**POLICY and PROCEDURE**

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| ***Title: Searches: Resident Room, Person, Packages, and Visitors*** |
| ***Issued By: Administration*** |
| ***Effective Date:***  | ***Last Review Date:***  | ***Supersedes: Previous*** |
| ***Distribution: All Staff*** |

**OBJECTIVE**:

To enhance safety by identifying and preventing hazardous items from entering into the facility.

To enhance safety by removing hazardous items if found in resident possession, or room. and/or on facility premises. To respect a resident’s choices and balance this right with the potential impact of these choices on their well-being, other residents, and on the facility’s obligation to protect residents from harm

**POLICY:**

It is the policy of this facility to respect the resident’s right to privacy, dignity, and use personal property while maintaining a safe environment for the residents, staff, and visitors. Under certain circumstances this may necessitate that the facility takes steps (i.e., searches) to ensure residents are not in possession of hazardous items/contraband that may present a hazard/imminent threat to their own personal safety or the safety of those in the facility.

**DEFINITIONS/BACKGROUND**

*Contraband/Hazardous-* a term used to describe prohibited or unauthorized items by this facility. It may also include items that may be used by a resident to harm themselves or others. Items include, but are not limited to:

* Tobacco and Tobacco-related Products, E-Cigs, Vaping Devices
* Explosives (black powder, fireworks)
* Alcoholic beverages
* Flammable substances
* Unidentifiable substances (vials, powders, pills, liquids)
* Sharp objects (scissors, nail clippers, knives, needles/pins, razor blades, awl, icepick,
* Hanging Risks (ropes, electrical wires and cords not associated to a device)
* Illegal substances/items (street drugs/narcotics)
* Medications (non-controlled substances, over-the-counter, personal medications unless resident has a self-medication order (see policy on Resident Self-Medication)
* Electrical Equipment (Must be given to Maintenance for inspection prior to use)

*Searches*- searches are actions taken by facility staff when

* there is a reasonable belief that contraband/hazardous item(s) is in the possession of the resident or in an area that could endanger the health or safety of residents, staff or visitors
* repetitive incidents of non-compliance by resident related to possession of hazardous items
* anytime there is a reasonable belief that there is an imminent threat from hazardous/contraband

*Imminent threat* - describes an immediate threat to personal safety created by reasonable suspicion or direct observation that a resident possesses contraband/hazards that could be used to harm himself/herself or someone else.

**PROCEDURES:**

1. To ensure the safety of the residents, staff and visitors in the facility, the facility may inspect packages upon entering the facility. This includes, but is not limited to, food deliveries, visitor bags and suspicious looking or tampered packages.
2. Residents that may require packages or other items to be inspected will be informed and consent will be obtained by SW/Nursing or Administration.
3. Residents who are suspected of having hazardous items and refuse to have packages/items inspected will have a meeting with the IDT to determine the appropriate actions that must be taken in-order to safeguard the resident, other residents, and staff of the facility.
4. In instances when a resident refuses to have package/items inspected and there is suspicion that the contents might present an imminent threat the local law enforcement will be contacted.
5. Packages/items to be inspected will be logged by the receptionist and a designated staff member will bring package/item to room, assist with opening, as needed, and document contents on Package Delivery Log. *(Refer to attachment)*
6. When there is a suspicion that a visitor is bringing contraband/hazardous items into the facility, the facility has the right to request the visitor to allow inspection of any packages or carried items. Should the visitor refuse, the facility may take the following actions:
* Restrict visitation
* Arrange for Supervised Visitation
* Contact local law enforcement if there is suspicion that the visitor may have contents that present an imminent threat and refuses to leave the facility.
1. If any staff member notices an item that could be considered contraband/hazardous, they shall take immediate actions to address any related safety issues and promptly notify direct supervisor.
2. The decision to conduct a room search will be based on the criteria mentioned above by the DNS, Administrator, or RNS.
3. For any search of resident property, the reason for the search will be explained to the resident and consent obtained.
4. Resident room searches will be conducted with the resident present unless
	1. the resident declines to be present,
	2. the resident is not able to be present due to clinical or medical issues
	3. there is cause to believe a highly dangerous item may be present
5. When the resident refuses to consent, the individual performing the search will immediately notify the DNS /Administrator.
6. When there is reason to suspect that the resident has a hazardous item, and will not allow the facility to search room and/or person the facility will contact local law enforcement
7. If any contraband item is found during the room search:
* Items will be removed and given to the Social Worker or RN supervisor. It will then either be released to a person of the resident’s choosing (e.g., parent, guardian, friend) or be held in safekeeping and returned to the resident upon discharge depending on the nature of the item.
* Any illegal items will be confiscated by the facility and given to law enforcement for further disposition.
* Staff to ensure documentation is entered into medical record, including electronic 24-hour report, progress notes and care plan.
* IDT will review resident’s care plan, identify appropriate interventions, and provide education to resident/representative.
1. The IDT will make all efforts to honor residents’ rights and at the same time ensure resident is safe and supervised to prevent harm when hazardous items are identified.
* The facility has a responsibility to educate a resident, representative, and staff regarding significant risks related to contraband/hazardous items
* When a resident’s choice poses some risk, the IDT will work with the resident to understand reasons for the choice, and discuss options and interventions to mitigate risks.
* An individualized plan of care for each resident will be developed to promote safety and monitor for hazardous items.

**Resources:**

[CMS ( 2022) **F557** som107ap\_pp\_guidelines\_ltcf.pdf](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CGNY%5CDocuments%5CBeach%20Gardens%20DPOC%5C99690_som107ap_pp_guidelines_ltcf.pdf)

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