

DEEP RIVER AND DISTRICT HEALTH

Policy: Code Silver – Person with a Weapon	
Original Date: 2019-03-01	Policy Manual: Emergency Preparedness
Approved by: <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Directors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chief Nursing Executive <input type="checkbox"/> Chief Financial Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Chief Human Resources Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Chief Executive Officer	

Policy

A Code Silver is a planned response to ensure the safety of all healthcare workers, patients, residents, and visitors at the organization when an individual is in possession of a weapon (something such as a club, knife, or gun) used to injure, defeat, or destroy and a police response is required.

Code Silver should be called if there is a threat, attempt, or active use of a weapon to cause harm, regardless of the type of weapon.

Code Silver will not result in other healthcare workers coming to assist, as it is designed to keep people away from harm. Police will be contacted as soon as Code Silver is called.

Procedure

Medical Emergency Codes (E.g.: Code Blue, Code White, etc.) will NOT be called for victims of the assailant until the incident site is secured by Police

Initiating a Code Silver

Any healthcare worker who encounters a person with a weapon or attempting to harm or injure themselves or others with a weapon should immediately press a panic alarm (if available) and/or at the first safe opportunity page a Code Silver by stating “Code Silver, location” three times overhead. If unable to announce the code, the healthcare worker should contact a coworker to do so.

It is the responsibility of the Four Seasons Lodge RPN on days or evenings, or night RPN on Medical to verify that:

- 9-1-1 has been contacted (by calling 9-1-1 and asking dispatch if they are aware of the Code Silver) and
- Admin-on-Call (if after hours) has been notified.
- If the assailant is in the Four Seasons Lodge, **the in charge Nurse** is responsible to contact 9-1-1 and Admin-on-Call (if after-hours).

The health care worker who speaks with police shall provide to the best of their knowledge:

- Location of the assailant(s) (current, last known, and/or direction headed)
- Type of weapon(s)
- Description of the assailant(s)
- Any comments or demands made by the assailant(s)

- Any other information you feel may be relevant
- Remain on the line, and follow any instructions (stay as quiet as possible)

When a Code Silver is initiated, all employees will make every reasonable effort to protect themselves, patients, visitors, and others in their immediate area, following the procedures set out in this policy.

Healthcare workers in the immediate area of the assailant(s):

DO NOT attempt to engage the assailant. This includes verbal and physical attempts to deescalate the situation.

- Remain calm and hide
 - Do not confront a person with a weapon
 - Do not attempt to remove wounded persons from the scene
 - If possible, redirect those trying to enter
 - If possible close doors to patient care areas and instruct patients that are able, to hide
 - Use rooms with doors that lock
 - Barricade the door with heavy furniture
 - Silence your cell phone and turn off any sources of noise (e.g. radios, televisions, etc.)
 - Hide behind large objects (e.g. cabinets, desks, walls, etc.)
 - Remain quiet and low to the ground
- Survive
 - Fight only as a last resort and only if your life is in imminent danger
 - If necessary, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the assailant by:
 - Acting as aggressively as possible against him/her
 - Throw items and improvising weapons
 - Yelling
 - If others are available, work together to distract and attack the assailant as fiercely as possible

Healthcare workers in the area NEAR the assailant(s):

- If you can leave safely, RUN (evacuate):
 - Remain calm and follow Police direction, if available
 - Quickly leave the area, evacuating as many patients and other people as possible
 - Redirect any people entering the area to evacuate
 - Move to a safe, pre-determined meeting point (Staff Parking Lot – at Helipad walkway or Parking spaces beside loading dock on East side of building)) to await police and Incident Commander.
 - Supervisors:
 - Once at the meeting point, perform a headcount to determine if your team is accounted for. Once Incident Commander arrives, provide census, as best able, to them.
 - Incident Commander:
 - Complete **Appendix A: Incident Commander Code Silver Log** once safe to do so

- If you cannot leave safely, HIDE:
 - Remain calm
 - Protect yourself and individuals in your area by quickly and quietly:
 - Closing doors, locking and barricading yourself and others inside (where possible)
 - Positioning people out of sight and behind large items that offer protection. (e.g. behind desks, cabinets, and away from windows)
 - Silencing personal alarms, mobile phones and other electronic devices (e.g. TVs, Radios, etc.)
 - Turning off monitors and screens (where possible) to reduce backlighting
 - Instructing others, who are capable of assisting, to do the same with other patient rooms (i.e. visitors may assist with the patient room they are visiting)
 - Do not use the telephone unless directly related to the Code Silver.
 - Hide in place until “Code Silver, All Clear” is announced overhead
 - If the assailant enters your work area, contact 911 if it is safe to do so

