



San Joaquin County

Emergency Medical Services Agency



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

Mailing Address
PO Box 1020
Stockton, CA 95201

Health Care Services Complex
Benton Hall
500 W. Hospital Rd.
French Camp, CA 95231

Phone Number
(209) 468-6818

Fax Number
(209) 468-6725

Policy Memorandum

DATE: September 25, 2007

TO: All Emergency Medical Services Providers and Personnel

FROM: Richard N. Buys, M.D., Medical Director
Dan Burch, EMS Administrator

SUBJ.: Patient Privacy

It is of utmost importance that all EMS personnel maintain professional conduct regarding a patient's right to privacy. Under no circumstances should prehospital personnel take photographs of patients without the expressed written consent of the patient. Furthermore, EMS personnel should not possess patient records other than those that are necessary as part of appropriate employer required record keeping.

San Joaquin County EMS Agency is currently drafting a policy to govern the use and release of protected patient health information (PHI). Acceptable uses of PHI within EMS organizations include but are not limited to: patient treatment, peer review, quality improvement activities, and billing.

Possessing, releasing, or distributing protected patient health information (including photographs) other than as part of your EMS organization's record keeping is a violation of HIPAA. Occurrences or suspected occurrences of violations of patient privacy and HIPAA must be referred to the EMS Agency.

Questions regarding this policy memorandum may be directed to Anna Valdez, RN, PhD(c), CEN, Quality Improvement/Trauma Coordinator at (209) 468-6721 or by email at avaldez@sjgov.org.