

**SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT  
PROCEDURE**

**DATE:** DECEMBER 4, 2020  
**NUMBER:** 3.20 - INVESTIGATIONS  
**SUBJECT:** HOSPITAL INTERVIEW PROCEDURES  
**RELATED POLICY:** N/A  
**ORIGINATING DIVISION:** OPERATIONAL SUPPORT  
**NEW PROCEDURE:**   
**PROCEDURAL CHANGE:**  **NO CHANGES**  
**SUPERSEDES:** DP 3.20 – 04/11/2017

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**I. PURPOSE**

This Department procedure establishes guidelines for conducting interviews with hospital patients.

**II. SCOPE**

This procedure applies to all members of the Department.

**III. BACKGROUND**

It is necessary to have access to hospital patients who are witnesses, victims, and suspects. In addition, Department members may need information contained in hospital records. The primary purpose of a hospital is to extend medical service and Department members must not interfere with this objective.

**IV. PROCEDURES**

**A. Visiting Patients who are Witnesses, Victims, or Suspects**

1. Officers are to make all requests to see patients through the hospital's administrative office and, if possible, should telephone in advance. This will enable the hospital staff to make the necessary arrangements.

2. Visiting officers will check in with the hospital's administrative office prior to conducting an interview. A staff member does not need to be present during the interview unless the therapeutic interests of the patient are at issue.
3. Hospital personnel will not advise any patient of their rights.
4. After concluding an interview, officers shall not visit any other patient without, again, scheduling the visit with the administrative office.
5. Hospital officials will not deny an officer access to any patient unless the attending physician states the patient's condition is such that the patient cannot be seen.

B. Hospital Records (California Penal Code § 1543)

1. Hospital records that are not considered privileged under Section 1524 (c) of the California Penal Code (PC) shall only be disclosed to law enforcement agencies with:
  - a. Prior written consent of the patient;
  - b. Court order by a court in the county in which the records are located; or,
  - c. A search warrant obtained pursuant to Section 1524 PC.
2. All business involving hospital records should be conducted through the hospital's Director of Medical Records.
3. In the event hospital staff denies access to a patient or a needed medical record, the requesting officer shall make a report to the Department's Hospital Liaison Sergeant in Operational Support, who will then contact the hospital's administrator. Individual officers are not to contact the administrator directly to complain about such an incident.

C. Special Requests

If, during the course of an interview, it is discovered that a special medical examination of the subject is of importance to the case and the patient cannot be moved:

1. The request must be made either by the Watch Commander or the requesting officer's supervisor; and,
2. A search warrant must be obtained for a body cavity search of a suspect.

D. Local Hospital Telephone Numbers:

Alvarado Hospital	(619) 287-3270
Children's Hospital	(858) 576-1700
Grossmont Hospital	(619) 740-6000
Kaiser Permanente	(619) 266-5000
Kindred Hospital	(619) 543-4500
Mercy Hospital	(619) 294-8111
Naval Medical Center	(619) 532-6400
Palomar Hospital	(442) 281-5000
Paradise Valley Hospital	(619) 470-4321 or 470-4160
Pomerado Hospital	(858) 613-4000
Promise Hospital	(619) 582-3800
San Diego County Psychiatric Hospital	(619) 692-8200
Scripps Chula Vista Hospital	(619) 691-7000
Scripps Green Hospital	(858) 554-9100
Scripps La Jolla Hospital	(858) 626-4123
Sharp Chula Vista Hospital	(619) 502-5800
Sharp Coronado Hospital	(619) 522-3600
Sharp Memorial Hospital	(858) 939-3400
Thornton Hospital	(858) 657-7000
Tri-City Hospital	(760) 724-8411
UCSD Hospital/Medical Center	(858) 657-7000