

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

10901 GOLD CENTER DR., SUITE 400
RANCHO CORDOVA, CA 95670
(916) 322-4336 FAX (916) 324-2875



DATE: July 18, 2017

TO: EMS System Stakeholders

FROM: Howard Backer, MD, MPH, FACEP
Director

SUBJECT: Adoption of Data De-Identification Guidelines by the EMS Authority

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. Backer".

The Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) is committed to supporting transparency in the standard collection and use of EMS pre-hospital data as clearly specified in my memorandum entitled "Strategy for Data Collection, Evaluation, and Quality" (dated June 2, 2016). EMSA is dedicated to improving our own data and continuing our professional collaboration with other system stakeholders within EMS and across departments that desire to incorporate EMS data into their research.

EMSA recognizes the value of providing validated, accurate data and being both sensitive and proactive in protecting the privacy of EMS patients. The Data De-Identification Guidelines (DDG) was created by the efforts of a state multi-departmental workgroup under the larger umbrella of the California Health and Human Services (CHHS) agency. These guidelines provide clear definitions and processes to follow to protect the privacy of all when sharing data publically.

The EMS Authority is adopting the DDG in its entirety to maintain consistency across multiple state departments as well as to provide guidance to our stakeholders related to the protection of confidential information found within EMS data. The release of useful data to the public promotes transparency of state government and supports other CHHS initiatives. The steps described within the DGG are intended to assist departments in assuring that data is appropriate de-identified for purpose of public releases that meet the requirements of the California Information Practices Act (IPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) to prevent the disclosure of personal information.

For easy reference, the DDG can be found in its entirety at the following link:
<http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/dataandstats/Documents/DHCS-DDG-V2.0-120116.pdf>

If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact Nancy Marker at nancy.marker@emsa.ca.gov.