Upon Arrival of Police

- Law enforcement personnel are the primary responders and will assume control in any Code Silver response.
- Do not interfere with the Police Officers by delaying or impeding their movements: The Police are there to stop the threat as soon as possible. Officers will proceed directly to the area the assailant was last seen or heard. The first officers at the scene will not stop to assist injured individuals.
- Police Officers will be responding with the intent to use a required level of force to diffuse the situation. Ensure you do not present yourself as a threat to them:
 - Drop any items in your hands (e.g. bags, jackets, etc.)
 - Immediately raise hands and keep them visible at all times
 - Remain calm and follow Officers’ instructions; avoid screaming and/or yelling
 - Avoid making quick movements toward Officers
 - Do not attempt to grab hold of an Officer
 - Do not stop to ask Officers for help or direction when evacuating: Proceed in the direction from which Officers are entering the area
- Police Officers may:
 - Be wearing normal uniforms or tactical gear, helmets, etc.
 - Be armed with rifles, shotguns and/or handguns
 - Use chemical irritants or incapacitating devices (e.g. pepper spray, stun grenades, tasers, etc.) to control the situation
 - Shout commands and may push individuals to the ground for their safety

Rescue teams comprised of additional Officers and emergency medical personnel may follow the initial Officers when it is safe to do so. These rescue teams will treat and remove any injured persons. They may also call upon able-bodied individuals to assist in removing the wounded from the area.

Once you have reached a safe location you will likely be held in that area by Police until the situation is under control and all witnesses have been identified and questioned. Do not leave the safe location until Police have instructed you to do so.

Recovery

- Police will advise the Incident Commander (or designate) when it is safe to end the Code Silver.
- Once the Police have said it is safe to do so, the Incident Commander will announce “Code Silver, All Clear” overhead three times.
- The Incident Commander will work with the Police to identify any secure areas. If work is unable to resume in any areas, leadership shall assess needs and develop plans to divert care or transfer patients/residents to other facilities

- As soon as possible, the Executive Leadership Team and Management will conduct a debriefing with staff and include participation of any responding law enforcement (See Debriefing Worksheet for Emergency Codes on Policy Medical).
- As part of the recovery process, the physical and mental health needs of all workers and patients will be considered. Support will be provided, utilizing existing and additional identified programs (e.g. Employee and Family Assistance Program, individual and group counselling, and workers compensation, as necessary.)
- Employees should speak with their supervisor regarding any specific concerns, needs, or considerations.

Materials and Supplies

- **Appendix A:** Incident Commander Code Silver Log
- Debriefing Worksheet for Emergency Codes

Quality Assurance

- Evaluation:
 - The policy will be reviewed and updated at least annually
- Education:
 - Education will be provided to all staff regarding emergency code upon hire and as per the *Emergency Code Testing Policy* found on Policy Medical.

Reference Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CNO. (2017). Code Silver. [On-line]. Available: http://www.cno.org/en/learn-about-standards-guidelines/educational-tools/ask-practice/code-silver/ • OHA. CODE SILVER: Person with a Weapon. [On-line]. Available: https://www.oha.com/Documents/Code%20Silver%20Development%20Guidance.pdf • Eppich, W. & Cheng, A (2016). PEARLS Scripted Debriefing Tool – Quickstart Guide. [On-line]. Available: https://www.heart.org/-/media/files/professional/quality-improvement/get-with-the-guidelines/get-with-the-guidelines-resuscitation/pearls-hot-debriefing-form-examples-ucm_486571.pdf?la=en&hash=E343780D25C8A6046CAA36D726A34AA291773514
Acknowledgements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Review Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency Preparedness Committee – May 7, 2025 • Joint Health and Safety Committee –
Revision Approval Date	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 7, 2025

Version approved for printing by Chief Executive Officer

Signature

Date of printed approval:

Incident Commander Code Silver Log

Incident Commander is to remain in Command Centre for the duration of the Code Silver unless unsafe to do so or at instructions of Police.

Action	Completed (Y/N)
1. Incident Commander to set up Command Centre immediately. (CEO during office hours. Charge Nurse until arrival of Admin on Call/CEO after hours).	
2. Establish and set up Command Centre in Garage (by Staff Parking Lot) if deemed safe by police.	
3. Make contact with Police and identify yourself as the hospital Incident Commander.	
4. Assist Police as instructed.	
5. In consultation with Police, determine the need for a full facility lock down and initiate as needed.	
6. Place hospital on redirect and inform Critical.	
7. Contact Ministry to advise of situation. *	
8. Determine appropriate communication for internal and external inquires.	
9. Co-ordinate transportation, beds at other hospitals, and other resources as required.	
10. In consultation with Police and relevant stakeholders, determine when "All Clear" can be given.	
11. When safe announce, "Code Silver, All Clear" overhead three times.	
12. Coordinate Debriefing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate Code Silver debriefing session Facilitate a debriefing to determine effectiveness of Code Silver response and recommendations for improvement. This can include local responding Police services or if preferred, a separate debriefing involving local Police services should occur. Ensure recommendations from debriefing are forwarded to the appropriate entities within the organization. 	
13. Ensure Critical Stress Debriefing is set up with hospital's EAP Provider.	
14. Submit this Checklist to appropriate entity within the organization. (CEO/CNE)	

Incident Commander: _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

*** Inform MOHLTC Emergency Management Branch (EMB) by calling the Healthcare Providers Hotline at 1-866-212-2272**