



**SOP# 224**

**Ride Along Policy**

**Effective: January 15, 2016**

**Updated: January 15, 2016**

**Reviewed: February 1, 2020**

**Approved By:**

**Michael Johnson  
Regional Director**

## **Contra Costa County Operations**

*Patient Focused - Customer Centered - Caregiver Inspired*

### **A. SCOPE**

All AMR colleagues. For purposes of this policy, all references to “colleague” or “colleagues” include temporary, part-time and full-time employees, independent contractors, clinicians, officers and directors.

### **B. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to outline which individuals may ride in an AMR vehicle (ambulance or Supervisor vehicle) to ensure compliance with the AMR policies pertaining to the HIPAA Privacy Rule.

### **C. POLICY**

All AMR employees must adhere to the HIPAA Privacy Rule as it relates to permitted uses and/or disclosures of protected health information (PHI) of the patients we treat and/or transport. This policy was created to comply with our policies pertaining to the HIPAA Privacy Rule. Therefore, this policy prohibits anyone from riding in an AMR ambulance, Supervisor’s vehicle or any other company owned vehicle where the possibility of disclosing a patient’s PHI exists without the patient’s prior written authorization. This includes, but is not limited to, the following groups:

- Any member of the print or broadcast media;
- Explorer Scouts or any other volunteer group that is not directly involved in the treatment of the patient;
- AMR family members (unless as a family member of a patient);
- The general public;
- Any other person who is not directly involved in the treatment of the patient or the healthcare operations of AMR.

### **D. EXCEPTIONS**

The Ethics & Compliance Department has determined the following exceptions to the Ride Along Policy apply. This is an all-inclusive list. Any agency/individual who is not specifically listed below as an exception to this policy must receive prior written approval from the AMR Privacy Officer or Chief Compliance Officer prior to being allowed to ride. In addition, any person or agency permitted to ride in an AMR ambulance or other company owned vehicle must fully comply with the requirements set forth in all applicable Safety Risk or Clinical Education Services Policies.

- AMR employees with a legitimate business reason to ride. This includes both clinical and non-clinical employees;

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- EMT and Paramedic students who are currently enrolled in a formal EMS school as it relates to the school's curriculum;
- Physicians, nurses and other clinical personnel whose job function includes the continuation of patient care;
- Members of Congress as it applies to the Congressional Ambulance Operations Tour Toolkit;
- Health oversight agency personnel in performing specific oversight/enforcement activities;
- Family members of patients where permitted and consistent with other published AMR Safety Risk policies. Family members will only be allowed to ride along in the event that the patient consents to the family member riding in the ambulance, or the consent can be implied secondary to the patient's mental status;
- Service animals.
  - A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove a service animal unless:
    - The animal is out of control and the animal's owner does not take effective action to control it.
    - The animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others.
  - When transporting a patient with a service animal, do so in a safe manner for the patient, the animal and the crew members. When possible, the animal should be secured in order to prevent injury during transport.

All persons riding in an ambulance shall have their seatbelts fastened at all times.

**The transporting personnel may refuse to transport family members with the patient if one or more of the following conditions exist:**

- **The transporting personnel feel that either their personal safety or the safety of their patient is in jeopardy.**
- **The transporting personnel feel that the patient's treatment will be compromised by the presence of the rider.**

### **E. POLICY REVIEW**

The Ethics & Compliance Department will review and update this Policy in the normal course of its review of the Corporate Ethics & Compliance HIPAA Program.

### **F. ENFORCEMENT OF POLICY**

1. Violations of this policy are subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

American Medical Response  
Contra Costa County Operations  
Standard Operating Procedure #224