

EL DORADO COUNTY EMS AGENCY

FIELD POLICIES

Effective: July 1, 2018

Reviewed: July 1, 2017, 2018

Revised: N/A

Scope: All personnel



EMS Agency Medical Director

ON-SCENE PHOTOGRAPHY

PURPOSE:

To define the parameters for taking photographs or video during emergency scene operations and the security of such images and to ensure the safety and privacy of all personnel and the patients we serve.

POLICY:

1. All personnel are permitted to photograph or video on scene so long as the images are taken with department issued equipment at public scenes or homes and businesses with proper permission.
2. Personal devices: cell phone cameras, video cameras, digital cameras and film cameras are **NEVER** permitted to take on scene photos at any time by any personnel.
3. Photographs or video may be taken of rescue situations, mechanism of Injury at motor vehicle collisions and patient care procedures without identifiable features.
4. **Photographs or video inside the patient compartment of an ambulance or private residence are NOT permitted.**
5. All images are solely the property of El Dorado County EMS Agency. No personnel shall use, print, copy, scan and/or retain photographs or video of an incident scene. Images shall be stored with the patient care record as part of the documentation.
6. All personnel are prohibited from posting images on personal web sites, any social media site or other public safety agency web sites, e-mailing images to friends, colleagues or others in the EMS industry, sharing or distributing in any manner.

Photographs of an incident scene are used by the District in the following ways:

- Training: Photos of specific on scene situations, conditions and equipment use are a valuable resource for teaching paramedics techniques and methods.
- Investigation: Photos are used to help fire/accident investigators determine what happened and how.
- Patient Care: Mechanism of injury photos can be valuable to the receiving emergency room physician or trauma surgeon.
- Incident Documentation: Photos are taken to document the progression of an incident.
- After Action Reviews: Photos are taken to assist in re-creating the incident and timeline for training purposes.

Any unauthorized distribution of on-scene photography may be deemed a violation of patient privacy laws and may result in disciplinary and/or legal action.