

Person(s) in Handcuffs

KEY POINT

LAW ENFORCEMENT with PERSON(S) in HANDCUFFS:

- “Hogtied” or “Hobbled” handcuffed **PRONE** position patient(s) are not appropriate for EMS.
 - EMS staff shall immediately require that the patient(s) be un-hobbled/un-hogtied prior to assessment and/or treatment
- EMS Patient Refusal Forms shall be signed by the Patient refusing medical care and/or transport that is in Law Enforcement custody.
- **The applicable sections of the EMS Patient Refusal Form shall not be signed—at any time—by Law Enforcement.**
- If, at any point, the patient cannot sign their EMS Patient Refusal Form, then the Patient Care Report shall reflect why the EMS Patient Refusal Form was not signed by the patient.

- When a patient is in handcuffs (NOT EMS RESTRAINTS) they are legally in the custody of a Law Enforcement Officer/Deputy. If a patient is in handcuffs and transport is required, Law Enforcement must accompany the EMS staff. If Law Enforcement is unable or unwilling to accompany the EMS transport unit with the handcuffed patient, then the patient must be removed from the handcuffs.
- EMS shall not transport a handcuffed patient without Law Enforcement riding in with the patient inside the patient transport compartment area.
- When a patient is being transported in handcuffs (with Law Enforcement accompanying in EMS unit patient transport compartment area) they shall not be handcuffed to the gurney or any other portion of the ambulance (i.e. wall, straps, poles, etc.). The handcuffs shall be placed in the front of the patient to ensure proper seatbelt usage. **Patients are not to be restrained by EMS Restraints unless they present a danger to themselves or the EMS staff.**
- If Law Enforcement is unwilling or unable to accompany EMS personnel in the ambulance then the patient shall not be restrained by an EMS Restraint system (physical or chemical) based only on Law Enforcement request. EMS does not have authority to maintain custody of any person solely for Law Enforcement reasons. The patient must demonstrate a need (danger to themselves or the EMS staff) for EMS Restraint.
- If Law Enforcement refuses to ride along AND/OR refuses to remove the handcuffs, then the EMS crew shall not transport the patient. The EMS staff shall stay on the 911 scene, and the Lead Paramedic from the Transport unit shall contact their EMS Supervisor or EMS Consortium physician on call for online medical control consultation on patient transport.
- If Law Enforcement does not accompany the patient (without handcuffs), EMS will honor the patient’s medical decision making abilities, including the right to refuse further care and transport at any time before, during, or after the EMS transport.
- Law Enforcement **SHALL NOT** transport 911 EMS patients to any Hospital Emergency Department (ED) when the patient requests transport by ambulance after being evaluated by EMS providers outside of the exceptions listed below.
 - Exceptions in which Law Enforcement may transport a person to a medical facility:
 - Law Enforcement may transport a mental health patient directly to a mental health facility if vital signs fall within stated parameters and the paramedic does not suspect any other underlying traumatic or medical causes—[Psychiatric Emergencies](#);
 - Non-medical/non-traumatic ETOH customers can be transported by Law Enforcement to MATS if patient agrees—[MATS Public Inebriate Intervention Program \(PIIP\)](#);
 - Sexual assault victims, not requiring ED treatment and not requiring EMS transport to SANE as per ABC systems protocol, can be transported by Law Enforcement, POV, or taxi to the SANE unit at the Family Advocacy Center (FAC) at 625 Silver SW for a SA exam—[Sexual Assault](#).