

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY



**TITLE: AMBULANCE PATIENT OFFLOAD TIME**

EMS Policy No. **6341**

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to establish standardized methodologies for collecting, calculating, and reporting Ambulance Patient Offload Time (APOT) and to establish and define Ambulance Patient Offload Delay (APOD).

**AUTHORITY:**

Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, §1797.120, §1797.120.5, §1797.120.6, §1797.120.7, §1797.123, §1797.220, §1797.225, §1797.228, §1798 et seq., CCR Title 22, Div. 9, Ch. 1.2

**DEFINITIONS:** See EMS Policy No. 1100, POLICY DEFINITIONS.

**POLICY:**

**I. Ambulance Patient Offload Times (APOT):**

- A. The measurement of an APOT is defined in California Health and Safety Code and California Code of Regulations and are defined as the time interval between the ambulance arrival at the hospital and the physical transfer of care of a patient to that hospital.
- B. APOT times are recorded in the ambulance providers' electronic patient care record (ePCR) systems through an electronic signature signed by the emergency department medical personnel at the time of physical patient transfer and compiled into a SJCEMSA repository.
- B. The responsibility of accurate recording of the APOT rests with the hospital and its personnel.
- C. SJCEMSA will report out APOT/APOD times monthly and provide the information on the SJCEMSA website.

**II. Ambulance Patient Offload Delays (APOD):**

- A. The acceptable delay for all San Joaquin County hospitals is twenty-five (25) minutes, 90 percent of the time (90<sup>th</sup> percentile).
- B. Any monthly reporting measurement that exceeds this time is out of compliance with SJCEMSA policy.
- C. Hospitals submitting APOT time corrections though the APOT audit tool must submit complete supporting documentation.
- D. Hospitals must submit the current hospital APOT reduction protocols to SJCEMSA.

Effective: March 1, 2026

Supersedes: July 1, 2018

Approved:   
6C7EAFE959C6438  
Medical Director

DocuSigned by:  
  
06A07EED8DA14D4  
EMS Administrator

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