



# McLean County Area EMS System

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<b>Title of Policy:</b> <i>Spit Guard Policy</i>	<b>Policy Number:</b> S-200
<b>Effective Date:</b> 09/2018	<b>Review Date:</b>
<b>Policy Area:</b> Safety	<b>Approvals:</b> EMSSC, EMS MD

## Background to Policy:

When responding to a variety of emergency medical calls, occasions arise when patients become combative. It is in the best interest of the provider(s) to take appropriate actions to protect the patient and the provider(s) from further injury or complications

## Policy Statement:

The purpose of this policy is to define the appropriate steps when utilizing a system approved spit-guard.

## Policy:

- a. When a 911 call is initiated, and concerns arise in regards to safety of the responders, standard precautions should be taken. This includes staging away from the scene until secured by law enforcement, utilizing law enforcement to search and/or secure the patient or restraining the patient per the *Patient Restraint* policy.
- b. If a patient becomes aggressive and threatens or attempts to spit or spread their own personal secretions, providers may utilize a system approved spit guard. This device is not to be used as punishment for the patient, but rather protecting providers from unwanted spread of bodily fluid.
- c. When utilizing system approved spit guard, the providers must assess vitals as soon as possible including skin color and condition, pulse oximetry, heart/pulse rate, respiratory rate and blood pressure. Vitals must be recorded every 5 minutes with these patients. Assessment of respiratory effort should be documented in detail.
- d. The spit guard should be removed immediately if there is a change in level of consciousness, increased respiratory effort is noted, sudden onset of respiratory distress is noted or any signs or symptoms of patient condition is deteriorating.
- e. Providers must thoroughly document continuous assessment throughout transport of the patient.
- f. Quality Assurance measures will be utilized to track and monitor these events to ensure that proper application, assessment and documentation are recorded.

## Additional Notes:

- a. To utilize this policy, agencies must demonstrate through training records that they have had didactic and psychomotor training in the proper application of this device and how to properly monitor and document usage of this policy. Failure to provide proper training could result in removal of equipment and/or suspension of a provider's license.