



Date: November 20, 2019
To: All City Medics and Bridged EMT's
From: Brandon Greene, City Operations Manager
Subject: Stress and Violence in Fire-Based EMS Responders (SAVER) and EMERG

In partnership with the Center for Firefighter Injury Research and Safety Trends (FIRST) at Drexel University, L145, L911, Fire-Rescue management and AMR/SDAPP are announcing the release of the **EMERG Violent Event Reporting System**.

Beginning December 2, 2019, EMERG is available to all members and will remain in effect for 1 year as an aspect of our participation in the **"Stress and Violence in fire-based EMS Responders (SAVER)"** project, led by Drexel. Over the next few weeks instruction and promotional material will be delivered for display as well as a direct link to EMERG on all operations iPads and iPhones.

- **The information you submit through EMERG is NOT accessible to the department or your labor union. Only the research staff will have access to the data.**
 - [SAVER - EMERG Website](#) **Username: sdcity Password: saver**

We know verbal and physical violence is something you experience on incidents with the public. Currently, there is no national or standardized system to capture exposures to verbal and physical violence that do not result in injury to fire-based EMS responders.

Labor and Management strongly encourage you to report any incident of verbal or physical violence to EMERG. Reporting to EMERG is quick and easy and takes 5 minutes of your time. Your reports are crucial in helping us understand and describe the dangers you are faced with every day.



In the video links that follow you will hear from your union leadership, department management and others describing their expressed support for the project. Benjamin Vernon discusses his first-hand experience and the deep impact of violence on the job. You will also hear from Paramedic Nathaniel Metz, Executive Director of EMERG, who describes the confidentiality and privacy protections of the EMERG reporting system. And lastly, Dr. Jennifer Taylor, the Director of the FIRST Center, who describes the SAVER project and EMERG in more detail.

[San Diego Fire-Rescue / AMR message](#) - Management and your Union Leaders

[Ben Vernon message](#) – Personal request

[Nate Metz message](#)- Executive Director of EMERG and Paramedic

[Dr. Taylor message](#) - Director of the FIRST Center

Please contact the Health and Safety Office at SDFDHealth&Safety@sandiego.gov with comments or areas of improvement. For all other questions contact HSO/Battalion Chief David Picone at dpicone@sandiego.gov

Wellness Resources link: ["Promoting Safe and Healthy Lives"](#) or call **833-SDFD-HSO**

[password – support](#)

FAQ's:

Stress and Violence in fire-based EMS Responders (SAVER) and EMERG

-What is SAVER?

- ✚ “Stress and Violence in fire-based EMS Responders (SAVER),” is led by the Center for Firefighter Injury Research and Safety Trends (FIRST) at the Dornsife School of Public Health at Drexel University. Funded by Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), SAVER is the first FEMA R&D funded project to address the EMS aspect of fire – which can run as high as 60- 90% of the work. EMERG is one of four aims in SAVER.

-Why is SAVER important?

- ✚ From 1980 to the present, demand for EMS has increased 320%. We believe this is causing increased violence to you, but there are very little data to support this. In order to prevent negative physical and mental health outcomes from violence, we must get data on your experience. Then we can advocate for resources.

-Who is participating in SAVER?

- ✚ The SAVER study sites are: Chicago Fire Department & Local 2, Dallas Fire-Rescue & Local 58, Philadelphia Fire Department & Local 22, and San Diego Fire-Rescue & Local 145 & Teamsters 911 & AMR/SDAPP. These departments will be first in leading this effort for the rest of the country.

-What is the purpose of the EMERG violence reporting system?

- ✚ The purpose of the EMERG Violent Event Reporting System is to increase the reporting of violence and injury experienced by fire-based EMS workers.

-Why should I report my violent experiences to EMERG?

- ✚ Currently, there is no system that capture exposures to verbal and physical violence in fire-based EMS responders. Drexel University has modified an existing reporting system from the Center for Leadership, Innovation, and Research in EMS (CLIR) Emergency Medical Error Reduction Group (EMERG) System. With funding from FEMA and help from the SAVER study sites, EMERG has been customized to your department. Your reports will help us start to understand and describe the prevalence of violence and stress in your department.

-Why is it important to share my violence experiences?

- ✚ By reporting your experiences of verbal and physical violence on the job, we not only begin to understand the dangers and stressors you face every day, but we can advocate for resources to prevent violence to you.

-How do I know my report is private and confidential and will not be tracked back to me?

- ✚ The EMERG system is a confidential and privileged reporting system classified as a Patient Safety Organization. All data submitted on this system are protected under the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act of 2005, codified at 42CFR Part 3 as Patient Safety Work Product. Data from the system are protected from discovery and punitive action, meaning that any information submitted will NOT be accessible to departments or labor unions. Only the research staff of Dr. Jennifer Taylor at Drexel University will have access to the information you submit. We analyze trends and then summarize the overall pattern of violence in your department.

-What questions does the EMERG survey ask?

- ✚ The survey consists of three parts. The first includes questions about the incident and other details surrounding it. The second section is information about the individual EMS worker and includes questions regarding demographics and injury. Part three focuses on assailant information including demographics and potential causes of attack.

-What happens if I provide my contact information in my report?

- ✚ At the bottom of the EMERG survey is an optional section that allows for the sharing of contact information. A representative from the FIRST Center may contact you to learn more about your experience. This enables two-way conversations that FIRST has used in the past to get research funding, generate ideas, and inform national messaging to help solve the EMS violence problem.

-How will my information be used?

- ✚ Anonymous, deidentified Quarterly Reports will be made available to you, your department, and your IAFF local on the EMERG website. The Quarterly Report will provide you with objective data to advocate for the resources and support that you need. As a result, the stories you share may help inform future policy change and improved safety protocols, creating a safer work environment for you and your coworkers.

-If you have additional questions, please contact:

- Dr. Jennifer Taylor @ jat65@drexel.edu; 267-359-6060
or
- Regan Murray, EMS Project Manager @ rmm438@drexel.edu; 267-359-6108