

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS



Standard Operating Procedures

Policy Name: Privacy of Care		
Policy Number: 507.04.26	Effective Date: 01/25/2022	Page Number: 1 of 2
Authority: Commissioner	Originating Division: Office of Health Services (Physical Health)	Access Listing: Level I: All Access

I. Introduction and Summary:

Health care encounters will be provided with consideration for offender dignity and privacy. This policy is applicable to all facilities that house Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC) offenders to include private and county prisons.

II. Authority:

- A. GDC Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): 507.01.01 Health Care Philosophy and Right to Treatment;
- B. NCCHC 2018 Adult Standard: P-A-07;
- C. ACA Standards: 5-ACI-6C-10, 4-ALDF-4D-19 (2016 Standards Supplement), and 1-HC-3A-10 (2016 Standards Supplement); and
- D. HIPAA Title II.

III. Definitions:

- A. **Clinical Encounter** - An interaction between an offender and healthcare provider that involves a treatment and/or exchange of confidential information.
- B. **Custody Staff** - Includes line security as well as administration to support the implementation of clinical decisions.
- C. **Health Care Staff** - Qualified health care professionals as well as administrative and supportive staff (e.g., health records administrators, laboratory technicians, nursing, and medical assistants, and clerical workers).

IV. Statement of Policy and Applicable Procedures:

- A. Every reasonable effort is made to ensure Clinical Encounters are conducted in private and not observed by Custody Staff unless the offender poses a probable security risk or risk to the safety of the Health Care Staff. When Custody Staff is present, either auditory or visual privacy is provided. Custody Staff observing

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Clinical Encounters are instructed to keep confidential any health care information obtained.

- B. A chaperone will be present when desired by the provider or requested by the patient. At the time of disrobing, a provider of the opposite sex will leave the room, while the chaperone prepares the patient for the exam. A chaperone of the same sex is required for female offenders.
 - C. Rectal and pelvic examinations performed by health care personnel for medical reasons will be done only with the verbal consent of the offender.
 - D. When safety is a concern and full visual and auditory privacy cannot be given, alternatives for partial privacy should be considered, e.g., privacy screen. As another alternative, safety may be observed in certain cases by having one or more correctional officers within sight but not sound of the offender, e.g., observe through a window or remain at a certain distance in the same room.
- V. **Attachments:** None.
- VI. **Record Retention of Forms Relevant to this Policy:** None.