



American College of
Emergency Physicians®

ADVANCING EMERGENCY CARE 

POLICY STATEMENT

Approved January 2017

Human Resources Concepts Governing Physician Medical Directors of EMS

Approved January 2017

*A joint policy statement of the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP),
the National Association of EMS Physicians (NAEMSP), and
the American Academy of Emergency Medicine (AAEM)*

Physicians who answer the call to serve as an EMS medical director make significant investments to provide that necessary leadership to an EMS agency or system. These physicians provide vital oversight of EMS and often perform clinical activities in the EMS environment. Just as the EMS medical director provides significant support to an EMS program or system, EMS must also appropriately support the role of the EMS medical director.

The NAEMSP, ACEP, and AAEM believe that:

- **CONTRACT:** The role of an EMS medical director should be explicitly and contractually defined between the EMS service and the EMS physician. Elements of the position that require explicit description in a written agreement include qualifications, authority, reporting structure or chain of command, responsibilities, protection, compensation, term of service, and severability.
- **AUTHORITY:** EMS medicine is a recognized subspecialty practice of medicine. As such, the EMS medical director should be assured a scope of authority that encompasses all clinical aspects of EMS, is commensurate with their level of responsibility, and that is contractually defined.
- **COMPENSATION:** The EMS service must provide compensation to the EMS medical director at a mutually agreeable value commensurate with the responsibilities held by the EMS medical director.
- **PROTECTION:** The EMS service should ensure the EMS medical director has appropriate protection commensurate with their

Copyright © 2017 American College of Emergency Physicians. All rights reserved.

responsibilities and risk profile. Such protection must include medical malpractice insurance and liability protection, errors and omissions coverage, and may include line of duty injury and death benefits and hazardous duty compensation commensurate with the exposure and risk assumed by the physician. These protections must specifically cover the responsibilities and activities of the EMS medical director as defined in contract. Such protections must either be agency-provided or the agency should provide remuneration to the physician for physician-owned coverage. Securing these protections is paramount to the EMS medical director.

- **DUE PROCESS:** An EMS medical director must be afforded appropriate due process if performance or professional concerns are identified by the EMS service.