

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES IN CALIFORNIA COVERED BY LIFTING LAW

A new statute enacted in California requires acute care hospitals in the state to develop a safe patient handling policy to prevent back injuries. Under the Hospital Patient and Health Care Worker Injury Protection Act, hospitals must adopt a plan to prevent worker injuries and cannot discipline employees who refuse to lift or transfer a patient because of personal safety concerns. The law also requires employers to provide lift training and lift teams composed of staff trained in proper lifting techniques.

NYS DOH Policy Statement 00-10 Functional Position Description for EMTs in New York State show one of the qualifications as the "Ability to lift, carry and balance up to 125 pounds (250 pounds with assistance)". Some EMS agencies enforce this requirement with no allowance provided for an EMT's body size or the conditions over which the patient must be carried.