



## I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines for the transfer of patient care from emergency medical services personnel to receiving facility providers in San Diego County. These standards are essential to public safety.

---

## II. POLICY STATEMENT

This guidance is implemented to provide clarity for EMS and receiving medical staff for the critical intersection of patient care transfer. This guidance may be updated following the promulgation and adoption of State regulations described in Health and Safety Code Section 1797.120.5.

---

**III. AUTHORITY:** Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797.120, 1797.120.5, 1797.120.6, 1797.120.7, 1797.220, 1797.225, 1797.252, and 1798.0.

---

## IV. DEFINITIONS

**Transfer of Patient Care:** The transition of patient care responsibility from EMS personnel to receiving facility medical personnel.

**Verbal Patient Report:** The face-to-face verbal exchange of key patient information between EMS personnel and receiving facility medical personnel to ensure uninterrupted clinical treatment. The verbal patient report will relay, but is not limited to, pertinent history, vital signs, interventions, and response to treatment.

**Written EMS Report:** The written report supplied to receiving facility medical personnel that details patient assessment and care provided by EMS personnel.

---

## V. PROCEDURE

### A. Transfer of Patient Care

1. Receiving facility medical personnel should make every attempt to accept a verbal patient report and assume care of the patient as soon as possible.
2. Both receiving facility and EMS personnel are required to participate in a standardized, problem-oriented formal transfer of patient care.

**San Diego County Emergency Medical Services Office  
Policy / Procedure / Protocol**

3. The standardized transfer of patient care is completed when:
  - a. The patient is physically transferred to a receiving facility gurney, bed, chair, or other mutually agreed upon and safe location  
**AND**
  - b. EMS personnel provide a patient-centered verbal patient report to the receiving facility medical personnel  
**AND**
  - c. Receiving facility medical personnel sign the ePCR and assume patient care  
**THEN**  
The standardized transfer of patient care is complete.
4. The written EMS report shall be accurately completed and made available to receiving facility medical personnel prior to returning to service whenever possible.
5. It is not acceptable for EMS personnel to leave a patient at a receiving facility without completing a standardized transfer of patient care.
6. Receiving facility medical personnel shall not unduly delay the acceptance of an awaiting ambulance patient by avoiding participation in a standardized transfer of patient care.
7. EMS ambulance patients shall not be directed to wait or stage in any area that may be hazardous to the patient or EMS personnel because of weather or other conditions.