

Office of the Director
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Temporary Use of Southern Youth Correctional Center, Norwalk, for COVID-19 Surge Capacity – FAQ

1. What will this facility be used for?
Answer: The facility will be used to house up to 98 patients from the Department of State Hospitals. The patients may come from nearby Metropolitan State Hospital or other state hospitals. Housing these patients at this facility will provide more bed space at a state hospital for patients who test positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed to the virus.

2. What types of patients will live at this facility?
Answer: The facility will treat patients with the same commitment types who are currently admitted to Metropolitan State Hospital. They include individuals forensically committed as Incompetent to Stand Trial (Penal Code 1370); Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity (Penal Code 1026); Offenders with a Mental Health Disorder (Penal Code 2962/2972); and individuals who have been conserved by the courts under the Lanterman-Petris Short Act.

3. How will you decide which patients are placed there?
Answer: This facility would be used if more bed space is needed at a state hospital to respond to a COVID-19 outbreak. The priority would be to transfer patients who have not tested positive for COVID-19 to this facility. By housing patients from one of the state hospitals at this facility, it will provide more bed space at a state hospital for patients who test positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed to the virus.

4. What kind of security will this facility have?
Answer: The facility perimeter will be secured like a state hospital campus:
 - State Hospital Police will be present 24/7.
 - The entire campus is secured with correctional security fencing with razor wire and ongoing perimeter inspections have already begun.
 - All persons entering through the main entrance will be screened for COVID-19, required to provide identification and required to provide their reason for visiting the campus.
 - The patient care areas are locked secured wards that have individual rooms.

5. Who will be in charge of this facility?

Answer: The operations and the facility will be managed by nearby Metropolitan State Hospital, which has been part of the Norwalk community since 1916. Historically, Metropolitan operated one of the units at the facility when it was previously open. Metropolitan will assign a Program Management structure on site at the facility in exactly the same way as programs are managed on the state hospital campus. Metropolitan will also provide services from its hospital to this campus, such as food service, pharmacy and laundry.

6. What treatment will be provided to patients there?

Answer: To the extent possible, patients will receive the same treatment that is provided at a state hospital. There will be complete nursing and clinical teams assigned in the same ratios and with the same duties and responsibilities as they have at the hospital. This will include all of the necessary psychiatric, psychological, medical, rehabilitative, and nursing treatment.

7. Why was this facility picked?

Answer: The facility is conveniently located near Metropolitan State Hospital and features two 50-bed units, plus a separate building for treatment and office space. The facility's closeness to Metropolitan allows the hospital to provide all of the necessary staffing, security, facility and other support necessary. In addition, the facility was also selected because of the level of security that the patient treatment areas provide.

8. Will visitors be allowed to see patients there?

Answer: Visitors will not be allowed at this facility. In response to COVID-19, visiting at all state hospitals is currently offered only via web-based video services. Information on video visiting at this facility and state hospitals can be found on the DSH website:

https://www.dsh.ca.gov/Metropolitan/Visitor_Information.html

9. Will the use of this facility affect traffic or increase noise in the area?

Answer: The facility is not expected to have a significant impact on traffic or noise in the area.

10. If I have any concerns about this facility, who can I contact?

Answer: Questions or concerns should be directed to the DSH Metropolitan Public Information Officer Claudine Hanna, claudine.hanna@dsh.ca.gov.