



McLean County Area EMS System

TITLE: CARDIAC RESUSCITATION vs. CEASE EFFORTS AND CORONER NOTIFICATIONS

POLICY STATEMENT:

The EMS provider is responsible to make every effort to preserve life, if there is any chance that life exists, at the scene and during transport to a medical facility. There are times when death is obvious and no resuscitation is indicated.

GOAL/PURPOSE:

To provide the EMS provider and Medical Control direction in determining between resuscitation efforts or death is recognized and the coroner is notified.

POLICY:

A. Resuscitation vs. Recognition of Death

If an EMS provider finds that the patient is pulse less and non-breathing, resuscitation must be attempted **UNLESS:**

- The patient has obvious signs of biological death which are rigor mortis, dependent lividity, or injuries which are incompatible with life (i.e., decapitation, massive head injuries, transected torso, incineration, etc.).
- The patient has a valid DO NOT RESUSCITATE Order.
- The patient's physician is at the scene, assumes Medical Control and orders that resuscitative efforts not be initiated.
- The Medical Control Physician orders resuscitation efforts to be discontinued.

B. Guidelines for determining resuscitation efforts or ceasing efforts:

- Begin CPR, if indicated.
- Contact the Medical Control Physician. Transmit as much pertinent history as possible (age, vital signs, EKG, pupil status, length of time since onset of cardiac arrest) and receive resuscitation instructions or cease effort orders.
- If on-site resuscitation is not successful and Medical Control has authorized the cease efforts, follow the coroner notification policy.

C. No signs of life present, signs of death not notably evident (i.e., no blood pressure, pulse, respirations, EKG is asystole, patient down time is unknown, body temperature warm):

- Initiate CPR
- Initiate Field Treatment Protocols as appropriate
- Contact Medical Control
- Continue resuscitative measures as directed



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- D. Signs of death are notably evident:
 - Confirm no Blood Pressure, respirations, or EKG activity
 - Contact Medical Control
 - Receive direction to notify Coroner

- E. Upon EMS arrival, CPR is in progress:
 - Continue CPR
 - Determine if life signs are present
 - Contact Medical Control
 - Continue resuscitative measures as directed

- F. Special circumstance where prolonged resuscitation efforts are indicated:
 - Hypothermia
 - Pediatric patients
 - Treatable contributing factors

(revised 8/10)