


Sierra – Sacramento Valley EMS Agency Program Policy

Crime Scene Management

	Effective: 12/1/2023	Next Review: 09/2026	825
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PURPOSE:

To provide guidelines for EMS personnel when patient care is required at the scene of a known or potential crime.

AUTHORITY:

- A. California Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, § 1798.6, 1797.220.
- B. California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9.

POLICY:

- A. The primary duty of both law enforcement and EMS personnel is to protect and preserve human life. EMS personnel must ensure that patient care is given highest priority, in consideration to the needs of law enforcement (personnel/public safety, crime scene management and evidence preservation).
- B. In the event that EMS personnel discover a crime scene, or are at a crime scene without law enforcement, an immediate request for law enforcement shall be made. EMS personnel shall assure their own safety and, if possible, attempt to follow the guidelines contained in this policy.
- C. EMS personnel shall follow the directions of law enforcement with respect to crime scene management. This direction should not prevent or detract from patient care. The following guidelines should be followed:
 - 1. Parking of EMS vehicles should be done to provide adequate access for EMS personnel but with consideration of the crime scene (i.e., do not run over expended shell casings or destroy physical evidence such as tire tracks, foot prints and/or broken glass).
 - 2. Entry to the crime scene should be made by the minimum number of EMS personnel necessary to provide patient care. If possible, entry and exit should be accomplished by the same route.

3. Care should be taken not to disturb any physical evidence.
4. Removal of the patient's clothing should be kept to a minimum. If necessary, clothing removal should be done in a manner which will minimize the loss of physical evidence (i.e., do not cut clothing through bullet or knife holes).
5. Patient clothing and personal articles are to be left in the possession of law enforcement personnel. Do not discard anything.
6. Place wrappers and other disposable trash items which accumulate as patient care is rendered in a single site away from the patient and/or potential crime scene evidence. Do not pick up trash items and discard because evidence may be destroyed. Law enforcement personnel may suggest a site to be used for trash which would be most ideal to maximize evidence preservation.
7. Determination Of Death (S-SV EMS Determination of Death Policy 820):
 - Patients who meet 'Obvious Death Criteria' do not require cardiac monitor confirmation of asystole.
 - Patients who meet 'Probable Death Criteria' should be assessed utilizing the minimum number of EMS personnel necessary.
 - If death has been determined by EMS personnel, the patient should be left in the position found and not moved or touched beyond what is necessary to determine death.
 - Law enforcement personnel have the authority to declare death. If this has occurred, medical confirmation procedures by EMS personnel do not need to be performed unless specifically requested by law enforcement.
8. Every effort to cooperate with law enforcement should be made. In the event of disagreement with law enforcement, EMS personnel should document the issue and refer the matter to their supervisor for follow up. If the disagreement involves an issue that could result in patient harm, an immediate request for supervisory personnel to respond to the scene shall be made.