

**HACKETTSTOWN REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER**  
**Administrative Policy & Procedure**

Personal Belongings/Valuables Of Patient

<b>Effective Date:</b>	<b>May 1996</b>	<b>Policy No:</b>	<b>PC16</b>
<b>Cross Referenced:</b>		<b>Origin:</b>	<b>Patient Care Services</b>
<b>Reviewed Date:</b>		<b>Authority:</b>	<b>Chief Financial Officer</b>
<b>Revised Date:</b>	<b>1/13</b>	<b>Page:</b>	<b>1 of 2</b>

**POLICY:**

To provide a system to safeguard personal belongings/valuables during the patient's hospital stay.

**PROCEDURE:**

Hackettstown Regional Medical Center has no responsibility, nor assumes such responsibility for loss or damage to any patient's personal belongings and/or valuables.

In order to safeguard these personal belongings/valuables during the patient's hospital stay, the following guidelines are established:

1. Patient's shall be categorized into one of two groups:
  - a. Conscious and oriented with use of their faculties to understand and take responsibility for their own belongings/valuables, OR
  - b. Unconscious or disoriented and/or do not have the faculties to care for their own belongings/valuables.
2. If the patient is conscious and oriented, it shall be strongly recommended that all personal belongings/valuables (i.e., cash over \$5.00, credit cards, jewelry, luggage, clothing, electrical appliances, etc.) be sent home with family member(s) OR placed in the hospital safe. Those items which the patient insists are needed during the hospital stay may be kept on the patient care unit to which they are admitted.
3. If the patient is unconscious or disoriented, valuables must be inventoried by two staff persons and taken to the hospital safe.
4. Self-help items, such as dentures, eyeglasses and hearing aids will be kept with each patient.
5. Personally owned electrical appliances should be sent home. If patient wishes to keep them, i.e., hand razors, shavers, radios, etc. they should be checked by the Maintenance staff prior to use.
6. Patients shall be encouraged to check for all belongings/valuables prior to leaving the hospital. If an item is left behind, an attempt shall be made to contact the patient and/or family by the Department of Environmental Services. Environmental Services shall be responsible for storage of these items, and their disposal after the established time frames for retention have been exceeded.

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Disposal of Items

- a. Items such as soiled clothing, bedding, personal pillows, etc., will be disposed of after seven days for sanitary reasons. Extensively soiled items may be discarded earlier if necessary.
  - b. Clean clothing, coats, dressing gowns will be kept for thirty (30) days.
  - c. Items such as jewelry, watches, dentures, etc., will be held for ninety (90) days.
7. Lost or damaged items will be reported to the Environmental Services Department and an incident report shall be filed with Risk Management.
  8. Self-help items shall be considered for reimbursement after report is received and investigated by Risk Management. If the investigation reveals that Hackettstown Regional Medical Center could have any responsibility, the Risk Management Department will notify the appropriate parties.

**Alleged Stolen Items**

1. Notify Security if a patient reports valuables stolen.
2. Security will notify the local police, when appropriate, and provide a copy of their report to Risk Management.
3. Submit an incident report to Risk Management.

Please refer to your department manual for procedures that support this policy.