



San Joaquin County

Emergency Medical Services Agency



<http://www.sjgov.org/ems>

Policy Memorandum No. 2010-02

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TO: EMS Personnel
EMS Providers
EMS Training Programs
Base Hospital Physicians
Receiving Hospital Physicians and Nurse Liaisons

FROM: Richard Buys, MD, Medical Director
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SUBJ.: Patient Privacy

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On January 1, 2010, the EMS Agency implemented EMS Policy No. 5102, Patient Privacy. EMS Policy No. 5102 was adopted in part to proscribe EMS personnel from sharing confidential patient information by ways and means for which it was not intended such as the taking and posting of pictures to the internet. EMS Policy No. 5102 defines the appropriate and inappropriate uses of confidential patient information. Over the past few weeks the EMS Agency has become aware of instances when EMS personnel have posted names of patients and/or patient pictures to the internet via Facebook and other portals. A common theme is emerging in which attending EMS personnel are updating their Facebook status while waiting to transition care at the receiving hospital.

All EMS personnel are reminded that it is their responsibility to read, understand, and abide by all EMS Agency policies and procedures. A copy of EMS Policy no. 5102 is attached to this memorandum. Please take this opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of EMS Policy No. 5102 Patient Privacy and incorporate the provisions of that policy into your work performance.

If you have, any questions please contact Kevin O'Loughlin, Sr., MICP, EMS Specialist at (209) 468-6818 or by email koloughlin@sjgov.org.