



Contra Costa County Operations

Patient Focused - Customer Centered - Caregiver Inspired

SOP# 205

Care and Handling of Patients

Effective: January 1, 2010

Updated: May 1, 2016

Reviewed:

Approved By:

**Michael Johnson
Regional Director**

A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish standards related to the care, dignity, and movement of patients during all phases of a patient encounter as well as to comply with all federal, state and local regulations. The provision of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and other out-of-hospital healthcare providers carries with it an obligation to make every effort possible to ensure the safety, comfort, and health of all those we encounter in order to be worthy of the trust placed upon us.

B. Policy

1. It is the policy of American Medical Response (AMR) that for every patient placed in our care, the patient shall not ambulate to the ambulance or to the gurney. The patient must be carried to or placed directly on the gurney and then loaded into the ambulance.
2. This policy shall apply to all types of transports including, but not limited to, 911 or emergency response, inter-facility transfer, and Critical Care Transport (CCT).
3. Every patient, regardless of their complaint or apparent acuity, could potentially become weak, slip or fall during care and transportation. Therefore, no patient should be expected to ambulate, change position or climb, in order to receive care and/or transport.
4. When an AMR unit is requested from either the 911 system or privately, it is the expectation of the public that they will receive excellent customer service that includes minimal effort on their part in getting to the gurney.
5. In the event the patient refuses to be carried to the gurney, the senior field personnel must fully document the refusal on the Patient Care Report and secure a witness's signature confirming the refusal. Additionally, the senior field personnel must appropriately warn and advise the patient of any possible complications or risks that may result from their refusal of assistance to the gurney.

C. Responsibility

1. In the interests of professionalism and high quality patient care as well as to fulfill the Vision and Guiding Principles of American Medical Response, it is the responsibility that all employees at all levels and in all job classifications ensure that this policy is facilitated and enforced.
2. Every employee who provides care has a separate affirmative, ethical and legal duty to prevent harm to all patients being served by AMR. While employees are in no way expected to put themselves in jeopardy, they must do whatever possible to anticipate any need for special equipment, lift assistance or other resources necessary to safely move the patient.

D. Procedure

1. The employee who is charged with attending to a patient during a particular transport is required to coordinate the movement and loading of the patient. Unless unsafe or absolutely impractical

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(e.g. multi-casualty incident, unsecured scene, etc.) every effort will be made to carry the patient to the gurney.

2. Call early for lift assist.
3. Notify Division Captain if special equipment is needed (Maxi flat, child safety restraint, etc.)
4. All patients shall be covered with a sheet and / or blanket. It shall not be left folded, but extended to cover the patient completely.
5. No patient/occupied gurney shall be left unattended.
6. When not secured within the ambulance, one employee must be in physical contact with the gurney at all times to prevent it from tipping over.

E. Patient Belongings

1. AMR ambulance crews will from time to time be in possession of patient personal property during the transport from one destination to another. AMR crews will take every reasonable precaution to safeguard and protect each customer's personal property during transport.
 - a. In order to reduce the number of missing belongings claims, patient belonging bags/envelopes must be utilized whenever patient property (medications, clothing, eye glasses, cell phones etc.) is transported with the patient.
 - b. When AMR crews receive or have in their possession any currency, jewelry or other small personal property or valuables they must itemize each possession and complete the field for patient valuables in the MEDS ePCR. The envelope/bag with belongings must be received by either the patient, an appropriate member of the facility taking charge of the patient or a relative of the patient.
 - c. Patient belonging bags must be utilized for large items such as clothing (do not use red biohazard bags. For soiled /contaminated belongings you must use a yellow biohazard bag).

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 #205