

STANISLAUS COUNTY EMS AGENCY
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

POLICY: **570.25**
TITLE: **EMS Organ Donor Information**

APPROVED: SIGNATURE ON FILE IN EMS OFFICE
Executive Director

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Medical Director

EFFECTIVE DATE 09/01/2003
SUPERSEDES:
REVISED: 06/2009
REVIEW DATE: 06/2014
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EMS ORGAN DONOR INFORMATION

I. **AUTHORITY**

Health and Safety Code, Section 7150.55, Section 1797.220 & Section 1798. California Code of Regulations, Section 100147.

II. **DEFINITIONS**

- A. Emergency Medical Care Personnel: First Responders, EMT-I, EMT-P.
- B. "Reasonable Search": A brief attempt by Emergency Medical Care Personnel to locate documentation that may identify a patient as a potential organ donor, or one who has refused to make an anatomical gift. This search shall be limited to checking a wallet or purse that is on or near the individual to locate a driver's license or other identification card with this information. This requirement may be met by asking a family member, if one is present, about the presence of an organ donor card. A reasonable search shall not take precedent over patient care/treatment.
- C. "Imminent Death": A condition wherein illness or injuries are of such severity that in the opinion of Emergency Medical Care Personnel, death is likely to occur before the patient arrives at the receiving hospital. For purposes of this policy, this definition does not include any conscious patient regardless of the severity of illness or injury.

III. **PURPOSE**

To establish guidelines for Emergency Medical Care Personnel to meet requirements that they search for organ donor information on adult patients for whom death appears imminent.

IV. **POLICY**

- A. When Emergency Medical Care Personnel encounter an unconscious adult patient for whom it appears death is imminent (that is, death prior to the arrival of the patient at a receiving facility), they shall attempt a "reasonable search" of the patient's belongings to determine if the individual carries information indicating the patient's status as an organ donor. This search shall be done in the presence of a witness, preferably a public safety officer.
- B. Treatment and transport of the patient remains the highest priority for Emergency Medical Care Personnel. This search shall not interfere with patient care or transport.

- C. Any organ donor document that is discovered should be transported to the receiving hospital with the patient unless the investigating law enforcement officer requests it. In the event that no transport is made, any document should remain with the patient.
- D. No search is to be made by Emergency Medical Care Personnel after the patient has expired.
- E. If a member of the patient's immediate family objects to the search for an organ donor document at the scene, their response to a question about the patient's organ donation wishes shall be considered to satisfy the requirement.
- F. In cases where information exists to suggest the patient is an organ or tissue donor, this information shall be relayed to the County Coroner's Office or the appropriate transplant coordinating service.