

SUBJECT: **SEARCH FOR DONOR CARD**

APPROVED BY:

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I. PURPOSE

Section 7152.5 of the Health and Safety Code requires emergency medical personnel to make a reasonable search for a document of anatomical gift, or other information identifying the bearer as a donor or as an individual who has refused to make an anatomical gift, "upon providing emergency medical services to an individual, when it appears that the death of that individual may be imminent. This requirement shall be secondary to the requirement that ambulance or emergency medical personnel provide emergency medical services to the patient".

No search is to be made by emergency medical personnel after the patient has expired.

II. DEFINITIONS

"Imminent Death": A condition wherein illness or injuries are of such severity that in the professional opinion of emergency medical personnel, death will probably occur before the patient arrives at the receiving hospital. This definition does not include any conscious patient regardless of the severity of illness or injury.

"Reasonable Search": A brief attempt by emergency medical personnel to locate documentation that may identify a patient as a potential organ donor, or one who has refused to make an anatomical gift. This search shall be limited to a wallet or purse that is on or near the individual, to locate a driver's license or other identification card with this information. If a purse or wallet is searched by emergency medical personnel, the search must be done in the presence of a witness.

A reasonable search shall not take precedence over, interfere with, or delay the provision of emergency medical care.

III. PROCEDURE

Emergency medical treatment and transport of the patient remains the highest priority for field personnel. This search shall not interfere with patient care or transport.

- A. If a document of anatomical gift or evidence of refusal to make an anatomical gift is located by emergency medical personnel, and the individual is taken to a hospital, the hospital shall be provided with the documentation. In situations where the investigating law enforcement officer has requested the card, hospital notification of documentation found will meet this requirement.
- B. If emergency medical personnel are unable to perform a search due to overriding medical care priorities or sensitivity concerns at the scene and/or during transport, the hospital shall be notified that the search has not been performed along with surrounding circumstances.
- C. Details of any search, including witnesses, what was found and who was notified, shall be documented on the Prehospital Care Report completed for that patient.