

**MARIN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
PATROL DIVISION POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL**

**CHAPTER 5 - JUVENILE
PAT-05-06
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**DATE
June 14, 2001
Rev: 01/25/02**

MEDICAL AID CALLS INVOLVING CHILDREN

POLICY

It is the policy of the Marin County Sheriff's Office to actively investigate all incidents where a child requires an emergency medical response and to provide for the protection of the child, the detection of crime, the proper documentation and referral to appropriate child service agencies and the notification of parents.

REFERENCE

The Department of Health and Human Services, Child Protective Service (CPS) has the responsibility of investigating abuse and neglect occurring in-home, furnishing placement of a child in an emergency shelter, filing W&I 300 petitions in juvenile court and child/family counseling.

The function of the Sheriff's Office is to provide for protection of the child, detect and investigate crime, apprehend criminal suspects and assist the District Attorney with the prosecution of offenders.

PROCEDURE

Each time an emergency medical aid call comes into Communications Center and the subject of the medical aid is determined to be a child under the age of six years a Deputy will be dispatched. In cases in which the Deputy is in a position to render life-saving assistance, the response shall be Code Three. In all cases, the Deputy will assess the situation immediately upon arrival and request any additional resources as may be appropriate. (i.e. detective, CPS child welfare worker) All involved parties will be identified and their role in the incident identified. The Deputy will conduct an inquiry as to the circumstances causing the child to require the medical response and make note of his/her observations of the scene, the child as well as the parent(s) or caregiver(s).

Special note will be made of any observed criminal activity, evidence of neglect, abuse, unsanitary conditions, drug use, immoral or obscene conduct and presence of known criminals.

If it appears to the Deputy that the child has been injured in an accidental and non-negligent manner, an incident report shall be prepared and submitted through normal channels.

If it appears that the circumstances are suspicious and warrant further investigation, the Deputy shall prepare an incident report and route it to the Juvenile Division. A call may be placed to the Juvenile Sergeant or on-call detective for advice if more immediate attention is necessary.

If it appears that a crime has occurred, or that the child falls within the provisions of W&I 300, the Deputy shall take temporary custody of the child, cause any arrest to be made as appropriate or necessary and notify the juvenile Sergeant or on-call detective.

The Deputy should take special note that cases initially identified, as SIDS deaths may possibly become homicide cases after the analysis of forensic and medical evidence. These cases may evolve differently than other unattended death cases, with the victim receiving resuscitation and transport even though

signs of death are present. It is important that a premature assumption of SIDS be avoided during the initial investigation, causing a less thorough scene investigation that might otherwise occur.

In cases where the child requires life support measures and it is possible death will result, items of evidence can be seized during an emergency search of the scene (i.e. clothing or bedding that contain bodily fluids, bottles containing recently consumed baby formula, medications given to the child) or any other items that may perish or be easily destroyed before a search warrant could be obtained.

Deputies questioning parents or caregivers of children in these circumstances must exercise extreme tact and consideration while still obtaining complete information.

RELATED STANDARDS:

Welfare & Institutions Code.

AFFECTED DIVISIONS:

Patrol
Communication
Investigations

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6/14/01
10/26/01
01/25/02

BY ORDER OF:

Daniel Payne, Captain
Bureau of Field Operations