COUNTY OF VENTURA HEALTH CARE AGENCY	EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Policy Title: Unusual Occurrence Reportable Events/Sentinel Event	Policy Number 150
APPROVED: Administration: Steven L. Carroll, EMT-P	Date: December 1, 2013
APPROVED: Medical Director: Angelo Salvucci, M.D.	Date: December 1, 2013
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I. PURPOSE: To define Unusual Occurrences and differentiate reportable events from Sentinel Events. To give direction for investigating and reporting occurrences. To define the role of VCEMS in relation to these events.

II. AUTHORITY: Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Section 1797.204 and 1798. California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Section 100167, 100168, 100169, 100402, 100403 and 100404.

III. DEFINITIONS:

A. Unusual Occurrence: Any event or occurrence deemed to have impact or potential impact on patient care, and/or any practices felt to be outside the norm of acceptable patient care, as defined by the Ventura County EMS (VCEMS) Policies & Procedures manual. Unusual occurrences also cover events outside the "normal" flow of operations surrounding dispatch, response, rescue and disposition of all ALS and BLS calls. Unusual occurrences may or may not have life threatening impacts.

1. Sentinel Event: The Joint Commission defines Sentinel Events as "…an unexpected occurrence involving death or serious physical or psychological injury, or the risk thereof." The phrase "or the risk thereof" includes any process variation for which a recurrence would carry a significant chance of a serious adverse outcome An Unusual Occurrence is considered a Sentinel Event if it could reasonably be considered to be the direct cause of a death or serious injury. Sentinel Events warrant immediate investigation, and reporting to VCEMS.

2. Reportable Event: A reportable event is an unexpected occurrence during the dispatch, rescue, care and transportation of a victim requiring emergency medical care that *is not the direct cause of* serious physical, psychological injury, or the risk thereof,

but does require investigation for the purposes of quality improvement.

IV. POLICY: Unusual Occurrences will be reported, investigated, and followed up according to the following procedures. VCEMS will participate in the review, tracking and resolution of all Unusual Occurrences.

V. PROCEDURE:

A. Reporting

1. The discovering party will report the event to VCEMS by fax, phone or e-mail. Sentinel Events shall be reported immediately. Reportable Events shall be reported within 24 hours.
2. If the event occurs after business hours, or on the weekends, reporting will be to VCEMS Duty Officer through Ventura County Fire Communications Center (805-388-4279). Information can also be sent via email to emsagencydutyofficer@ventura.org. If fax or email is used, and protected health information is being transmitted, place "CONFIDENTIAL" in the subject section.

B. Investigation:

1. Following notification of an Unusual Occurrence, VCEMS will assign the case to an appropriate entity for investigation. VCEMS will notify all parties when and to whom the case has been assigned.
2. When documents containing protected health information are being transmitted by written or electronic mail, they must be marked "CONFIDENTIAL".
3. VCEMS retains the authority to become the primary Investigator of any Sentinel or Reportable Event.
4. The investigating party will be responsible for completing the process by collecting all required elements described in this policy and formulating an initial Plan of Action.
5. The following are ***required elements*** in investigating sentinel events and must be submitted to VCEMS:
   a. Policies
   b. Written statement by involved personnel
   c. Pre-Hospital Care Record

d. Patient Care Record-ED if applicable
e. CAD sheets if applicable
f. VCEMS Unusual Occurrence Form
g. Patient Care Records (VCePCR and ED)
h. Rhythm Strips when applicable
i. Diversion status print out (Reddinet) if applicable

6. Complete report of the investigation will be submitted to VCEMS within **5 working days.**
7. If the investigating party is unable to comply with this time frame, VCEMS will be notified and every reasonable attempt will be made to adjust this requirement according to VCEMS, hospital and provider needs.
8. Upon completion, the report will be submitted to VCEMS, where a final conclusion and or recommendation will be made on the case.

C. Follow Up

1. PROVIDER AGENCY: Agencies will track all Sentinel events and Reportable Events for the purpose of quality assurance. If there has been no recurrence, tracking may end after a two year period. When follow-up reevaluation is part of the plan of action, an updated report will be forwarded to VCEMS.
2. VCEMS
   a. The Quality Improvement Coordinator will be responsible for receiving Unusual Occurrence investigations and assuring they are complete.
   b. All Unusual Occurrences will be reviewed by the EMS Deputy Administrator, EMS Medical Director and the CQI Coordinator
   c. Unusual Occurrences will be tracked and analyzed for quality improvement purposes
   d. The EMS Medical Director will issue a recommendation including, but not limited to, disciplinary action when indicated.
   e. Once the event is reviewed by VCEMS, a letter of acknowledgement, conclusion, and/or recommendation will

be sent to all involved agencies and the case will be tracked for a period of two years. If no further incidence, the case will be considered closed.

f. Education

All prospective investigating personnel from provider agencies and base hospitals will attend and complete a mandatory education seminar provided by VCEMS on Unusual Occurrence Investigation and Reporting.

VENTURA COUNTY EMS AGENCY
UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE
Reporting Form

Person Reporting	Agency	Date of Report	Date to EMS

Date of Event:	Fire Incident #:	PCR:
Time of Event:	Dispatch #:	Person Reported To:

Personnel Involved	Agency

Description of Unusual Occurrence

Identified Issues

Please email report to the VC EMS Agency Duty Officer emsagencydutyofficer@ventura.org
Or Fax to VC EMS Agency (805)981-5300 Attn: EMS Agency Duty Officer

UNUSUAL OCCURRENCE

SENTINEL EVENT

Unexpected occurrence involving death or serious physical or psychological injury, or the risk thereof

-To be reported to VCEMS immediately, by discovering party
-Investigation assigned by VCEMS Agency
-Complete report submitted to EMS in 5 working days

Event tracked by investigating provider agency or base hospital
-Review, Tracked by VCEMS
-EMS to issue findings and or recommendations

REPORTABLE EVENT

Unexpected occurrence or practice outside the "normal" flow of operations surrounding dispatch, response, rescue and disposition.

-To be reported to VCEMS within 24 hours by the discovering party or agency
-Investigation assigned by VCEMS Agency
-Complete report within 10 working days

-Event tracked by investigating provider agency or base hospital and VCEMS
-VCEMS to review and track
-VCEMS to issue findings and or recommendations