

**Chapter: COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**  
**Key Words: Policy/Procedure/Protocol**

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**SUBJECT:** EMT Scope of Practice

**POLICY NO:** B-450

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**DATE:** July 1, 2017

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**AUTHORITY:** Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797.170, 1797.202, 1797.214, and 1798.

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**I. PURPOSE**

To identify the basic scope of practice of an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) in San Diego County

**II. POLICY**

- A.** During training, while at the scene of an emergency, and during transport of the sick or injured, or during interfacility transfer, a supervised EMT student, or certified EMT, is authorized to do any of the following:
1. Evaluate the ill and injured.
  2. Render Basic Life Support (BLS), rescue, and first aid to patients.
  3. Obtain diagnostic signs, including, but not limited to:
    - a. Temperature
    - b. Blood pressure
    - c. Pulse
    - d. Respiratory rate
    - e. Level of consciousness
    - f. Pupil status
  4. Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR); including the use of mechanical adjuncts to basic CPR (e.g., use of chest compression devices).
  5. Administer oxygen.
  6. Use the following adjunctive airway breathing aids:
    - a. Oropharyngeal airway
    - b. Nasopharyngeal airway
    - c. Suction devices

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- d. Basic oxygen delivery devices, manual and mechanical ventilating devices designed for prehospital use
- e. Perilaryngeal Airway Adjuncts, if authorized by the local EMS agency
- 7. Use various types of stretchers and body motion restriction or immobilization devices.
- 8. Provide initial prehospital emergency care to patients, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Bleeding control through the application of tourniquets
  - b. Use of hemostatic dressings from a list approved by California EMS agency (EMSA)
  - c. Spinal motion restriction or immobilization
  - d. Seated spinal motion restriction or immobilization
  - e. Extremity splinting
  - f. Traction splinting
- 9. Administer or assist patient to administer oral glucose or sugar solutions.
- 10. Assist patient to take his/her own prescribed Nitroglycerin.
- 11. Extricate entrapped person(s).
- 12. Perform basic field triage.
- 13. Transport patients.
- 14. Apply mechanical patient restraint.
- 15. Set up for Advanced Life Support (ALS) procedures under the direction of an Advanced EMT (AEMT) or paramedic.
- 16. Perform automated external defibrillation.
- 17. Assist patients with the administration of physician prescribed devices, including, but not limited to:
  - a. Patient operated medication pumps
  - b. Self-administered emergency medications (including epinephrine devices)
- 18. Manage patients within their scope of practice.

**B.** A supervised EMT student or certified EMT may monitor and transport patients with peripheral lines delivering Intravenous (IV) fluids under the following circumstances:

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1. The patient's condition is not critical and is deemed stable by the transferring physician or base hospital physician.
  2. The fluid infusing is a glucose solution or isotonic balanced salt solution, including Ringer's Lactate.
  3. The IV is infusing at a pre-set rate of flow. Turn off device only with base hospital direction.
  4. No other ALS equipment is attached to the patient that will require monitoring that is outside the scope of practice of the EMT.
  5. The patient has not received additional treatment by paramedics that are outside the scope of practice of the EMT, if in the prehospital setting.
- C.** A supervised EMT student or certified EMT may monitor and transport patients, as described in B.1. above, with nasogastric (N.G.) tubes, gastrostomy tubes, heparin locks, Foley catheters, tracheostomy tubes, and/or indwelling vascular access lines, excluding arterial lines and uncapped central lines or other items approved by local EMS Agency.
- D.** Administer Naloxone or other opioid antagonist by intranasal route for suspected narcotic overdose.
- E.** Administer Epinephrine by autoinjector for suspected anaphylaxis and/or severe asthma.
- F.** Perform finger stick blood glucose testing.
- G.** An EMT student or certified EMT may utilize additional skills and/or medications included as part of pilot study as determined by the County of San Diego, Emergency Medical Services (CoSD EMS) Medical Director in accordance with Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Section 1797.214.