



Index	26-71
Page	1 of 1
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ORIGINATOR: Emergency Department

SUBJECT: Visitors in the Emergency Department

POLICY: To control patients' confidentiality and care in the Emergency Department, visitors will be controlled.

INTERPRETATION:

- Emergency Department nursing and health care professionals will control visitation in the department in coordination with the attending physician or provider.
- Visitors will be limited to (1) one visitor at a time after the patient has been triaged, depending upon the patient's condition.
- Family members, significant others, or individuals designated by the patient, may be included in the discharge teaching process, as applicable, and if the patient allows.
- Wherever appropriate, allow an admitted patient's family, significant other, or individuals designated by the patient, if applicable, to be present during resuscitation and invasive procedures. (*See Family Presence Position Statement, ENA, 2001*).
- Facility staff members who are not directly involved in the care of the patient must comply with this policy as a visitor.
- For the purposes of this policy, the Emergency Department is deemed an area that is designated for emergency care.
- Non-patient children under the age of eighteen (18) will not be permitted in the Emergency Department.
- Minor children being seen or admitted in the Emergency Department shall be allowed (1) one guardian to always accompany the patient in the Emergency Department.
- Administration, from time to time, to combat exposure of communicable disease, infection, and viruses, may limit the number of visitors allowed to wait in the waiting area and may require that visitors of non-admitted patients wait outside of the hospital, such as their vehicle. In such instances, notices of the decision to limit visitors in the waiting room will be posted at the entrance of the Emergency Department explaining the reason for the limitation and the anticipated duration for the limitation.

DEFINITIONS:

“Admitted” is defined as any patient who has received a doctors order or acceptance by any attending physician to admit the patient for in-patient care, whether as an observation or acute in-patient stay, or an order transferring the patient to another facility for admission.