



Department of Health Services  
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Director

**Divisions**  
Administration  
Behavioral Health  
Primary Health  
Public Health

## County of Sacramento

**Date:** March 13, 2025

**To:** All Sacramento County Emergency Medical Services Agency (SCEMSA) Stakeholders

**From:** Dr. Gregory Kann, SCEMSA Medical Director

**Subject:** Emergency Policy Memorandum Regarding Policy 8062.11 – Behavioral Crisis/Restraint

Effective immediately, SCEMSA is implementing a temporary modification to Policy 8062.11 – Behavioral Crisis/Restraint. This policy modification is in response to recent changes in law enforcement response to patients in behavioral health crisis. **This memorandum is intended to provide clarity to EMS providers on how to proceed in situations where they encounter a patient in behavioral crisis, with an unsafe scene, and no law enforcement partner presence.** This memorandum and policy change will remain in effect until there is consistent law enforcement presence when requested by EMS for behavioral crisis situations or otherwise altered.

### Procedure:

- A. Follow the established BLS/ALS<sup>1</sup> procedure as outlined in existing Policy 8062.11 – Behavioral Crisis/Restraint. (Enclosed.)
- B. If (per Dispatch or other information source) a patient has an identified or suspected weapon, an EMS unit, in consultation with a supervisor, may not engage with the patient if determined to be unsafe. If possible, the EMS Supervisor shall conduct and document a Behavioral Activity Rating Scale (BARS) assessment consistent with all listed steps below.
- C. If the scene is unsafe or patient assessment is not possible given conditions at the scene, follow BLS procedures 3. A. B. C. **AND:**
  1. Request an EMS Supervisor to respond to the scene.
  2. EMS Supervisor to contact appropriate law enforcement Supervisor to discuss scene safety and mitigation measures.
  3. EMS Supervisor shall document in the electronic patient care record (ePCR) the law enforcement Supervisor contact and the outcome of the discussion on scene safety mitigation.

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<sup>1</sup> Basic Life Support/Advanced Life Support

4. EMS personnel shall document procedure: **Police Requested to Attend** to indicate that law enforcement was requested to respond.
5. In consultation with on-scene staff, the EMS Supervisor SHALL document a Behavioral Activity Rating Scale (BARS) assessment as follows:

Score	Patient Description
1	Difficult or unable to arouse
2	Asleep but responds normally to verbal or physical contact
3	Drowsy, appears sedated
4	Quiet and awake (normal level of activity)
5	Signs of overt (physical or verbal) activity, calms with re-direction/instruction
6	Extremely or continuously active, not requiring restraint
7	Violent, requires restraint

6. If patient has a BARS of 6 or greater AND there is a continued non-response by law enforcement, EMS providers (per Supervisor consultation) may elect not to engage with the patient based on scene safety.
7. If measures 1-6 above have been completed AND 30 minutes have passed, the EMS Supervisor may authorize the unit to leave the scene and return to service.
8. In consultation with on-scene staff, the EMS Supervisor SHALL document *Released Following Protocol Guidelines* in the ePCR under patient disposition.

Should you have any inquiries, please contact Medical Director Gregory Kann. The above process may evolve as circumstances shift, at which time SCEMSA will issue additional written guidance.




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Gregory Kann MD FACEP  
 Medical Director  
 Sacramento County EMS Agency

Enclosure(s):  
 SCEMSA Policy 8062.11

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