



American College of  
Emergency Physicians®

ADVANCING EMERGENCY CARE 

# POLICY STATEMENT

Approved February 2023

## *Emergency Physician Response to In-Hospital Emergencies Outside the Emergency Department*

Revised February 2023 with  
current title

Reaffirmed January 2017,  
April 2011, September 2005,  
and March 1997

Originally approved August  
1992 titled "Emergency  
Physicians' Patient Care  
Responsibilities Outside the  
Emergency Department,"  
replacing Council Resolution  
titled "Relationship Between  
the Emergency Department and  
the Critical Care Unit" March  
1977

The emergency physician's principal legal and ethical responsibility is to patients who present to be seen and treated in the emergency department (ED). The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) believes that:

- An emergency physician must be available at all times to respond to emergency department patients in a timely and safe manner while formally assigned as an attending in the ED.
- It is the responsibility of the hospital administration and the organized medical staff to assure adequate medical care for those emergency situations that occur in other hospital departments and areas.
- Hospital medical emergency response plans and teams should be organized in a manner that is not reliant upon an emergency physician unless the ED and its patients' medical needs can be safely provided for at all times.
- Emergency physicians shall have adequate legal protection when responding to in-hospital emergencies outside the ED.