



# County of San Diego

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September 2, 2021

## **ASSESS AND REFER FOR LOW-RISK PATIENTS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC – OPTION REINSTATED**

Best practices for managing the COVID-19 pandemic are dynamic due to the rapidly evolving situation and changing scientific knowledge. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for [EMS providers](#) and [healthcare personnel](#) are continuously updated. All healthcare personnel should review these recommendations regularly.

Health system measures have indicated a need to implement tools to mitigate system strain related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The EMS Medical Director has implemented the time-limited **ASSESS AND REFER POLICY** outlined in [S-415A](#) until **FEBRUARY 28, 2022**.<sup>1</sup> A 9-1-1 service provider interested in implementing the Assess and Refer Option shall request authorization via [EMSNotifications@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:EMSNotifications@sdcounty.ca.gov). San Diego County EMS may grant a temporary and time-limited authorization.

EMS providers are likely to encounter known or suspected COVID-19 patients with a variety of presentations, from asymptomatic to critically ill. To preserve critical 9-1-1 and Emergency Department resources, low-risk patients or those requesting COVID-19 testing or healthcare system navigation assistance may be referred to existing healthcare and community resources.

To allow quality assurance for this time-limited policy, all Assess and Refer dispositions shall be reported to the EMS Medical Director monthly. Reports shall be submitted no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the following month (i.e., November 15 for October's report). The Assess and Refer Report should include, but not be limited to, incident times, dates, and any repeat 9-1-1 calls within 72 hours. These reports should be submitted to [EMSNotifications@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:EMSNotifications@sdcounty.ca.gov).

Thank you for continuing to provide outstanding care to our patients.

Respectfully,

Kristi L. Koenig, MD, FACEP, FIFEM, FAEMS, Medical Director  
San Diego County Emergency Medical Services Office  
San Diego County Fire

cc: Eric McDonald, MD, MPH, Chief Medical Officer  
Wilma Wooten, MD, MPH, Public Health Officer  
Herman Reddick, Director  
Andy Parr, EMS Administrator

<sup>1</sup> Please note the Assess and Refer policy and procedure has been modified from the March 2020 version to reflect updated guidance and treatment options.