


Sierra – Sacramento Valley EMS Agency Program Policy			
Unsafe Scene			
	Effective: 10/1/2025	Next Review: 07/2028	854
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PURPOSE:

To establish procedures for mitigating unsafe scenes and provide direction to EMS personnel who determine that a scene cannot be made safe.

AUTHORITY

- A. HSC, Division 2.5, § 1797.204, § 1797.220, § 1798.
- B. CCR, Title 22, Div. 9.

DEFINITIONS:

- A. **Appropriate Agency** – Any public or private agency, department, or company who could respond to an unsafe scene to make the scene safe for EMS personnel, including, but not limited to:
 - 1. Law enforcement.
 - 2. Animal control.
 - 3. Fire departments/districts.
 - 4. Environmental health.
 - 5. Power/electric companies.
 - 6. Tow companies.
- B. **Safe Scene** – Any scene that does not pose a known or assumed threat to EMS personnel safety.
- C. **Staging** – A safe location, normally within close proximity to the incident scene, where EMS personnel/resources can temporarily assemble until the scene can be made safe or EMS personnel determine that a scene cannot be made safe according to the procedures contained in this policy.

D. **Unsafe Scene** – Any scene that poses a known or assumed threat to EMS personnel safety, including, but not limited to:

1. Aggressive/violent subject, patient, or bystander(s).
2. The presence of aggressive/dangerous animals.
3. Hazardous material incidents.
4. Downed powerlines.
5. Structural instability.
6. Civil unrest.
7. The possible presence of weapons.

POLICY:

- A. EMS personnel should not enter or be encouraged to enter an unsafe scene.
- B. If a scene becomes unsafe after their arrival, EMS personnel should retreat to a safe location as quickly as possible.
- C. EMS personnel shall request an appropriate agency to respond to an unsafe scene to attempt to make the scene safe.

PROCEDURE:

- A. If EMS personnel are informed that a scene is unsafe, arrive to find an unsafe scene, or a scene becomes unsafe after their arrival, they shall request an appropriate agency to respond to make the scene safe:
 1. If EMS personnel have arrived at a scene that is unsafe or later becomes unsafe:
 - They may attempt to verbally de-escalate the situation, if applicable.
 - They should retreat from the scene to a safe location as quickly as possible.
 - Once they are in a safe location, EMS personnel shall inform dispatch of the situation and request an appropriate agency to respond.
 2. Once staging, EMS personnel shall request via dispatch an ETA of the appropriate agency.

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3. If an extended ETA is given, or the requested appropriate agency is unable/unwilling to respond, EMS personnel shall immediately contact their supervisor for directions to either continue staging until the scene is safe or return to service. In making this determination, supervisor staff shall consider the following:
 - The nature of the original request for service.
 - What is causing the scene to be unsafe.
 - Alternative appropriate agencies that can be requested to make the scene safe.
 4. EMS personnel may also consult with a base/modified base hospital to explain the unsafe scene and discuss possible alternative options.
- B. If EMS personnel are staging due to an unsafe scene, they are considered to have 'arrived at scene' and shall follow the S-SV EMS Documentation Policy accordingly. The following information shall be documented in the ePCR for any incident where EMS personnel determine that a scene cannot be made safe and return to service:
1. The narrative section shall include the following additional information:
 - The nature of the call reported by dispatch.
 - The cause of the unsafe scene.
 - How EMS personnel remained safe, and any actions taken by EMS personnel on scene to attempt to mitigate the unsafe scene.
 - Actions taken to get an appropriate agency to respond to and/or mitigate the unsafe scene.
 - A detailed explanation of the discussion with the supervisor and the direction provided.
 - Identification of the base/modified base hospital contacted, and any direction provided by the base/modified base hospital, if applicable.
 - A statement indicating that EMS personnel returned to service due to an unsafe scene.
 2. 'Patient Access' should be selected under the 'Transport Delay' drop down box.
 3. 'Back in Service, No Care/Support Services Required' should be selected under the 'Crew Disposition' drop down box.
- C. Prehospital provider agencies shall notify S-SV EMS (DutyOfficer@ssvems.com) by the end of the next business day of any incident where their EMS personnel determined that a scene could not be made safe and return to service.
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