



Procedure for De-escalation to include CATT response

Effective: September 1, 2024

Review: September 1, 2027

Approved: [Link to Record of Revisions and Approvals](#)

Purpose: The following procedure is meant to provide a structured approach for first responders to effectively manage situations involving individuals in distress. The procedure aims to prevent the situation from further escalating into violence or harm by employing strategies that promote communication, rapport building, and the reduction of emotional intensity.

1. **Assess the situation:** Evaluate the scene and identify potential risks and hazards. Ensure personal safety and the safety of the team members while considering any unique local factors. Only approach the patient with the minimum amount of personnel needed.
2. **Communicate Effectively:** Approach the individual in distress with a calm and respectful demeanor. Introduce yourself and maintain open, non-threatening body language. Use a calm and soothing tone of voice, speaking slowly and clearly, while being cognizant of any language barriers. Avoid raising your voice or using aggressive language, which can escalate the situation.
3. **Establish rapport:** Try to build rapport with the person by actively listening and showing empathy, considering the cultural background and values of the patient. Use open-ended questions to encourage them to express their feelings and concerns.
4. **Validate emotions:** Acknowledge and validate the person's emotions without judgment. Let them know that their feelings are understood and respected.
5. **Maintain personal space:** Respect personal space boundaries. Avoid invading the person's personal space and be aware of appropriate interpersonal distances.
6. **Offer choices:** Provide the person with appropriate alternative options, such as available mental health services to help the patient regain a sense of control. Ask the patient if they are part of any community-based support systems you can contact.



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7. **CATT Team guidelines:** Follow the above procedures. If the client attempts to leave the scene the CATT members are not to use force or attempt to prevent the client from leaving the scene. If a 5150/5585 hold has been initiated the team shall:
 - a.) Activate Law Enforcement and request an ambulance response.
 - b.) If safe, follow the client at a safe distance and attempt to encourage the client to receive services.
 - c.) CATT EMTs can assist Law Enforcement and or ambulance personnel who are on the scene. EMS policy & procedures along with the guidelines noted below shall be adhered to.

Remember, it is essential to prioritize the safety and well-being of everyone involved, while also respecting the rights and dignity of the individual in distress. The below options are a last resort if de-escalation techniques are ineffective.

8. **Physical Restraints:** If the patient's behavior becomes physically violent and there is an imminent risk of harm to themselves or others, consider the use of restraint as a last resort.
9. **Evaluate the need for sedation:** If the patient's behavior continues to escalate, poses a significant risk to their own safety or the safety of others, and other de-escalation measures have been unsuccessful or are not feasible, consider the need for sedation.
10. **Consider calling the police:** If the situation poses a severe and immediate threat to the safety of the individual, yourself, or others, and de-escalation techniques have been unsuccessful or are not appropriate, consider calling the police and removing yourself safely and quickly from the situation.