waiting rooms exist on every floor and shall be used as the waiting area for two visitors per patient. All other visitors must remain on the ground floor Lobby.
- F. Under special circumstances, one family member or significant other may be approved to remain with the patient after 9:00 p.m.

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- G. Any visitor showing signs and symptoms of infection (e.g. cold, flu, or chicken pox, or who has recently been exposed to chicken pox or any infectious disease) will not be allowed to visit the patient.
- H. Children under the age of 12 must be accompanied and supervised by a responsible adult at all times.
- I. Pets are not permitted to visit with the exception of Service or Therapy Dogs. (**)
- J. The patient's nurse or physician will coordinate visitor restrictions with the Information Desk and LASD.
- K. Visitors are encouraged to participate in patient care under the direction and discretion of the nurse, or physician.
- L. For attorney visitation guidelines refer to the Nursing Policy, "Patient/Staff Attorney Contact".
- M. Medical Center employees are expected to follow this policy when not visiting patient's on official business.

II. VISITATION GUIDELINES FOR ADULT INTENSIVE CARE UNITS

- A. Visitors are allowed and encouraged to participate in patient care under the direction of and the discretion of the nurse, or physician.
- B. Visiting with patients is restricted to immediate family members and/or significant others. Visitation is limited to two (2) visitors per patient. The timeline for visits is ten (10) minutes per hour.
- C. Visitors must wash hands before and after entering the ICU and must always check with the appropriate staff before entering a patient room.
- D. Large groups of visitors are not permitted and will be asked to relocate to designated waiting areas.
- E. Visitors may be asked to leave the room and wait in the designated waiting area during shift changes to allow for nursing and physician reports and assessments.
- F. Generally children under the age of 12(*) are not permitted to visit patients in the adult intensive care units in order to reduce the risk of infection to the patients and visitors
- G. If approved by the nurse or physician caring for the patient, special consideration may be given to children under the age of 12.

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III. VISITATION GUIDELINES FOR GENERAL PEDIATRIC UNIT

- A. Parents are encouraged to stay with their hospitalized child and participate in care activities under the direction of and at the discretion of the physician(s) or nurse(s).
- B. Parents are allowed to visit at any time. More than 2 visitors are allowed at the bedside based on patient care needs, and discretion of the physician and nurse.
- C. All visitors must be approved by the parents of the patient.
- D. Children under the age of 12 are permitted to visit under the discretion of the parents, physician and nurse.

IV. VISITATION GUIDELINES FOR SPECIAL CARE PEDIATRIC UNITS

A. Pediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU)

- 1. Parents are encouraged to stay in the hospital with their hospitalized child and may visit at any time during the hours of 6:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. one parent will be allowed to stay at the bedside.
- 2. Parents are encouraged to be present during morning rounds. However parents and other visitors may be asked to leave to maintain the confidentiality of other patients during rounds.
- 3. All visitors must have a "visitor's badge" from the information desk and check-in (sign-in) with the staff nurse before entering the PICU.
- 4. Special protective gear and/or safety attire may be required before entering the PICU.
- 5. Space limitations or special care needs may dictate that parents be asked to refrain from sleeping at the bedside. If and possible, a parent sleeping room or waiting area will be made available.
- 6. Visitors must be free from illness and exposure to communicable disease (refer to the department policies for specific details).
- 7. No visitors under the age of 12, except for immediate family, are allowed in order to reduce the risk of infection to the patient and visitors.
- 8. All other visitors must be approved by the parent(s) of the patient prior to entry into the PICU, have a "visitor's badge" acquired from the Information Desk, and check-in/sign-in with the staff nurse.

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9. A Child Life specialist may be contacted and required to prepare siblings and visitors under the age of 12 before they visit a PICU.

10. All visitors will observe hand washing and gowning procedures.

B. Neonatal, including Neonatal Critical Care Unit

1. Parents may visit at any time except during nurse or staff shift changes (7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.)
2. Parents may designate up to four (4) adult visitors (18 years or older) to visit their infant.
3. Siblings may visit on a limited basis when accompanied by a parent. Other children are discouraged from visiting in order to reduce risk of infection to the patient and visitors.
4. Visitors must be free from illness and exposure to communicable disease (refer to the department polices for specific details).
5. All visitors will observe hand washing and gowning procedures.

V. VISITATION GUIDELINES FOR THE LABOR AND DELIVERY DEPARTMENT

A. Labor and Delivery

1. A limit of three (3) visitors including children of the patient are allowed to visit. Any other visitor requests are at the discretion of the nurse in charge or the patient.

B. Antepartum/Postpartum

1. A limit of three (3) visitors including children of the patient, are permitted at one time or at the discretion of the nurse in charge or the patient.
2. All visitors must check in/sign in at the nursing station. Nursing staff shall ensure all visitors have an official visitor's pass/badge to visit any patient on the unit.
3. If any visitor is found to have an infection, that visitor will not be permitted into the Perinatal Unit.
4. The patient, family member, and/or significant other will be asked if visiting siblings or children have any of the following:
 - a) Fever
 - b) Cold
 - c) Rash
 - d) Cough or chest congestion

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- e) Congested nose or sore throat
- f) Vomiting and / or diarrhea
- g) A communicable disease (e.g. Measles, chicken pox, mumps, etc.)

VI. VISITATION GUIDELINES FOR THE EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT

- A. Due to the unique setting of the Emergency Department, the decision to permit visitation is at the discretion of the Emergency Department staff.
- B. If approved by the nurse or physician caring for the patient, special consideration may be given to children under the age of 12.

