



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

**October 1, 2009**

The following will be Policy for Emergency Medical Service care providers:

## **EMS RESPONSE TO DETENTION/HOLDING FACILITIES**

EMS providers are often called to detention or holding facilities to assess, treat and transport detainees. It is important to keep in mind that detainees have the same rights to medical treatment, as does the lay public.

### Request for Evaluation Only

While it is beyond the practice for paramedics or EMTs to provide intentional treat and release services, EMS responders often encounter situations where a patient (or law enforcement) desires evaluation, but does not want transportation.

When in such a situation, EMS responders must treat the scenario the same as they would a patient in a home or at an accident scene who requests evaluation only.

The EMS responder should follow good medical judgment in these situations, including doing a full history and assessment. Vitals signs should be assessed, including checking blood sugar if relevant.

### Patient/detainee Refusal of Transport

If in the judgment of the EMS provider the patient/detainee should be medically evaluated at the hospital, every attempt should be made to convince the patient/detainee (and law enforcement) to allow ambulance transportation to a local medical facility.

EMS responders should offer transportation several times; fully explain the potential medical consequences of refusing care to the patient/detainee and make every effort to ensure all parties understand the risks, and advise the patient/detainee to ask the law enforcement officer to recall 911 if necessary.

Should the patient/detainee refuse this offer of transport, a full refusal PCR should be completed. The law officer should witness it. In the event the patient/detainee refuses care and refuses to sign the PCR, document this fact and have the law officer attest to the patient's refusal to sign.



Phone: (860) 509-7975  
Telephone Device for the Deaf (860) 509-7191  
410 Capitol Avenue - MS # 12EMS  
P.O. Box 340308 Hartford, CT 06134  
An Equal Opportunity Employer

### Police Officer Ordered Transport

In the event the patient/detainee refuses treatment and transportation, but law enforcement orders it, EMS should transport the patient/detainee and document all circumstances in the PCR. In all cases a law enforcement officer should accompany a detainee in the ambulance.

### Law Enforcement Refused Transport

In the event the patient/detainee requests transport, but the law enforcement officer refuses to allow the patient/detainee to be transported, document this fact, including the name of the officer in your report. The officer can legally sign a refusal for a patient/detainee who requests transportation (however in practice this is not typically done). Documentation should also include the EMS responder's cautions to the law enforcement officer on the consequences of withholding necessary evaluation and or treatment. The EMS responder should request that the law enforcement officer sign under this documentation. Medical Direction must be contacted (see section below).

### Medical Control

EMS responders are always encouraged to contact Medical Direction to allow the on-line physician to speak directly with the patient/detainee or law enforcement officer in an effort to convince them of the need for further medical evaluation. In all circumstances in which a patient/detainee is given an approved EMS medication such as a breathing treatment or dextrose, and then refuses transport or has transport denied by the law enforcement officer, the EMS responder must contact Medical Direction

### Scope of Practice

At no time should an EMS responder perform any treatments or evaluation methods beyond their scope of practice such as dispensing or verifying medications or administering medications such as insulin.

### Transport Destination

The law enforcement officer may determine the hospital of choice unless it conflicts with patient/detainee need as determined by regional guideline or state regulation. Medical Direction should be contacted with any questions.