

Courtesy, Conduct, Cellular, Telephone, Internet Usage Policy

Customer Service

All Department of Pathology personnel are expected to treat customers and fellow employees with dignity and respect. Customers include: patients, family members, visitors, external customers, fellow employees and supervisors/managers.

Department personnel are expected to treat others with respect, communicate positively, and project a professional image and attitude.

Examples of what will be considered rude or discourteous behavior include, but are not limited to:

- sarcastic tone
- raised voice
- remarks made with an angry tone
- discussing other patients in front of waiting patients
- ignoring customers while conducting personal phone calls or personal conversations with co-workers
- demeaning remarks
- inappropriate circumstances, as determined by the supervisor

Conduct

Department of Pathology personnel are required to conduct themselves in a professional and cooperative manner. Workplace violence will not be tolerated. Workplace violence is defined as an act of aggression, physical assault or threatening behavior that occurs in a work setting and causes physical or emotional harm to staff, patients or visitors. Workplace violence includes disruptive conduct and overt and covert behaviors ranging in aggressiveness from non-verbal harassment to murder.

Distractions and Errors

It is extremely important that all Department of Pathology personnel eliminate distractions, as much as possible, and enhance their focus in performing all laboratory tasks; thus ensuring the highest quality error free work possible.

Distraction is a common source of potential error that is well established within the fields of human factors research and cognitive psychology. High levels of distraction in healthcare settings pose a constant threat to patient safety. New technologies have increased the number and types of distractions present in these settings.

The definition of "distract" is "to draw or direct (as one's attention) to a different object or in different directions at the same time."

Anything that diverts attention away from the primary task is a source of distraction. Sources of distraction can be broadly attributed to individuals (e.g., clinicians, patients, family members) or to technology (e.g., medical equipment, computers, and communication devices). "Distracted doctoring" is a term recently coined in the media to describe the interruptions to workflow caused by the introduction of new technological devices in the clinical setting. This has been elevated to new levels of concern within the healthcare community and the general public due to the widespread implementation of computerized provider order entry (CPOE) systems and electronic medical records, along with the growing use of cell phones and smartphones. In fact, distractions from smartphones and other mobile devices have been identified for the first time as one of the **top 10 health technology hazards** for 2013 by ECRI Institute.

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Cellular Phone/Other Electronic Device Usage

The following Laboratory cell phone and military phone guidelines are in accordance with the Commander's Policy No. 28 – Use of Personal Cell Phones and Government Telephones in the Work Area

Cellular phones may be used as needed by following the below guidelines; use shall not be disruptive of others or interfere with the provision of laboratory testing.

Guidelines for use of cell phones within the laboratory testing, processing, blood drawing, and front desk areas are:

1. Personal cell phones or other electronic devices for personal phone calls, texting, or accessing of the internet for anything that is not work related is limited to those times when an employee is on break from their assigned tasks.
2. Personnel are required to keep personal cell phones in purses, lockers or out of sight in the laboratory bench testing areas.
3. Laboratory personnel **will not use** personal cell phones, ear pieces or headphones while conducting any laboratory testing functions (Pre-analytical, Analytical, or Post-analytical) or official duties unless it is needed to accomplish assigned job related tasks.
4. The cell phone ringer must be placed on silent at all times. Cell phone ringers and ring tone music should not be heard in any areas of the laboratory that has patients (i.e., Front Desk, Blood Drawing Area)
5. In case of family emergencies or illness, laboratory staff will notify their supervisor of the necessity to access a personal cell phone during duty hours and keep all calls as brief as possible. The supervisor will ask another laboratory member to assist in any patient testing, when possible, and go to a private area of the laboratory to answer the phone.
6. Laboratory personnel will not answer a personal cell phone in the presence of a patient, but will complete the immediate task involving the patient and then excuse themselves from the room or area.
7. Laboratory personnel will not hold personal phone conversations in front of customers or patients.
8. If a staff member has a spouse or family member deployed, they will inform their supervisor of an expected call in order for the supervisor to make coverage arrangements.
9. Personal cell phones will not be used to transmit patient health information (PHI).

Department of Defense (DOD) Military Phones

Guidelines for use of Department of Defense (DOD) military phones refer to:

1. All calls made using a DOD military phone are subject to monitoring.
2. All areas within the facility have government telephone numbers designated for employee use.
3. Telephone usage policy states that all government-owned or operated telephones, cell phones or wireless devices will be used to conduct official business.
4. Employees will limit personal telephone calls in frequency and duration to the greatest extent possible. This includes incoming as well as outgoing calls. Personal calls will not interfere with an employee's duties or the duties of others in the laboratory. Personal calls will not impact an employee's productivity.
5. Personal phone calls will be limited to the following:
 - a. Brief calls to notify or contact family members and/or physician in the case of an emergency.
 - b. Brief calls to notify family members of a scheduling change or travel delay.
 - c. Brief calls to the employee's residence or family member.
 - d. Brief calls to make alternative transportation or child care arrangements.
 - e. Brief calls to local businesses that can only be reached during duty hours (i.e., government agencies, physicians, auto or home repair).
 - f. Any other emergent situation.

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Internet Use

The Internet is a great resource tool, especially in laboratory medicine. Research of information for current or future processes provides valuable knowledge and potential cost savings. However, when misused, the internet is a serious distraction and can lead to errors (i.e., data entry errors, delayed turnaround times, etc.)

Internet misuse such as playing games, online gaming, shopping is prohibited while performing any laboratory task.

Access to the Internet is limited to official use only during normal duty hours. Use during "down times" excludes pornographic sites, hate sites, or sites not approved by this command or the Army. Use during "down times" will be kept to a minimum and the use of continuous access programs are prohibited.

Use of email and internet services constitutes consent to monitoring.

Inappropriate use of computers, email, or internet services may result in disciplinary action to include adverse administrative actions or judicial measures for the violating employee(s). Supervisors may revoke the authorized personal use or parts thereof for misuse of email or internet services for reasonable or just cause.

This Laboratory Internet usage guideline is in accordance with MEDDAC Reg 25-2 INFORMATION ASSURANCE SECURITY

References

Policy No. 24 – Performance Management and Good Customer Relations

Policy No. 9 – Code of Conduct (Prevention and Management of Disruptive Behavior

Policy No. 59 – Workplace Violence Prevention Program

Policy No. 28 – Use of Personal Cell Phones and Government Telephones in the Work Area

MEDDAC Reg 25-2 INFORMATION ASSURANCE SECURITY

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Initial Review

Reviewed by: (Printed Name)	Signature	Date
Jason D. Kendelhardt, LTC, MC Medical Director	Jason D. Kendelhardt LTC, MC Chief, Department of Pathology Blanchfield Army Community Hospital	25 May 16
Michael S. Allen MBA, MT QA Manager	Michael S. Allen	25 May 16
Michael L. Mandel, CPT, MS Lab Manager	Michael L. Mandel, JR. CPT, MS Assistant Laboratory Manager Blanchfield Army Community Hos	25 May 16

Change in Medical Director

Reviewed by: (Printed Name)	Signature	Date
Medical Director		

Annual Review

Review Signatures

This procedure has had annual review performed by:

Reviewed by:(Printed Name)	Signature	Date

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