

# Solano County Health & Social Services Department

Mental Health Services  
Public Health Services  
Substance Abuse Services  
Older & Disabled Adult Services



Eligibility Services  
Employment Services  
Children's Services  
Administrative Services

Patrick O. Duterte, Director

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## EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY

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Ted Selby  
EMS Agency Administrator

## POLICY MEMORANDUM 2305

DATE: February 17, 2011

REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:

  
RICHARD C. LOTSCH, EMS AGENCY MEDICAL DIRECTOR

  
TED SELBY, EMS AGENCY ADMINISTRATOR

**SUBJECT: FIELD ADVISORY REPORT (FAR)**

AUTHORITY: CALIFORNIA HEALTH & SAFETY CODE, DIVISION 2.5, 1797.220.

**I. PURPOSE/POLICY:**

The purpose of this policy is to formalize a mechanism for identifying and reviewing problems or potential problems, as well as positive issues, for the express purpose of continually improving the delivery of prehospital care in Solano County.

**II. INCIDENTS REQUIRING A FIELD ADVISORY REPORT (FAR)**

- A. The following circumstances require submission of a FAR to the EMS Agency:
1. A situation that adversely, or potentially adversely, affects a patient;
  2. A conflict exists with a County Policy/Protocol and/or state law, or a patient's condition warrants deviation from protocol requiring Base Physician's order to do so;
  3. A significant threat or barrier to the delivery of high quality patient care;
  4. A threat to the safety of patients or providers of prehospital care;
  5. Noteworthy performance benefiting the patient, the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system, or the community.
  6. A request by the EMS Agency.

**III. REPORTING PARTY****A. Any person or agency may initiate a FAR.**

A report shall be made whenever a person or agency decides, in good faith, that an inquiry, investigation, corrective action, or positive recognition may be warranted. It is not the responsibility of the reporting party to determine blame, accountability, or whether the occurrence is intentional, avoidable, preventable, or inappropriate.

**B. Base Hospitals.**

Base Hospitals shall submit FARs on incidents involving their areas of oversight, (e.g., field care, personnel, or incidents occurring at the Base Hospital), including:

1. Incidents of noteworthy benefit to the patient, EMS system, or community
2. Deviation from policy/protocol
3. Deviation from destination guidelines
4. Controlled substance irregularities
5. Unprofessional conduct

**C. Ground and Air Providers.**

Ground and air providers shall be responsible for completing and submitting FARs associated with incidents involving their personnel, including:

1. Items of noteworthy benefit to the patient, EMS system, or community
2. Deviation from policy/protocol
3. Dispatch issues
4. Deviation from destination guidelines
5. Controlled substance irregularities
6. Unprofessional conduct
7. Equipment failure/malfunction
8. Deviation from authorized supplies/equipment
9. Complications/unexpected clinical events
10. Documentation issues

**D. The EMS Agency.**

The EMS Agency may generate and investigate, or request the generation of a FAR, on any issue, event, or occurrence that it deems necessary or beneficial to individuals, patients, agencies, facilities, or the EMS system as a whole.

**IV. REPORTING PROCESS**

The reporting party shall complete the approved *EMS Agency Field Advisory Report Form* and submit the FAR to the EMS Agency within 72 hours of the time the incident occurred.

**A. FAR Form**

1. Reporting party shall only use the approved *EMS Agency Field Advisory Report Form* when submitting a FAR to the EMS Agency.
2. All reports shall be as complete as possible, including incident dates, times, and locations, as well as complete reporting party contact information.
3. Incomplete or incorrect forms will be returned to the reporting party for completion or correction prior to Agency action.

**V. INVESTIGATING AGENCY**

The EMS Agency is the primary investigating agency of a FAR, and is responsible for the collection of all data appropriate to the investigation.

**VI. EMS AGENCY PROCESS****A. Incident Opened**

1. The FAR will be logged in the *Field Advisory Log Book* with the following information:
  - a. Log number
  - b. Log date
  - c. Basic information regarding the incident
  - d. Date reported
2. Review Process
  - a. The EMS Agency will review the FAR to determine the level of review or investigation required.

**B. Investigation**

1. The EMS Agency is the primary investigative agency for all FARs.
  - a. The EMS staff member will conduct the investigation.
  - b. Individuals, facilities, agencies, and organizations may be required to provide information and documentation pertinent to the investigation to the EMS Agency.
    1. Individuals, facilities, agencies, and organizations must meet requests by the Agency for information within 48 hours.
    2. The Agency may require individuals, facilities, agencies, and organizations to conduct secondary investigations and report their findings of fact with recommendations to the EMS Agency within a reasonable period of time.

**VII. OUTCOMES, RECOMMENDATIONS, DIRECTIVES, AND ACTIONS BY THE EMS AGENCY**

- A. The EMS Agency is responsible for investigative findings and actions, and will determine whether investigative findings and actions taken were appropriate and adequately completed. The case will then be marked "closed" in the Field Advisory Log Book.
- B. If formal counseling is required by the employer or EMS Agency, the individual(s) involved will be requested by the counselor to appear at a time and date agreed upon. Once requested, counseling is obligatory. Due process and representation will be respected by the counseling agency.
- C. Written counseling documentation will be sent to the EMS Agency. If the EMS Agency determines that the counseling did not adequately address the problem, the Agency may also counsel the individual involved.
- D. Action on EMT-Basic certifications is the sole responsibility of the EMS Agency. Action on paramedic licenses is the responsibility of the State EMS Authority.
- E. In cases where the Exclusive Operating Area (EOA) Agreement is breached by non-exclusive operators, the EMS Agency shall investigate and levy fines and penalties as appropriate.

**VIII. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- A. Employees do not need permission or clearance from their employers to submit a FAR to the EMS Agency.
- B. All FARs are confidential and will not be a part of a patient's medical record.
- C. All FARs, investigation materials, and procedures will conform to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- D. Individuals, facilities, agencies and organizations concerned in a FAR will take reasonable measures to maintain the confidentiality of all the parties involved.

**IX. QUARTERLY REPORT**

- A. A report shall be prepared on a quarterly basis.
  - B. The report shall include the following:
    - 1. Total number of FARs received during the current quarter.
    - 2. Total number of incidents currently in the review process.
    - 3. Total number of incidents reviewed and closed during the current quarter.
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