

Policy and Procedure

Department: Emergency Preparedness	Section:	Subject: Code Yellow- Missing Person
Policy: 10426	Original Date: March 16, 2021	Supersedes: March 16, 2021
Last Reviewed: June 20, 2022	Next Review Date: March 16, 2023	Approver: Suzzanne Thompson

POLICY

Code Yellow is the term used to activate a response process when a patient/resident is reported missing. The purpose of this policy is to define the plan for searching and handling of a missing patient/resident.

Any person who becomes aware that a patient/resident is missing must advise the **ED Nurse (Incident Commander) at extension 911**. The name of the patient/resident and a description is to be provided at this time if possible.

PLEASE NOTE: THERE ARE SEPARATE SEARCH PROCESSES FOR DAYTIME HOURS (Mon-Fri 8:00-16:00), AND AFTER HOURS (16:00-08:00AM)/WEEKENDS/HOLIDAYS.

Daytime Hours: Two (2) staff members from each department will search their own area. After Hours/weekends/holidays: a designated search team will report to Incident Command to search the entire facility.

Please note

If you **see the patient leave the facility during business hours**, there is no need to perform an internal search. **IC will announce** "Your attention please, your attention please- Code Yellow (ED/Acute Care). No internal search required." IC will then:

- Notify OPP, providing as many details as possible
- Notify CNO, ext. 3003
- Notify Department Manager

Staff are **not** responsible for following a patient off hospital property.

If a coordinated emergency response by several agencies is required, please consult the Town of Espanola Emergency Response Plan.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This document is maintained by the Emergency Preparedness Manager and reviewed by the Emergency Preparedness Committee. Workers, Managers, and specific Departments have roles and/or responsibilities as outlined:

Workers

Knowing and carrying out the Code Yellow procedure for a missing patient/resident.
Knowing the location of patient/clients that are in your care.
Reviewing the Code Yellow process regularly to ensure competence

Managers

Ensuring all employees know their role and can respond competently to the Code Yellow procedure.

Reviewing the Code Yellow policy and procedure with new employees during orientation and/or staff meetings

Emergency Preparedness Committee

Developing, reviewing, and revising the Code Yellow process, as necessary.

Emergency Preparedness Manager.

Arranging and providing employees the opportunity for an annual review of the Code Yellow procedure.

Coordinating mock exercises to evaluate knowledge of the procedure.

Providing Managers and staff with feedback on performance during mock exercises.

PROCEDURE-Daytime Hours Mon-Fri, 0800-1600

1. Dial internal 911 to notify ED Nurse of the missing patient/resident and provide a description.
2. The ED Nurse will take charge of Incident Command and announce:

"Your Attention Please, Your Attention Please: Code Yellow _____ (here you will announce the Department of missing person twice).

Announce the physical description of missing person (sex, age, weight, height, hair color, clothing etc.)

Announce: "Please commence departmental searches. Once complete, report to Incident Command in Emergency Department"

The Code Yellow will continue to be announced every 30 minutes twice and then hourly until 9pm on the day of the code until the individual is located.

3. Two (2) staff members from each department will obtain their department's Code Yellow Binder and proceed to search the department using the map. Once the search is complete, the map will be brought to Incident Command in the Emergency Department. Maintenance staff is designated to search parking lots as part of their departmental search map.

4. IC to call FHT general reception ext. 4224. FHT staff will announce code and commence FHT search.
5. Incident Commander will call OPP to report missing person, giving as much information as possible.
 - Incident Commander will provide the police with:
 - ??Name of Missing Person
 - ??Time person was last seen
 - ??Description as to height, weight, clothes worn
 - ??Home Address and Address of Next of Kin
 - ??Photo if available
6. The Department Manager will be notified by the Incident Command RN that a Code Yellow has been called. The Department Manager will notify the Chief Executive Officer or Chief Nursing Officer and keep them informed of the search outcome.
7. If the missing person is not found after an internal and external search, the Code Yellow search will be repeated at 30 minutes and 1 hour.
8. Further direction will be taken from the police.
9. When the missing person is located, "Code Yellow All Clear, Code Yellow All Clear" will be announced by the Incident Commander. All parties are to be notified, which may include police, CEO, CNO, physician, family.
10. Ensure the patient/resident is assessed and provided with reassurance.
11. The person who noticed the missing person/resident will complete a Critical Incident form in Surge. The Incident Commander will complete the Code Yellow Incident Command Spreadsheet. The Code Yellow checklist and completed search maps are to be given to the Emergency Preparedness Manager.
12. If LTC resident: DOC or ADOC to complete Critical Incident report. Refer to Critical Incident Policy.
13. The Incident Commander and other involved parties will participate in a debrief meeting led by the Emergency Preparedness Manager within 1 day of the incident.

PROCEDURE-After-hours (1600-0800), Weekends, Holidays

1. If you become aware that a patient or resident is missing, dial internal 911 to notify ED Nurse and provide a description.

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2. The ED Nurse will take charge of Incident Command and announce:

"Your Attention Please, Your Attention Please: Code Yellow _____ (here you will announce the Department of missing person twice).

If available, announce the physical description of missing person (sex, age, weight, height, hair color, clothing etc.)

Announce: "Search Party Staff please report to Incident Command in the Emergency Department."

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3. Departments that are staffed 24/7 will complete a departmental search prior to reporting to IC (e.g., LTC North and South, ED, Acute, and QWP until 11:00pm).

Designated search party includes

- 1 Acute Care RN
- 1 RPN North Wing
- 1 HCA South Wing
- 1 EVS (AB, NEH, or L)

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4. Incident Commander will call OPP to report missing person, giving as much detail as possible.

Incident Commander will provide the police with:

- ??Name of Missing Person
- ??Time person was last seen
- ??Description as to height, weight, clothes worn
- ??Home Address and Address of Next of Kin
- ??Photo if available

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5. Once the search party presents to IC, the Incident Commander will coordinate the remainder of the internal search. The search party will go in two teams of two, using the search packages/maps. The area from which the patient went missing does not need to be searched again.
6. Further direction will be taken from the Police.
7. When the missing person is located, "Code Yellow All Clear, Code Yellow All Clear" will be announced by the Incident Commander. All parties are to be notified, which may include police, CEO, CNO, physician, family.
8. Ensure the patient/resident is assessed and provided with reassurance.
9. The person who noticed the missing person/resident will complete a Critical Incident form in Surge. The Incident Commander will complete the Code Yellow Incident Command checklist.

The Code Yellow checklist and completed search maps are to be given to the Emergency Preparedness Manager.

10. If LTC resident: RPN to complete Critical Incident report. Refer to Critical Incident Policy.
11. The Incident Commander and other involved parties will participate in a debrief meeting led by the Emergency Preparedness Manager within 1 day of the incident.

Recovery Plan: a debrief will occur for staff, residents, patients, volunteers, students as required using EAP, Social work department or delegate. An action plan to resume operations, evaluate current process, and identify improvement opportunities will be created.

References

Emergency management and Civil Protection Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. E.O. Ontario.ca. (2022, April 21). Retrieved June 14, 2022, from <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e09>

Ontario Hospital Association. (2008). Emergency Management Toolkit. [Emergency Management Toolkit.pdf \(oha.com\)](#)