

- I. “5150” is defined in code as, : “A patient who is held against their will for evaluation under the authority of Welfare and Institution Code, Section 5150, because the patient is a danger to themselves, a danger to others and/or gravely disabled (i.e., unable to care for self). This is a written order placed by a law enforcement officer, County Mental Health Worker, or a health worker certified by the County to place an individual on a 5150 hold.”
- J. “5170” is defined in code as, “A person who is a danger to others or to him/herself, or gravely disabled as a result of inebriation, a peace officer, member of the attending staff, as defined by regulation, of an evaluation facility designated by the County, or other person designated by the County may, upon reasonable cause, take or cause to be taken, the person into civil protective custody and place him in a facility designated by the County and approved by the State Department of Alcohol and Drug Abuse as a facility for 72-hour treatment and evaluation of inebriates.”

III PURPOSE:

To provide direction and guidelines to EMS Personnel for patient-initiated refusal of service.

IV. POLICY

- A. Any patient may decline all or part of assessment, treatments, or transportation by EMS Personnel if the following factors are NOT present:
 - 1. Impaired capacity to understand the nature of their medical condition due to, but not limited to, alcohol, drugs or medications, mental illness, traumatic injury, or grave disability.
 - 2. Legal minor
- B. When it is determined that a patient has refused assessment, treatment, or transport by ambulance, EMS personnel shall complete a refusal of EMS service form.

V. PROCEDURE

- A. In the event a patient is refusing EMS services the EMS personnel with the highest medical authority on scene shall attempt the following:
 - 1. Obtain a history of the event and prior medical history including medications.
 - 2. Perform a physical assessment to include a complete set of vital signs.
 - 3. Determine that the patient is a competent
 - 4. Explain the risks of refusal of EMS service.
 - 5. Explain the benefits of EMS service.
 - 6. Determine that the patient has an understanding of the risks of refusal.
 - 7. Offer treatment and transportation to the nearest appropriate receiving facility.

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8. Advise the patient to seek medical attention for complaint.
 9. Advise patient to call 9-1-1 if condition worsens or if they desire EMS Services.
- B. For patients that are refusing part or all of the assessment, treatment, or transportation and who in the judgment of the EMS personnel, requires assessment, treatment, or transportation, consider the following;
1. Have your partner offer assessment, treatment, or transportation.
 2. Contact a designated base hospital for assistance from the base hospital physician in further assessment of the patient. Communication with the base physician may require communication between the physician and patient.
 3. For a patient meeting “trauma criteria,” a designated Trauma Center will be contacted in all cases of patient refusal of assessment, treatment, or transportation.
 4. If the patient is a danger to themselves or others or meets the definition of a 5150 or 5170 patient, contact law enforcement officials.
- C. Complete and explain the refusal of EMS service form to the patient.
1. A signature should be obtained from the patient and a witness if possible
 2. If patient is a minor or incompetent adult, assure that the legal guardian is refusing treatment prior to allowing the refusal.
- D. Each item described above shall be documented on the prehospital care report (PCR) and filed per individual EMS service provider policy.
- E. Provider Agencies will use the elements listed below on the EMS Service Patient Refusal Form:
1. Patient’s Name, Date, Incident Number, and Incident Location
 2. Criteria for refusing care
 3. Acknowledgement of Information
 4. Release of Liability
 5. Location for patient’s signature and date
 6. Check box for “refused to sign”
 7. Witness signature line
 8. Form completed by; signature line, date, and ID number