

7.14 REPORTING ASSAULT / ABUSE

INDICATION

Suspected assault or Abuse

PROCEDURE

1. Follow appropriate treatment protocol for patient's chief complaint, e.g. head trauma.
2. If concerned about patient safety, transport to an appropriate Receiving Hospital. Notify receiving hospital staff of your concerns.
3. Contact appropriate law enforcement agency (see below).
4. Provide emotional support to the victim and family.
5. When in doubt, transport suspected abuse/neglect victims to a Receiving Hospital.
6. Treat all clothing, medications and personal items with patient at time of transport as potential evidence. If these need to be removed from patient to facilitate assessment/treatment, place them in a container labeled with patient identification and document turnover of these materials to patient treatment team or law enforcement.
7. The patient care report should be descriptive as possible of the conditions of the elder/dependent adult and of his/her living situation.

REPORTING PROCEDURES (SUSPECTED OR ACTUAL INCIDENT)

Contact the appropriate agency by telephone as soon as possible to give a verbal report and receive instructions on how to file a written report (generally must be done within **36-hours**).

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

- Notify local law enforcement or Receiving Hospital staff and document.

CHILD ABUSE:

- **Must transport pediatric patients who are potential child abuse victims.**
- San Francisco Human Services Agency - Child Abuse Hotline (800) 856-5553 (available 24-hrs)

ELDER ABUSE (age 65 or older):

If the any combination of the following circumstances are present, contact **San Francisco Police Department** immediately to respond to the scene from where the elder/dependent adult was removed by paramedics, regardless of whether it was at home or at an acute care or long term care facility.

- Evidence of either (a) *decubitis ulcer on the elder/dependent adult, or (b) injuries on the elder/dependent adult that are consistent with falls or an assault, i.e., possible fractures, lacerations, bruises, or signs of inappropriate physical restraint.*
- Evidence of poor hygiene or living conditions for the elder/dependent adult (i.e., *feces/urine soaked bedsheets or clothing, evidence of dehydration or malnutrition, extreme clutter or filth in the home, extremely bad odors, evidence of human waste that has not been properly disposed of, such as dirty adult diapers, or waste being kept in buckets or by other inappropriate means*).

7.14 REPORTING ASSAULT / ABUSE

- *Identifiable caretaker(s) for the elder/dependent adult, whether or not present at the scene at the time of the paramedics responding.*

The report by the paramedic should be descriptive as possible of the conditions of the elder/dependent adult, and of his/her living situation, including any odors, and the extent of poor hygiene or filth in the residence or facility.

ELDER ABUSE AT A LICENSED HEALTH CARE FACILITY BY FACILITY STAFF:

California Department of Health Services Division of Licensing and Certification	OR	Ombudsman (for Skilled Nursing Facility Complaints) 6221 Geary Boulevard San Francisco, CA 94121 (415) 751-9788
350 90 th Street Daly City, CA 94105 (650) 301-9971 / (800) 554-0353		

ELDER ABUSE AT HOME OR ABUSE BY A VISITOR OR ANOTHER RESIDENT AT A LICENSED HEALTH CARE FACILITY:

- San Francisco Human Services Agency – Adult Protective Services,
- Adult Abuse Hotline (415) 355-6700 (24-hour number)

DEPENDANT ADULT AT HOME OR ABUSE BY A VISITOR OR ANOTHER RESIDENT AT A LICENSED HEALTH CARE FACILITY:

- San Francisco Human Services Agency – Adult Protective Services,
- Adult Abuse Hotline (415) 355-6700 (available 24-hrs)

SEXUAL ASSAULT:

- Patients should be encouraged to be transported to San Francisco General Hospital emergency department for evidence collection *if the assault occurred less than 72-hours prior to ambulance call.*
- Discourage bathing, washing, urination/defecation or changing clothes until arrival at the hospital in order to preserve evidence.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING*:

- SFPD's Vice Crimes tip line (415) 643-6233 for suspected human trafficking.
- San Francisco Collaborative against Human Trafficking (www.sfcaht.org) lists other local resources or call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (888) 373-7888.

***Definition:** *"Human trafficking is when people are treated as possessions (such as being forced into prostitution or involuntary labor). Warning signs include individuals who are segregated from contact with the responders, are physically or emotionally bullied by others, or who don't have control of their own ID/documents; locations with unsuitable living conditions or unreasonable security measures; or incidents where responders are approached and asked for protection/asylum from other individuals at a scene."*