



# BEHAVIORAL EMERGENCIES



## Escambia County, Florida - ALS/BLS Medical Protocol

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### Guiding Principles

1. Respect the dignity of the patient.
2. Assure physical safety of patient and EMS personnel.
3. Diagnose and treat organic causes of behavioral disturbances such as hypoglycemia, hypoxia, or poisoning.
4. Use reasonable physical restraint **only** if attempts at verbal control are unsuccessful. Every attempt should be made to avoid injury to the patient when using physical restraint (see [Medical Procedure 4.25](#)).

**\*\*\* ANY time Physical Restraints are used (regardless of the type of restraint), the patient's status MUST be continuously monitored via Pulse Oximetry, Cardiac Monitoring, AND Nasal Capnography to avoid positional asphyxia. \*\*\***

5. Teamwork between EMS personnel and law enforcement will improve patient care.

### General Approach

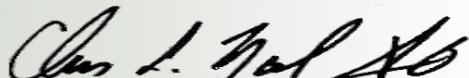
1. Communicate in a calm and non-threatening manner.
2. Offer your assistance to the patient.
3. Use reasonable physical force via law enforcement if the patient is a threat to himself or others.



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### Use of Restraint

#### 1. Physical:

- a. Use standard restraining techniques and devices, see [Medical Procedure 4.25](#) – Physical Restraints).
- b. Use sufficient padding on extremity restraints on elderly patients or others with delicate skin.

#### 2. Chemical:

- a. Use chemical restraint in conjunction with physical restraint if the latter is unsuccessful in controlling violent behavior.
- b. Agents (Level 2 – see [Adult Protocol 2.5.2](#) – Violent and/or Impaired Patient).

#### 3. Any Type of Restraint:

- a. Constantly monitor and observe the patient to prevent injury or positional asphyxia.  
**\*\*\* ANY time Physical Restraints are used (regardless of the type of restraint), the patient's status MUST be continuously monitored via Pulse Oximetry, Cardiac Monitoring, AND Nasal Capnography. \*\*\***
- b. A Lifepak monitor strip displaying ETCO<sub>2</sub> waveform must be printed out for the record.
- c. Carefully document the rationale for the use of restraint.
- d. See [Adult Protocol 2.5.2](#), Violent or Impaired Patient for specific treatment protocols.
- e. It may be appropriate for law enforcement to execute an involuntary certificate for psychiatric examination (Baker Act - FS Chapter 394.463). However, such certificate shall not be an absolute condition for hospital transport.



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### Transportation

1. All individuals being transported for psychological evaluation under the premise of Baker Act should be accompanied by a police officer. The paramedic in charge shall determine whether the police officer will ride in the back or follow behind the rescue unit.
2. In those situations where a female patient is being transported and a female is not part of the rescue crew, the paramedic should attempt to have a female police officer accompany the patient to the hospital.

(This is imperative in situations such as possible rape).

Also document beginning and ending mileage with dispatch via radio.

### Baker Act

Florida Statute Chapter 394 - Mental Health relates to the authorization of police, physicians and the courts to dictate certain medical care for persons who pose a threat to themselves or others.

### Incapacitated Persons Law

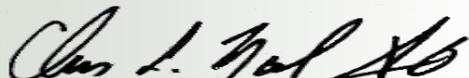
Florida Statute Chapter 401.445 allows for examination and treatment of incapacitated persons in emergency situations.



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