

Mental Illness Commitments

409.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines for when officers may take a person into custody for psychiatric evaluation and treatment (5150 commitment) (Welfare and Institutions Code § 5150).

409.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Santa Monica Police Department to protect the public and individuals through legal and appropriate use of the 72-hour treatment and evaluation commitment (5150 commitment) process.

409.3 AUTHORITY

A sworn officer having probable cause may take a person into custody and place the person in an approved mental health facility for 72-hour treatment and evaluation when the officer believes that, as a result of a mental disorder, the person is a danger to themselves or others or the person is gravely disabled (Welfare and Institutions Code § 5150; Welfare and Institutions Code § 5585.50).

When determining whether to take a person into custody, officers are not limited to determining the person is an imminent danger and shall consider reasonably available information about the historical course of the person's mental disorder, which may include evidence presented from any of the following (Welfare and Institutions Code § 5150; Welfare and Institutions Code § 5150.05):

- (a) An individual who is providing or has provided mental health treatment or related support services to the person
- (b) A family member
- (c) The person subject to the determination or anyone designated by the person

409.3.1 VOLUNTARY EVALUATION

If a sworn officer encounters an individual who may qualify for a 5150 commitment, the officer may inquire as to whether the person desires to voluntarily be evaluated at an appropriate facility. If the person so desires, the officers should:

- (a) Transport the person to an appropriate facility that is able to connect them to appropriate resources and services, or to conduct the evaluation and admit the person pursuant to a 5150 commitment (per Health & Safety Code § 5150.05):
- (b) If a person withdraws their consent for a voluntary evaluation at any time, either through words or actions, officers are discouraged from using force to enforce the hold. Instead, they should consider a plan to safely disengage and leave the situation when appropriate unless they are a danger to others. Whenever practical, officers should notify their supervisor before disengaging and provide the individual with appropriate resources.

Santa Monica Police Department

Santa Monica Police Department Policy Manual

Mental Illness Commitments

409.4 CONSIDERATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Any officer handling a call involving an individual who may qualify for a 5150 commitment should consider, as time and circumstances reasonably permit:

- (a) Available information that might assist in determining the cause and nature of the person's action or stated intentions.
- (b) Community or neighborhood mediation services.
- (c) Conflict resolution and de-escalation techniques.
- (d) Community or other resources available to assist in dealing with mental health issues.

While these steps are encouraged, nothing in this section is intended to dissuade officers from taking reasonable action to ensure the safety of the officers and others.

Officers should consider a 5150 commitment over arrest when mental health issues appear to be a mitigating factor for people who are suspected of committing minor crimes or creating other public safety issues. In an incident involving a subject who is a danger to self, with no criminal element, officers should only proceed if a 5150 commitment can be accomplished without the use of force. In the event that officers determine a use of force may be necessary to affect a 5150 hold, officers should consider tactfully disengaging and instead offer resources to assist the person in crisis whenever feasible.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit an officer's authority to use reasonable force where unique circumstances are identified. Refer to Use of Force Policy for guidance.

409.4.1 SECURING OF PROPERTY

When a person is taken into custody for evaluation, or within a reasonable time thereafter, and unless a responsible relative, guardian or conservator is in possession of the person's personal property, the officer shall take reasonable precautions to safeguard the individual's personal property in his/her possession or on the premises occupied by the person (Welfare and Institutions Code § 5150).

The officer taking the person into custody shall provide a report to the court that describes the person's property and its disposition in the format provided in Welfare and Institutions Code § 5211, unless a responsible person took possession of the property, in which case the officer shall only include the name of the responsible person and the location of the property (Welfare and Institutions Code § 5150).

409.5 TRANSPORTATION

When transporting any individual for a 5150 commitment, the transporting officer should have Public Safety Communications Center notify the receiving facility of the estimated time of arrival, the level of cooperation of the individual and whether any special medical care is needed.

Officers may transport individuals in a patrol unit and shall secure them in accordance with the Handcuffing and Restraints Policy. Should the detainee require transport in a medical transport vehicle and the safety of any person, including the detainee, requires the presence of a sworn officer during the transport, Watch Commander approval is required before transport commences.

Santa Monica Police Department

Santa Monica Police Department Policy Manual

Mental Illness Commitments

409.6 TRANSFER TO APPROPRIATE FACILITY

Officers are responsible for transporting an individual in custody pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code § 5150 to the appropriate facility. When deciding where to transport an individual, officers shall use the following guidelines or the most current Department guidelines as hospital procedures are subject to change:

