



EMS Offload/ Facility Transition of Care

Policy:

EMS represents a valuable community asset and timely availability of transport units is paramount to successful system operations. Turn Around Times after transport destination arrival can often decrease availability of units in the community. It is the expectation that medical facilities will accept care in a timely fashion after arrival of EMS and that EMS will transition care to medical facility staff in a timely manner.

Once EMS arrives at a hospital facility, EMS recognizes that the receiving hospital becomes responsible for patient care and receiving the patient for continued care. The Emergency Medical Treatment and Active Labor Act (EMTALA) is a federal law that states once a patient arrives within 250 feet of a hospital's main building(s), the hospital is responsible for care of the patient, and is obligated to perform a medical screening exam. Hospitals are not permitted to delay receiving of a patient(s) due to their EMTALA obligation. If an EMS transport unit arrives on hospital property that has declared diversionary status, the hospital is not relieved of its EMTALA obligations and must receive the patient.

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure timely transfer of patient care to the receiving medical facility.
- Provide for the transfer of appropriate care information to the receiving facility.
- Ensure adequate number of transport units available to the community is not delayed due to prolonged Turn Around Times at receiving facilities.
- Promote teamwork and collegiality in transferring care of patients between EMS and hospital personnel with the goal of optimal patient care in focus.

Procedure:

1. EMS will provide an oral report to hospital personnel describing patient status, mechanism of injury or illness, vital signs, therapies provided, procedures performed, and response to treatment.
2. Verbal patient report, paper transition of care/ written hand-off report, PCR copy, or ePCR transmission of patient care is provided to hospital personnel at time of transition of care.
 - Demographic information shall be legible and accurate (to the extent known).
 - Summary of care provided.
 - Vital sign summary.
 - Procedures performed summary.
3. Assist in moving patient from EMS manner of conveyance to designated hospital area identified by hospital personnel.
4. Obtain the name and title of the receiving hospital personnel and document in the EMS PCR or ePCR.
5. Attempt to obtain the signature of the receiving hospital personnel and document in the EMS PCR or ePCR.
 - In the event hospital personnel refuse to sign acknowledging receipt of the patient, document the name and title of the hospital personnel and note hospital personnel refused to sign in the narrative portion of the PCR or ePCR or other area designated by agency.