





EMS SYSTEM ADVISORY #2021-11/24

TO: Riverside County EMS System

FROM: Reza Vaezazizi MD, Medical Director 
Daniel Bates, Deputy EMS Administrator 

SUBJECT: Assess and Refer

DATE: November 24, 2021

Prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for EMS services was steadily increasing every year, with predictable surges every winter. Since its onset, our system has experienced a persistent surge that shows no sign of ending, with significant and sustained increases in total call volume as well as ambulance patient offload delays (APOD) and times (APOT), all of which continue to cause fatigue throughout the entire EMS system.

The Riverside County COVID EMS Response Plan was drafted in early 2020, and among its multiple documents, an Assess and Refer policy exists. Its original intent was to mitigate the foreseeable strain on hospital, and pre-hospital, resources due to patients with complaints of COVID-like symptoms. It was never publicly released or implemented.

After months of monitoring system performance, and much internal discussion, effective 12/13/2021 at 0001, REMSA provisional policy #3312 (*Assess and Refer*, found here: <http://remsa.us/policy/3312.pdf>) will go live. The purpose of this policy is to establish standards for the identification of patients whose condition does not require transport by 9-1-1 emergency ambulance to an emergency department.

All 9-1-1 calls for EMS will receive an appropriate response, timely assessment, and appropriate patient care. A thorough assessment of the patient's complaint, their clinical presentation, and the providers sound judgment are required to determine if the application of policy #3312 is appropriate. If it is determined that the patient's condition is stable and they do not require emergency department services, EMS field personnel will provide a recommendation to an appropriate non-acute care facility.

Provider agencies will perform 100% CQI on all incidents with a disposition of "REMSA Assess and Refer" in the ePCR.

Please refer all questions regarding provisional policy #3312 to the EMS Coordinator at your agency. For all other questions, contact the EMS Agency at (951) 358-5029, or for an urgent matter, contact the REMSA Duty Officer at (951) 712-3342.

