

CORRECTIONAL MANAGED HEALTH CARE POLICY MANUAL	Effective Date: 9/8/2022	NUMBER: G-53.3 Page 1 of 2
	Replaces: 12/12/2016	
	Formulated: 3/86 Reviewed: 07/2022	
MANAGEMENT OF INMATE HUNGER STRIKES		

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

POLICY: All inmates 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 inmate declares a hunger strike or when security refers an inmate who appears to not be eating, medical staff will be notified within the first day. The inmate’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 inmate 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 inmate 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 inmate is determined to lack medical decision-making capacity and based on a medical evaluation by a facility provider the inmate is at risk of serious harm, the inmate may be force-fed in the TDCJ regional infirmaries or psychiatric inpatient facilities as per CMHC Policy I-71.1 “Inmate’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 three calendar days or when multiple inmates declare a hunger strike at the same time. MHSL will begin weekly chart reviews of the inmate’s condition and may request additional clinical updates from unit health care staff periodically. If an inmate is ever hospitalized due to a hunger strike, MHSL must be notified immediately.**

- V. **In the event there is more than one inmate on a hunger-strike, the inmates can be separated. Sensationalism of the hunger strike should be avoided.**

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