



SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH SYSTEM

DATE: 7/20/12

POLICY NO. 2012-197
PROGRAMS: Edison and Mobile Clinics
SUBJECT: Clinic Emergency Closure Events
AUTHORITY: Medical Director and Clinic Services Manager
SUPERSEDES: New Policy

PURPOSE:

Unforeseen events may result in the temporary and unexpected closure of a clinic, to ensure the safety of patients and staff. This policy ensures the appropriate disposition of staff work assignments.

BACKGROUND:

Edison Clinic is a Public Health Clinic in San Mateo County funded by Ryan White and third party payer sources. Eligibility criteria for receiving Ryan White funded HIV services at Edison Clinic are: 1) HIV-positive, 2) resident of San Mateo County, 3) uninsured or under-insured and 4) income less than 400% Federal Poverty Level. Clients who do not meet all four of the above criteria may receive medical and psychiatric services only if they have another third-party payer source (i.e. Medi-Cal authorized for San Mateo County, Medicare, private insurance that is accepted through SMMC) from which Edison Clinic can receive reimbursement for the services provided to the client.

There are two distinct paths from which clients may have Medi-Cal: 1) a client may have applied through a county Medi-Cal process (County Medi-Cal) or 2) a client may have Medi-Cal due to being approved for Supplemental Security Income (SSI-linked Medi-Cal). Medi-Cal insurance plans authorized for another county will not cover any services provided within the Edison Clinic or anywhere else in the San Mateo Medical Center.

Since all Edison Clinic medical providers are contracted with the Health Plan of San Mateo, a Medical Exemption Request cannot be filed by the patient to continue to receive medical services.

POLICY:

A standard process is followed by the clinics to ensure that patients and staff experience a safe environment and staff have clear guidelines regarding their work status when there is an interruption of service because of a building-wide event, such as a hazardous materials spill or power outage, which may result in delays in opening a clinic or unexpected early closure.

PROCEDURE:

- I. When an unexpected event occurs which compromises the ability of the clinic to continue operations, the first action will be to evacuate all patients from the building to the parking lots in compliance with the emergency exit plan. Patients will be assisted by staff as required. Patients will be told that they can either wait in the parking lot until the expected duration of the event is known or they can leave and reschedule the appointment. Designated staff will wait with patients outside until they either leave or return to the clinic.
- II. The Clinic Manager, Patient Services Assistant, or Charge Nurse (in that order, as available) will contact the appropriate utilities or other service provider or SMMC Facilities Operations to inquire about the nature of the event and estimated time of operations restoration.
- III. If the anticipated duration of the events exceeds one hour, remaining patient appointments will be cancelled by phone, and the waiting patients will be instructed to leave the clinic.
- IV. Also, if the anticipated duration of the outage exceeds one hour, the clinic will be closed and staff will be given the following options:
 - a. If it is safe to remain in their work area and they have done adequate work assignments that can be safely performed, their supervisor may grant permission for them to return in the clinic during all or part of the outage.
 - b. If staff cannot continue working in the building, they may either be reassigned by the Clinics Manager to other locations within Public Health Clinics or instructed to leave work for the day. The Clinics Manager will coordinate with supervisory staff at other Public Health clinics concerning the need to reassign staff due to clinic closure and determine available assignments.
 - c. If staff are instructed to leave work for the day, and there are sufficient days remaining in the work week, staff may choose to "flex" some or all of the hours lost during the event by working additional hours on the remaining day(s).
 - d. If staff cannot work in their building but are reassigned by the Clinics Manager to other locations, and choose not to be redeployed, they may opt to leave work for the day, using the appropriate and available leave time. The following pay codes, if available for the employee, may be used for this time: 041 (Vacation with pay), 048 (Accum holiday hrs taken), 052 (*Comp/Admin Hrs used), 090 (VTO), or, if no leave is available and it is requested, 061 (leave without pay) can be used.
 - e. Staff must inform their supervisors at the time of the clinic closure of their intention to utilize any of these options.
 - f. Staff may not use 001 (regular hours) for time they are not working and may not use 035 (sick leave) except as appropriate.

Approved: 7/12/12