

CORRECTIONAL MANAGED HEALTH CARE POLICY MANUAL	Effective Date: 12/12/2016	NUMBER: G-53.3  Page 1 of 2
	Replaces: 5/20/2016	
	Formulated: 3/86 Reviewed: 12/16	

## MANAGEMENT OF OFFENDER HUNGER STRIKES

**PURPOSE:** To provide guidelines for the management of offenders on a hunger strike.

**POLICY:** All offenders of TDCJ on a hunger-strike are to be evaluated and monitored daily to ensure they present no imminent risk of danger to themselves.

**PROCEDURE:**

- I. **Definition of Hunger Strike**  
When an offender declares a hunger strike or when security refers an offender who appears to not be eating, medical staff will be notified within the first day. The offender's medical record will be reviewed for medical conditions that would require immediate monitoring. Otherwise, medical monitoring will begin following 72 hours without food. If an offender is observed eating, the 72 hours time period will begin over.
  
- II. **Evaluation and Documentation**  
Following the first 72 hours of a declared or suspected hunger strike or sooner if medical monitoring has been determined to be medically necessary, a licensed health care professional will communicate with the offender daily. Nutritional status, weight and physical condition will be assessed daily. The results of these daily encounters are to be documented in the health record.
  
- III. **Force Feeding / Refeeding**  
If the offender is determined to lack medical decision-making capacity and based on a medical evaluation by a facility provider the offender is at risk of serious harm, the offender may be force-fed in the TDCJ regional infirmaries or psychiatric inpatient facilities as per CMHC Policy I-71.1 "Offender's Right to Refuse Treatment/Department's Right to Compel Treatment". The decision to force feed must be supported by documentation in the health record and concurred with by a Senior or Regional Medical Director and a psychiatrist.  
  
When force-feeding or refeeding is initiated, a dietary consult must be obtained from the UTMB Statewide Dietician.
  
- IV. **The TDCJ Mental Health Services Liaison (MHSL) must be notified if the hunger strike lasts beyond 14 calendar days. MHSL will begin weekly chart reviews of the offender's condition and may request additional clinical updates from unit health care staff periodically. If an offender is ever hospitalized due to a hunger strike, MHSL must be notified immediately.**
  
- V. **In the event there is more than one offender on a hunger-strike, the offenders can be separated. Sensationalism of the hunger strike should be avoided.**

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Reference: ACA 4-4224 Threats to Security (MANDATORY)