- (a) Any individual who desires to voluntarily commit themselves, or any person with medical problems, will be transported to SMEH-UCLA or St. John's Hospital.
- (b) Combative individuals, not in custody for a felony crime, should be transported to Harbor UCLA Hospital.
- (c) Adults in custody for a felony crime should be transported to the Los Angeles County Jail.
- (d) Individuals identified as United States Military Veterans should be taken to the Veteran's Administration (VA). Prior to transporting, offices should confirm veteran status with the VA.
- (e) Individuals under 14 years old can be transported to Ronald Regan UCLA Westwood Hospital.
- (f) Individuals 13 years old and over with no medical problems, no insurance, and without parents or guardians present should be transported to Exodus MLK (12021 Wilmington Ave. Building 10 Los Angeles, CA. 90059).
- (g) Non-combative individuals, 17 years old and over, with no medical problems, who are not on parole, extremely intoxicated (Penal Code § 647(f), or suffering with an organic dysfunction (e.g. dementia, Alzheimer's, or other neurodevelopmental disorders characterized by significantly impaired intellectual and adaptive functioning) may be admitted to Exodus locations as long as they do not have private insurance. Those on probation or AB 109 or with Medicaid/Medicare may be admitted into Exodus, but the officer(s) must call the facility beforehand.
- (h) Individuals suffering from an organic dysfunction, should be transported to SMEH-UCLA or St. John's Hospital for medical assessment and treatment. Officers, generally, should not remove subjects from Convalescent Hospitals.

If an individual has been seeing a mental health professional for treatment or had arrangements with another medical facility, then the officer will take these factors into consideration for the appropriate transfer of the individual.

Absent exigent circumstances, the transporting officer should not assist facility staff with the admission process, including restraint of the individual. However, if the individual is transported and delivered while restrained, the officer may assist with transferring the individual to facility restraints and will be available to assist during the admission process, if requested. Under normal circumstances, officers will not apply facility-ordered restraints.

409.7 DOCUMENTATION

When an officer completes an application for a 72-Hour detention for evaluation and treatment, they shall provide it to the facility staff member assigned to that patient and retain a copy of the application to be attached to the related report.

Santa Monica Police Department

Santa Monica Police Department Policy Manual

Mental Illness Commitments

The application shall include the circumstances for officer involvement; the probable cause to believe the person is, as a result of a mental health disorder, a danger to others or him/herself or gravely disabled; and all information used for the determination of probable cause (Welfare and Institutions Code § 5150; Welfare and Institutions Code § 5150.05).

The officer shall also provide a verbal summary to any evaluating staff member regarding the circumstances leading to the involuntary detention.

When transporting an individual with medical issues to 1799.111 H&S facilities (e.g. SMEH-UCLA or St. John's Hospital), the officer should inquire if the evaluating staff would like the officer to complete the application or if the evaluating staff would like to complete the evaluation and application due to existing medical problems.

In addition to the application or any other report forms including crime reports, information received reports, and injured persons reports, officers shall complete a Field Identification Card for any individual who voluntarily commits or is involuntarily committed into an authorized facility pursuant to Welfare and Institutions Code § 5150. The Field Identification Card will include:

- (a) A brief summary of the investigation and disposition.
- (b) The name of the facility the individual was transported for treatment.
- (c) The name of the medical/mental health professional receiving the individual.
- (d) Whether the services of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health was utilized.
- (e) If a patient's treating mental health professional was involved or made arrangements for treatment with another medical facility.

409.7.1 ADVISEMENT

The officer taking a person into custody for evaluation shall advise the person of:

- (a) The officer's name and agency.
- (b) The fact that the person is not under criminal arrest but is being taken for examination by mental health professionals and the mental health staff will advise him/her of their rights.
- (c) The name of the facility to which the person is being taken.
- (d) If the person is being taken into custody at his/her residence, he/she should also be advised that he/she may take a few personal items, which the officer must approve, and may make a telephone call or leave a note indicating where he/she is being taken. The officer should also ask if the person needs assistance turning off any appliance or water.

The advisement shall be given in a language the person understands. If the person cannot understand an oral advisement, the information shall be provided in writing (Welfare and Institutions Code § 5150).

409.8 CRIMINAL OFFENSES

Officers investigating an individual who is suspected of committing a minor criminal offense and who is being taken on a 5150 commitment should resolve the criminal matter by issuing a warning or a Notice to Appear as appropriate.

Santa Monica Police Department

Santa Monica Police Department Policy Manual

Mental Illness Commitments

When an individual who may qualify for a 5150 commitment has committed a serious criminal offense that would normally result in an arrest and transfer to a jail facility, the officer should:

- (a) Arrest the individual when there is probable cause to do so.
- (b) Notify the appropriate supervisor of the facts supporting the arrest and the facts that would support the 5150 commitment.
- (c) Facilitate the individual's transfer to jail.
- (d) Thoroughly document in the related reports the circumstances that indicate the individual may qualify for a 5150 commitment.

In the supervisor's judgment, the individual may instead be arrested or booked and transported to the appropriate mental health facility. The supervisor should consider the seriousness of the offense, the treatment options available, the ability of this Department to regain custody of the individual, Department resources (e.g., posting a guard) and other relevant factors in making this decision.

409.9 ACTIVE-DUTY MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO ARE MENTALLY ILL

If an officer has reasonable cause to believe that a person currently on active duty in the military is mentally ill to the degree that they present themselves to be a danger to self or others (or gravely disabled), the following procedures shall be utilized.

