



American College of
Emergency Physicians®

ADVANCING EMERGENCY CARE 

POLICY STATEMENT

Approved January 2019

Antitrust

Reaffirmed January
2019, June 2013 and
October 2007

Revised October 2001 and
June 1996

Approved April 1994

The American College of Emergency Physicians is a national not-for-profit professional organization that exists to support quality emergency medical care and to promote the interest of emergency physicians. The College is not organized to and may not play any role in the competitive decisions of its members or their employees, nor in any way restrict competition among members or potential members. Rather it serves as a forum for a free and open discussion of diverse opinions without in any way attempting to encourage or sanction any particular business practice.

The College provides a forum for exchange of ideas in a variety of settings including its annual meeting, educational programs, committee meetings, and Board meetings. The Board of Directors of the College recognizes the possibility that the College and its activities could be viewed by some as an opportunity for anti-competitive conduct. Therefore, the Board is promulgating this policy statement to clearly and unequivocally support the policy of competition served by the antitrust laws and to communicate the College's uncompromising policy to comply strictly in all respects with those laws.

While recognizing the importance of the principle of competition served by the antitrust laws, the College also recognizes the severity of the potential penalties that might be imposed on not only the College but its members as well in the event that certain conduct is found to violate the antitrust laws. Should the College or its members be involved in any violation of federal/state antitrust laws, such violation can involve both civil as well as criminal penalties that may include imprisonment for up to 3 years as well as fines up to \$350,000 for individuals and up to \$10,000,000 for the College plus attorney fees. In addition, damage claims awarded to private parties in a civil suit are tripled for antitrust violations. Given the severity of such penalties, the Board intends to take all necessary and proper measures to ensure that violations of the antitrust laws do not occur.

In order to ensure that the College and its members comply with the antitrust laws, the following principles will be observed:

- The American College of Emergency Physicians or any committee, section, chapter, or activity of the College shall not be used for the purpose of bringing about or attempting to bring about any understanding or agreement, written or oral, formal or informal, expressed or implied, among two or more members or other competitors with regard to prices or terms and conditions of contracts for services or products. Therefore, discussions and exchanges of information about such topics will not be permitted at College meetings or other activities.
- There will be no discussions discouraging or withholding patronage or services from, or encouraging exclusive dealing with any health care provider or group of health care providers, any supplier or purchaser or group of suppliers or purchasers of health care products or services, any actual or potential competitor or group of actual potential competitors, any patients or group of patients, or any private or governmental reimbursers.
- There will be no discussions about allocating or dividing geographic or service markets, customers, or patients.
- There will be no discussions about restricting, limiting, prohibiting, or sanctioning advertising or solicitation that is not false, misleading, deceptive, or directly competitive with College products or services.
- There will be no discussions about discouraging entry into or competition in any segment of the health care market.
- There will be no discussions about whether the practices of any member, actual or potential competitor, or other person are unethical or anti-competitive, unless the discussions or complaints follow the prescribed due process provisions of the College's bylaws.
- Certain activities of the College and its members are deemed protected from antitrust laws under the First Amendment right to petition government. The antitrust exemption for these activities, referred to as the Noerr-Pennington Doctrine, protects ethical and proper actions or discussions by members designed to influence: 1) legislation at the national, state, or local level; 2) regulatory or policy-making activities (as opposed to commercial activities) of a governmental body; or 3) decisions of judicial bodies. However, the exemption does not protect actions constituting a “sham” to cover anticompetitive conduct.
- Speakers at committees, educational meetings, or other business meetings of the College shall be informed that they must comply with the College's antitrust policy in the preparation and the presentation of their remarks. Meetings will follow a written agenda approved in advance by the College or its legal counsel.
- Meetings will follow a written agenda. Minutes will be prepared after the meeting to provide a concise summary of important matters discussed and actions taken or conclusions reached.

At informal discussions at the site of any College meeting all participants are expected to observe the same standards of personal conduct as are required of the College in its compliance.