

RESPONDING TO MEDICAL EPISODES



NON-CONTAMINATED AREA

- Recognize that the area of the incident may be classified as a crime scene by local authorities (homicide, suicide, drug overdose, but not likely in response to a first aid related episode). Refrain from touching or disturbing the scene as much as practicable.
- Be equipped with latex gloves and surgical mask prior to entering the area.
- Visually assess if the area is safe from illicit drug use or a clandestine drug lab. If unsafe, back out of the room and dial 911.
- If the area is safe to enter, triage the victim, notify 911 and continue rendering first aid.
- Assist EMTs, police or fire as directed.
- Alert the hotel's ownership, management company, insurance, and brand, if the latter is applicable:
 - Develop a code system that employees will be familiar with for brevity, confidentiality, and to lessen hysteria from those persons who do not need to know what is occurring.
- Consider escalating to public affairs or corporate communications:
 - Refer media inquiries to the investigating authority;
 - In a death situation, the investigating authority should notify the next of kin, not the hotel;
 - Be prepared to provide accommodations to the next of kin.
- Hotel leadership to address minor concerns and actions with employees and inquiring guests.

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- Perform a door lock interrogation and retain findings with the incident report:
 - When dealing with a connecting guest room, conduct a door lock interrogation of the connecting room's main entry door(s).
- Cooperate and work with local law enforcement and inventory the victim's personal property. If law enforcement is not involved in the inventory process, two members of hotel leadership will perform a written inventory and bag or box the belongings:
 - If the decedent is an employee, inventory their locker, office, or work area.
- If law enforcement does not take possession of the personal effects, the hotel will secure the property and release it to the next of kin in accordance with the state's guidelines.
- Open the in-room safe along with a witness and secure the contents in a safe that is managed by the hotel.
- Did the guest have a safety deposit box? If so, the next of kin will be required to provide power of attorney for the hotel to access that safe.
- Did the victim have a vehicle in the parking lot or garage? If dealing with a rental vehicle, notify the rental agency.
- Attach guest folio to the incident report.
- Memorialize all CCTV images from the guest's check-in until law enforcement releases the area. Maintain the images with the incident report.
- Obtain written statements from all potential witnesses, including employees, and keep them with the incident report.
- In high profile situations, such as an athlete, politician, or celebrity, consider the complete destruction of the guest room soft and case goods through incineration, including the physical guest room number. This will deter thrill seekers from claiming that they took memorabilia from the victim's guest room.

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- Consider grief counseling for those employees who were impacted by the circumstances, directly or indirectly. In some situations, consider extending grief counseling to those guests who were directly affected by these events.

SUSPECTED CONTAMINATED AREAS

- Follow the steps for a non-contaminated area, and after law enforcement releases the area back to the hotel,
 - A licensed and insured bio-hazard team may be required to clean the area, particularly where there is significant bodily fluid. This step is not to be delegated to a hotel employee.
 - When illicit drugs or a drug lab is involved, the bio-hazard team in charge must be credentialed in OSHA's HazWoper (Occupational Safety & Health Administration - Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response) 40-hour training. Depending on the toxicity of the area, understand that the local Board of Health may not release the area for a period of time. Areas around the suspect location may also be quarantined for an extended time.
 - Impacted guest rooms must be taken out of inventory until authorities release them back to the hotel.
 - Illicit labs have been known to create costly conditions for the hotel. Depending on the level of toxicity, the bio-hazard team may be required to properly dispose of all case and soft goods, including removing the drywall.
 - Check with the hotel's insurance carrier to determine if the property can be reimbursed due to the remediation and replacement of the contents.