

## CRIME SCENE RESPONSE

- I. The police are in charge of any crime scene. They have an interest in preserving any physical evidence that may assist in the prosecution of the criminal case; therefore police can refuse admittance to a crime scene. EMS personnel should adhere to the advice and direction of police on the scene in all matters relevant to evidence preservation. However, if doing so directly compromises patient care or if access to the patient is prohibited, document on PCR.
- II. In all cases where a crime, suicide or attempted suicide, accidental death, or suspicious fatality has occurred:
  - A. If police are not on the scene, request their services
  - B. Assess the scene to determine if conditions permit safe performance of professional medical duties. Treatment and transport should be delayed pending police arrival if the safety of the EMS personnel would be placed in jeopardy.
  - C. Initiate patient assessment and treatment per SMO.
    1. If access to the patient is prohibited, document CPD badge/star number.
    2. If the patient meets the criteria for non-initiation of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (see Initiation or Withholding of Resuscitative Measures Policy B.5), do not perform further patient care.
  - D. Contamination of the crime scene or damage to/loss of evidence are to be avoided.
    1. If circumstances require the alteration of the scene for the purpose of aiding the victim/patient, the police must be informed.
    2. Avoid unnecessary contact with physical objects at the scene.
    3. Anything carried onto the scene in the way of dressing, wrappings or packages should be removed by the medical team when they evacuate the scene. Do not remove anything from the scene other than those items.
    4. If it is necessary to cut through the clothing of the victim/patient, avoid cutting through tears, bullet holes, or other damaged or stained areas of clothing.
    5. Do not wash or clean the victim/patient's hands or areas which have sustained bullet wounds.
    6. In gunshot cases, be aware that expended bullets can be found in the clothing of the victim/patient (especially when heavy winter clothing is worn). These items of evidence may be lost during examination and/or transportation. Check your vehicle and stretcher after transport. Any items of evidence should be turned over to the **LAW ENFORCEMENT** and documented on the patient care report.

7. In hanging or asphyxiation cases, avoid cutting through or untying knots in the hanging device or other materials unless necessary to free the airway.
  8. In stabbing cases, any impaled object will be left in place for both medical reasons and evidence collection.
- E. Document observations at the crime scene as soon as possible on the patient care report. Include name and star number/badge number of law enforcement personnel interacted with at the scene.

**Copyright 2018 Region XI EMS Medical Directors Consortium**

Written: 1988

Reviewed: 10/92; 11/2/95; 5/96; 3/00; 12/06; 4/07; 5/11; 8/15; 8/17

Revised: 10/92; 3/00; 12/06; 4/07; 8/17

MDC Approval: 1988; 11/5/92; 11/2/95; 6/13/96; 3/00; 12/4/07; 9/20/17

IDPH Approval: 1988; 11/16/92; 9/17/96; 5/00; 10/24/08; 12/21/17

Implementation: 1/1/89; 9/1/93; 12/1/96; 10/00; 1/1/10; 8/1/18