

**GENERAL ORDER**

07/27/94

**PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF ADULTS**

This order outlines policies and procedures for dealing with psychologically distressed adults, including abatement, detainment, and arrest. It includes procedures for admission to facilities, medical treatment, weapons confiscation, and preparation of incident reports.

**I. GUIDELINES**

A. **CRITERIA FOR INVOLUNTARY DETENTIONS.** Officers may detain an individual for psychiatric evaluation pursuant to Section 5150 of the Welfare and Institutions Code only when the officer believes that, as a result of mental illness, an individual is:

1. A danger to himself/herself, or
2. A danger to others, or
3. Gravely disabled, meaning the individual is unable to care for himself/herself and has no reliable source of food, shelter or clothing.

**II. POLICY**

A. **It is the policy of the San Francisco Police Department that in incidents involving psychologically distressed adults, officers shall:**

1. **ABATE.** If the individual has not committed a crime and is not, as a result of a mental disorder, a danger to himself/herself, a danger to others, or gravely disabled, abate the incident and recommend that the individual contact a mental health professional.
2. **DETAIN.** If an individual has not committed a crime but is, as a result of a mental disorder, a danger to himself/herself, a danger to others, or gravely disabled, detain the individual for psychiatric evaluation and treatment.

3. **ARREST.** If an individual has committed a crime, arrest the individual and book or cite according to Department policies and procedures. Cited individuals who are, as a result of mental disorder, a danger to themselves, a danger to others, or are gravely disabled shall also be detained for psychiatric evaluation.

**B. ASSISTANCE TO OUTSIDE AGENCIES**

1. **STAFF MEMBER IS PRESENT.** It is the intention of the Department that police assistance to clinicians will be restricted to cases where the person to be detained for psychiatric evaluation (5150 W & I) is currently violent and presenting a public safety risk.
2. **STAFF MEMBER IS NOT PRESENT.** When an emergency evaluation is requested by a clinician who is not at the scene, the officer shall make his/her own independent evaluation and take appropriate action consistent with that evaluation.
3. **APPLICATION FOR EVALUATION.** Except in an emergency situation as determined by the officer, a clinician must prepare the "Application for 72-Hour Detention for Evaluation and Treatment" and make arrangements with Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) prior to requesting assistance.
4. **STAFF IDENTIFICATION.** Clinicians who are certified to initiate involuntary detentions must carry an identification card issued by the County Director of Mental Health. If the clinician cannot show his/her card, the decision to detain will be the responsibility of the officer at the scene.
5. **TRANSPORTATION.** If all criteria are met for a psychiatric detention, take the person and the clinician's paperwork to PES at SFGH only. If the person is currently not demonstrating a public safety risk, do not transport. Advise the clinician to consult with his/her supervisor regarding appropriate transportation.

### III. PROCEDURES

- A. ABATEMENT. When abating a situation involving a mentally disturbed individual, follow these procedures:
1. INCIDENT REPORT. If the individual needs psychiatric evaluation but does not meet 5150 W & I criteria, prepare an incident report entitled "Aided Case/Request Evaluation" and list the individual as "D" (detained).
  2. COPIES. Forward a copy of the report to the Psychiatric Liaison Unit which will be responsible for appropriate follow up.
- B. DETENTION. When detaining an individual for psychiatric evaluation and treatment, follow these procedures:
1. TRANSPORTATION. Take the individual to Psychiatric Emergency Services (SFGH) only and complete an "Application for 72-Hour Detention for Evaluation and Treatment."
  2. REPORT. Prepare an incident report and title it "Aided Case/5150 W & I." List the individual as "D" (detained).
    - a. DESCRIPTION. Include a detailed physical description of the individual and an accurate residence address. Also include his/her date of birth, SF number, driver license number, Social Security number, any other identification numbers.
    - b. FIREARMS/WEAPONS. List any confiscated firearms or deadly weapons in the incident report.
    - c. PROPERTY. Describe how the person's property was safeguarded or placed in police custody.
    - d. CRITERIA. Describe the circumstances that formed the reasonable and probable cause to believe that one or more of the criteria listed under Section I., A. above were present.

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C. **ARRESTS.** After arresting a mentally disturbed individual for a criminal offense, cite or book according to Department policy (see DGO 5.06, Citation Release). Also follow these procedures:

1. **CITATION.** If an individual is eligible for citation release, but as a result of a mental disorder is a danger to himself/herself, a danger to others, or is gravely disabled, cite the individual and take him/her to PES at SFGH. Indicate on the "Application for 72-Hour Detention for Evaluation and Treatment" that the person has been cited for an offense.
2. **BOOKING.** If an individual cannot be cited pursuant to Department policy, book him/her and request on the booking form that the Jail Psychiatric Services evaluate the individual in the jail.
3. **INCIDENT REPORT.** In either of the above cases, prepare an incident report and forward a copy to the Psychiatric Liaison Unit. Title the report by the offense and indicate that you have either cited and detained the individual for psychiatric evaluation or booked the individual and made a referral to Jail Psychiatric Services.

