**Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Mental Health Emergencies**

This Mental Health (MH) SOP is a **guidance document only** and should be used in conjunction with the mental health symptomatic management guidelines (SMGs) for Suicidal Self-Directed Violence and Behavior Changes/Unusual Behavior.

**This SOP is just an example.**

**A. Purpose**

Toidentify center-specific procedures to follow when the Center Mental Health Consultant (CMHC) is not available or during an after-hours mental health emergency (e.g., student expresses suicidal ideation, intent, plan; student makes suicidal gesture or attempt; or student is behaving in an unusual, dangerous, or threatening manner).

**B. Policy**

PRH 2.3, R2(k) requires that centers have a 24-hour emergency care system with a written referral plan or agreement for off-center medical, mental health, and inpatient care. Each center, with input from the CMHC, HWD, center administration, and contractor must create its own policy and process for staff to follow that complies with applicable federal and state laws in the event of a mental health emergency.

PRH 2.3, R4(d6) indicates that “Crisis intervention, as needed” is a part of all center Mental Health and Wellness Programs. In the event of a mental health emergency, the Center Mental Health Consultant (CMHC) or the Center Physician (CP) [or center medical provider] must conduct a mental health evaluation as soon as possible, and when necessary, refer the student for psychiatric care. *If the CP or CMHC is not available, the student must be referred immediately to the emergency room of the nearest medical facility.*If there is a life-threatening situation, 911 or the emergency response team should be called.

**C. Process**

**NEVER leave a student alone during a mental health emergency.**

* If there is a life-threatening emergency, call 911 or the emergency response team at (add phone number).
* If student is violent, agitated, or a threat to others, contact security and local law enforcement. *At all times, take steps to ensure safety - make sure others are around, make sure that staff can exit the room or area if needed, and if staff must keep distance always keep an eye on the student.*
* If the situation is not life threatening and student is cooperative, move the student to a private, comfortable space where the student’s symptoms and behaviors can be better assessed.
* **Follow the center’s SMGs for non-health staff for Suicidal Self-Directed Violence and Behavior Changes/Unusual Behavior, if indicated.**
* Immediately alert the Health and Wellness on-call staff of the situation [typically this will be the HWD or on-call RN].
* *The center may decide to alert additional people and this will vary by center and the CMHC should discuss this with the HWD and center management. Some options may include the Center Duty Officer, Security, Center Director, Student’s Career Counselor/Counseling Supervisor.*
* *If the CMHC’s contract indicates they are available 24/7 for mental health emergencies, the HWD/RN should alert the CMHC. If the CMHC is not available, the HWD should contact the CP (or center medical provider). If neither is available, the HWD should direct the center to transport the student to the ER or contact the local mental health mobile crisis unit (if available), per instructions below.*
* *If the center has access to a mental health mobile crisis assessment team, that team can assist with after-hours safety assessments. It is recommended that the center develop a collaborative relationship with the local mobile crisis team, if possible.*
* **If directed by Health and Wellness center (HWC) staff, or in cases of an emergency, the student should be transported to (name of hospital, address, phone)** for a safety assessment. It is recommended that the center develop a written Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the hospital(s), if possible.
  + NOTE: If a student is agitated or unable to be transported safely by staff, the center should call 911 or the emergency response team to assist with transportation. If a student is calm and cooperative, it may be deemed safe for staff to transport the student in a center vehicle.
* If a minor student is taken to the Emergency Room/hospital for assessment:
* The minor’s parent/guardian must be immediately notified [Identify who will be responsible for alerting the parent/guardian (e.g., RN/HWD, CMHC, Career Counselor, CD)].
* There is a legal requirement that a staff member remains with the student until a parent/guardian arrives or the staff member receives confirmation that the student is being admitted to the hospital.
* For adult students, while there is no legal requirement, it is recommended that a staff member remain with the student in order to provide support and ensure that the student is assessed.
* If, after an assessment, the student is admitted to the hospital, (add title (s)) should be alerted. [Individuals who might need alerting include HWD/RN, Counselor, CDO, CD.]
* If, after an assessment, the student is not admitted to the hospital, (add title(s)) must be contacted and provide permission for the student to return to center. It is recommended that the staff transporting the student request written hospital discharge/after care instructions, with the student’s permission. An adult student will need to sign an Authorization for Release of Information. If the student is a minor, please follow relevant state regulations.
* If the student returns to center, they will be monitored periodically and provided support by (add title(s)) until the student is able to meet with the HWC staff. [Identify how this process will work, which staff will provide support (e.g., residential staff, counselor, security), and ensure staff are trained and understand their role].

**Follow up:**

**Mental Health Emergencies Not Resulting in Hospitalization**

* The HWD/RN must inform the CMHC of any mental health emergencies occurring in their absence as soon as possible.
* The HWD/RN, CMHC or CP (whoever is first available) should meet with the student as soon as the HWC reopens.
* The CMHC or CP (or center medical provider) will review hospital discharge/after care instructions (if available), conduct an assessment and determine whether the student would benefit from leave or a MSWR. This will be discussed with the student (and guardian, if student is a minor) and the necessary leave and/or MSWR paperwork will be completed (see PRH [Chapter 6.2, R5](https://prh.jobcorps.gov/Administrative%20Support%20Services/6.2%20Enrollments%20Transfers%20and%20Separations/Pages/default.aspx), [Form 2-04 Individualized Assessment of Possible Direct Threat](https://prh.jobcorps.gov/Forms/Form%202-04%20Individualized%20Assessment%20of%20Possible%20Direct%20Threat.pdf), and [Form 2-05 Health Care Needs Assessment](https://prh.jobcorps.gov/Forms/Form%202-05%20Health%20Care%20Needs%20Assessment.pdf)). The CMHC should be involved with all mental health related leaves or MSWRs.

**Mental Health Emergencies Resulting in Hospitalization**

* The HWD should attempt to obtain the student’s hospitalization records, including the discharge summary, admission summary and recent notes indicating the student’s current symptoms, mental status, and treatment recommendations prior to the student being discharged from the hospital.
* The CMHC or CP should be consulted, review the hospitalization records, talk with the student, if possible, and provide a recommendation about whether the student is stable enough to return to center. The necessary leave and/or MSWR paperwork will be completed, if indicated.

**All Mental Health Emergencies**

* If the student remains on center, the CMHC will develop a treatment/care management plan with the student.
* If the student remains on center, the CMHC will meet with the student’s career counselor to develop a coordinated case management plan.
* The center designee [identify title here—typically this will be the HWD, CD, or CD designee] will enter the required Significant Incident Report (SIR) within 24 hours of the incident.
* It is recommended that the CMHC follow-up with staff and/or students who may have been impacted by the event to provide guidance and support.