- (a) Request a field supervisor to respond the location, and determine whether or not the subject should be detained due to possible mental illness.
- (b) If the supervisor and officer concur that the subject should be evaluated, the subject shall be taken to the appropriate mental health facility in accordance with Department guidelines (refer to § 409.6).
- (c) The detaining officer should then notify, or cause to be notified, the Department of Defense Police.
- (d) If military personnel being handled as mentally ill by this Department have committed a criminal offense, the detaining officer will contact the appropriate base and shall:
 - 1. Confirm whether or not Military Police will respond to take custody of the individual
 - 2. Coordinate the response with Military Police to determine the appropriate pick-up location
 - 3. Document the response in the related crime report
 - 4. Refer to Policy Manual § 400 for further procedures following the detention of military personnel for a criminal offense

409.10 FIREARMS AND OTHER WEAPONS

Whenever a person is taken into custody for a 5150 commitment, the handling officers should seek to determine if the person owns or has access to any firearm or other deadly weapon defined in Welfare and Institutions Code § 8100. Officers should consider whether it is appropriate and consistent with current search and seizure law under the circumstances to seize any such firearms or other dangerous weapons (e.g., safekeeping, evidence, consent).

Santa Monica Police Department

Santa Monica Police Department Policy Manual

Mental Illness Commitments

Officers are cautioned that a search warrant may be needed before entering a residence or other place to search, unless lawful, warrantless entry has already been made (e.g., exigent circumstances, consent). A search warrant may also be needed before searching for or seizing weapons

The handling officers shall issue a receipt describing the deadly weapon or any firearm seized and list any serial number or other identification that is on the firearm. Officers shall advise the person of the procedure for the return of any firearm or other weapon that has been taken into custody (Welfare and Institutions Code § 8102 (b)) (see Property and Evidence Policy).

409.10.1 PETITION FOR RETURN OF FIREARMS AND OTHER WEAPONS

Whenever the handling officer has cause to believe that the future return of any confiscated weapon might endanger the person or others, the officer shall detail those facts and circumstances in a report. The report shall be forwarded to the Criminal Investigations Division, which shall be responsible for initiating a petition to the Superior Court for a hearing in accordance with Welfare and Institutions Code § 8102(c), to determine whether the weapon will be returned.

The petition to the Superior Court shall be initiated within 30 days of the release of the individual from whom such weapon has been confiscated, unless the Department makes an ex parte application to the court to extend the time to file such a petition, up to a maximum of 60 days. At the time any such petition is initiated, the Department shall send written notice to the individual informing him/her of the right to a hearing on the issue, that he/she has 30 days to confirm with the court clerk any desire for a hearing and that the failure to do so will result in the forfeiture of any confiscated weapon.

409.11 APPREHENSION AND TRANSPORTATION OF ESCAPED MENTAL PATIENTS

In accordance with § 7325 of the Welfare and Institutions (WIC) code, the following procedures are established:

- (a) Welfare and Institutions Code § 7325 requires that officers of this Department assist with the apprehension and transportation of all involuntarily detained mental patients who have escaped from any Federal, State or designated County mental health facilities or hospitals when the four following criteria are met
 1. The qualifying mental health facility or hospital from where the subject escaped requests the Santa Monica Police Department's assistance in locating, apprehending and transporting the escaped subject back to the facility / hospital
 2. At the time of the escape, the subject was involuntarily detained pursuant to one of the statutes or orders listed in § 7325 WIC. These currently include:
 - (a) Committed by a court to a State hospital or other institution on or before June 30, 1969
 - (b) Judicially committed on or after July 1, 1969
 - (c) Involuntarily detained pursuant to Part 1 (commencing with § 5000) of Division 5 of the WIC, including sections: Judicially committed on or after July 1, 1969
 1. § 5150 (72-hour hold)

Santa Monica Police Department

Santa Monica Police Department Policy Manual

Mental Illness Commitments

2. § 5250 (14-day hold)
 3. § 5260 (second 14-day hold)
 4. § 5270 (30-day certification)
 5. § 5301 (180-day certification)
3. The date and time that the subject was due to be released from the above listed detention has not expired
4. The physician or their designee authorizing the apprehension and transportation of the involuntarily detained subject, completes an SMPD form #918E (Apprehension and Transportation Order – § 7325 WIC) and provides a copy of the completed form to a responding officer and/or faxes a copy to the Watch Commander.
 - (a) When the above criteria are met and an officer locates the escaped subject, the officer shall transport the subject back to the facility/hospital that issued the Apprehension and Transportation Order (form #918E).
 - (b) If the escapee cannot be located and the escape was from a designated County mental health facility or hospital located within the City of Santa Monica, and the subject is charged with any crime involving physical harm to children, this agency shall, pursuant to § 7325(c) WIC, provide copies of the completed form (#918E) to school districts:
 1. In the vicinity of the hospital or other facility in which the escapee was being held,
 2. In the area the escapee is known to, or is likely to frequent, and
 3. In the area where the escapee resided immediately prior to confinement.
 - (c) Note: The requirement to notify the school districts in the above-mentioned areas includes areas that may be outside of Santa Monica. If the agency in that jurisdiction cannot accommodate our request to make the required notification, SMPD personnel shall make the notifications.

409.12 TRAINING

This Department will endeavor to provide Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST)-approved advanced officer training on interaction with persons with mental disabilities, 5150 commitments and crisis intervention.