Example: Battery/Fists/Cited & 5150'd  
Robbery/Gun/Referral Made to Jail Psychiatric Services

D. **FACILITIES.** Currently, adults are evaluated at Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) at SFGH. Due to policy and budget considerations, facilities may change along with the hours of operation. Any changes will be announced in Department Bulletins.

E. **VOLUNTARY ADMISSIONS.** There is no such thing as a "voluntary 5150." The fact that an individual is willing to accompany you to a psychiatric facility does not make the evaluation voluntary. If you believe that psychiatric evaluation is necessary, complete an "Application for 72-Hour Detention for Evaluation and Treatment" even though the individual willingly accompanies you to PES.

- F. COORDINATING PSYCHIATRIC DETENTION WITH EMERGENCY MEDICAL TREATMENT.** If an individual is injured or ill, you must have him/her medically treated before requesting a psychiatric evaluation. The following procedures apply when an individual is not under arrest:
1. **SAN FRANCISCO GENERAL HOSPITAL.** If the individual is being treated at San Francisco General Hospital, Emergency Department, go to the Psychiatric Emergency Services (PES) and complete the "Application for 72-Hour Detention for Evaluation and Treatment." Leave the original at PES and take a copy to the emergency room attending physician. Your responsibility ends here. Any security services will be provided by SFGH Institutional Police.
  2. **OTHER MEDICAL FACILITIES.** When an individual is being treated at any other hospital emergency room, complete the "Application for 72-Hour Detention for Evaluation and Treatment" and present it to the attending physician. The physician is responsible for arranging for transportation of the patient to PES at San Francisco General Hospital. Any security required will be provided by the hospital's security staff. Your responsibility ends here.
  3. **INCIDENT REPORT/EVALUATION FORM.** In either of the cases above, prepare an incident report, title it "Aided Case/5150 Detention," and attach a copy of the "Application for 72-Hour Detention for Evaluation and Treatment" to it. List the individual as "D" detained and include the circumstances of the incident, the name of the medical facility, and the attending physician.
- G. JUVENILES.** See DGO 7.02, Psychological Evaluation of Juveniles.

**H. FIREARMS AND DEADLY WEAPONS.** Welfare and Institutions Code Section 8102 requires law enforcement officers to seize firearms and other deadly weapons from individuals detained or apprehended for examination of a mental condition pursuant to Section 5150 W&I. When seizing a firearm or deadly weapon, advise the individual to contact the SFPD Legal Division concerning its return. Also fax a copy of your incident report to the Department's Legal Division.

**1. MENTAL HEALTH FIREARMS PROHIBITION SYSTEM.** The Department of Justice, Bureau of Criminal Identification and Information, has developed a data base for the Mental Health Firearms Prohibition System (MHFPS). If you are conducting a criminal investigation that involves the acquisition, carrying or possession of a firearm, the CLETS data base will include a message that the person you are investigating may be subject to a mental health firearms prohibition pursuant to Sections 8100/8103 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. This message is provided in addition to the person's name, personal description, available identifying numbers, such as driver's license, Social Security, California Identification, Military Identification, or other miscellaneous identification numbers. You can use any CABLE terminal that has CLETS inquiry capability to access this data base using one of two ways:

**a. Using RF/**

- RF/CJIS/FQA Name inquiry
- RF/CJIS/FQN Number inquiry
- RF/CJIS/FQP Record number inquiry

**b. Using the HELP system**

You can access the three inquiries listed above using the HELP system by first selecting the Firearms category (E), then the MHFPS category (E7), finally entering the respective category for name inquiry (E7A), number inquiry (E7B), or record number inquiry (E7C).

If you need the reason a person has been prohibited from owning firearms, contact the DOJ Firearms Clearance Section.

- I. PROPERTY. When detaining an individual per 5150 W & I, take reasonable precautions to secure his/her premises and private property. Document this in your incident report. Any personal property that cannot be properly secured must be booked as Property for Safekeeping (see DGO 6.15, Property Processing).
  - J. MEDICATION. Any medication seized goes with the individual either to jail or the hospital.
  - K. QUESTIONS. For consultation or information, call officers at the SFPD Psychiatric Liaison Unit (PLU) at 206-8099 (Monday - Friday 0900-1700 hrs.). During non-business hours, contact the PLU through the Operations Center.
  - L. TARASOFF INCIDENTS. See DGO 6.21, Tarasoff Incidents.
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### References

DGO 7.02, Psychological Evaluation of Juveniles  
DGO 3.23, Department Weapon Return Panel  
5150 W & I Code  
8102 W & I Code