VII. VISITATION GUIDELINES FOR THE POST ANESTHESIA RECOVERY AREA (PAR)

- A. Privacy and confidentiality must be maintained for all patients and at all times.
- B. Visitors are not allowed in PAR. (Exception: One parent may remain with any patient sixteen years old and younger). The parent will be notified at the appropriate time post-operatively to come to PAR. Parent(s) are encouraged to remain with all children ten years old and younger.
- C. Special Circumstances and requests will be at the discretion of the PAR nursing and physician staff.

VIII. VISITATION GUIDELINES FOR PSYCHIATRIC NURSING SERVICES (HAWKINS)

- A. Visiting hours are daily: 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Monday through Sunday, and 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. Saturdays, Sundays, and on legal Holidays. Nursing staff must directly supervise all visits.
- B. All patients on the unit have the right to receive or refuse visitors. Arrangements for visitors under 14 years of age to visit shall be reviewed by the treatment team. If for any reason, a patient cannot have visitors, the physician must complete a Denial of Rights form.
- C. Each request to visit outside of established visiting hours will be evaluated on an individual basis by the Nurse-in-charge/Nursing Supervisor.
- D. Private places for visitation may be provided if requested, and available, if safety to the patient, visitor, or others is not compromised, and there is a sufficient number of staff to supervise.
- E. Nursing Staff will ensure each visitor signs in on the Ward Visitor's Registry.
- F. Nursing staff must check all articles brought by visitors. Potentially harmful objects such as matches and lighters will not be allowed. Visitors will be asked to remove such items

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when they leave. Other items, such as make-up or nail clippers will be labeled and kept in a designated location. The patient may use only those approved items under supervision. Clothing will be provided to the patient after being recorded on the clothing list.

IX. VISITATION FOR PATIENTS IN JAIL SERVICE (CUSTODY)

- A. Applies to patients in the custody of LASD throughout the hospital.
- B. Visiting hours are Wednesday thru Sunday 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m./2:00p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- C. Patients may not have any face to face visitation unless accompanied by LASD personnel and approved by the jail ward Watch Commander or designee.
- D. LASD Visitation Room (2N118) on the second floor provides a telephone and monitor for visitations with patients.
 - 1. Two (2) visitors are allowed and must be at least 18 years old. Visitors must be immediate family or have a close personal relationship with the patient, and have valid identification.
 - 2. Visitation privileges may be revoked depending on circumstances or emergencies.

X. VISITATION FOR JUVENILES IN THE CUSTODY OF THE PROBATION DEPARTMENT

- A. Parents are the only visitors allowed. They may not spend the night in the patient's room.

XI. LAW ENFORCEMENT VISITATION GUIDELINES

To simplify the procedure for law enforcement officers visiting inpatients to conduct investigations, the following procedures have been developed. The hospital will provide an environment that protects the patient's therapeutic and privacy interests, and is one that is non-confrontational for law enforcement officers. Hospital staff must be aware that law enforcement has a responsibility to perform investigative duties and that hindering the Police in conducting investigations could be considered obstruction of justice.

The investigating officer will call LASD at (323) 226-3333 to obtain clearance (pass) before proceeding to the patient's room. The LASD dispatch Center will contact the unit manager during business hours or the Administrative Nursing Office during non-business hours to determine whether or not the patient is available for an interview. The LASD will send a Deputy to issue the pass to the investigating officer.

- A. If a patient is available for an interview, the physician will determine that:

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1. The patient's medical condition will not be harmed by the visit.
 2. If patient is a minor, that parents consent to the patient being interviewed.
- B. If a patient refuses to be interviewed, the manager/supervisor shall:
1. Communicate the patient's decision to the officer(s);
 2. Consult the LASD Watch Sergeant if the officer(s) insists on visiting the patient.
- C. Refer to LAC+USC Medical Center Policy, "Law Enforcement Agency Contact With Patient"

XII. SPIRITUAL CARE VISITOR GUIDELINES

Hospital authorized chaplains wearing county approved ID Badge with chaplain's lanyard are permitted to visit at any time for regular patient rounds and upon the request of the patient, doctors, nurses, hospital staff and/or family. Local and/or general clergy, lay ministers and faith group representatives visiting their own church member, will report to Chaplains office for clearance, Clergy Hospital Visitation Identification Badge and authorization by the Director of the Department of Spiritual Care.

RESPONSIBILITY

Administrative staff
 Attending staff
 Nursing staff
 Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
 Spiritual Care Staff
 All employees

REFERENCES

California Code of Regulations, Title 22, 70707
 Joint Commission Standards (Rights and Responsibilities of the Individual), RI.01.01.01
 42 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 482 Section 482.13, and Part 485, Section 485.635
 CMS, Conditions of Participation, 482.13(h), Standard: Patient Visitation Rights
 Medical Center Policy #181, Law Enforcement Agency Contact With Patient
 Medical Center Policy #200, Patient's Rights
 Medical Center Policy #643, Security Role of County Police
 Medical Center Policy #654, Security Reporting Unusual or Suspicious Incidents
 Medical Center Policy #655, Public Disturbance Management
 Nursing Policy #185, Patient / Staff Attorney Contact
 DHS Policy #322, Patient's Bill of Rights
 DHS Policy #380 Patient Visitation

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REVISION DATES

July 1, 1995; February 11, 1999; April 9, 2002; October 16, 2008; August 30, 2009;
March 13, 2012; July 14, 2015