DETERMINATION OF DEATH - ALS
ALWAYS USE STANDARD PRECAUTIONS

INDICATION
Patient in cardiac arrest who does not meet criteria for BLS Determination of Death and does not have a valid DNR order.

PROCEDURE
- Confirm pulseless and apneic. Apply leads and document rhythm in two monitoring leads for one minute or in one lead if an AED is the only available monitor.
- Determination of death can be made prior to, or immediately after, initiating resuscitation when:
  - Medical (ALL must be present)
    - The presenting rhythm is asystole
    - Event was unwitnessed
    - Effective bystander CPR was not initiated, based on CPR guidelines/paramedic judgment
    - No evidence of potentially reversible cause of arrest (e.g. hyperkalemia or hypothermia)
    - No AED or manual shock delivered
  - Trauma (EITHER may be present)
    - MCI incident where triage principles preclude initiation of CPR
    - Blunt, penetrating or profound multi-system trauma with asystole or PEA
- If patient is in refractory VFib (3 unsuccessful shocks), immediately transport to the nearest available STEMI Receiving Center.
- If determination of death cannot be made, perform ALS resuscitation for 20 minutes on scene.
  - If the above procedures have been completed without ROSC, resuscitation may be discontinued, and determination of death made when ANY of the following are present:
    - Information (e.g. valid DNR or POLST form) becomes available which precludes continuation of resuscitation efforts
    - ETCO2 ≤ 10mm/Hg and the rhythm is asystole or PEA
- If determination of death can still not be made for medical arrests, continue resuscitation for ten additional minutes (30 minutes total) at which point resuscitation may be discontinued and determination of death made if ROSC has not occurred.

 PHYSICIAN CONSULT
- Evidence exists that resuscitative efforts are not desired or appropriate (e.g. family request) and above criteria is not met
- ETCO2 > 10mm/Hg after 30 minutes of resuscitation efforts
- When applicable, notify the appropriate law enforcement agency and remain on the scene until law enforcement or coroner arrives
- Complete the Determination of Death form and leave a copy at the scene if the patient will be transferred to the coroner

DOCUMENTATION- ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS
- Criteria for discretionary determination of death (i.e., DNR or valid POLST form)
- Name and phone number of physician authorizing termination of resuscitation
- When possible, attach copy of DNR to PCR or include type of DNR and physician information

RELATED POLICIES/ PROCEDURES
- Determination of Death BLS 5
- DNR/POLST GPC 7
- Cardiac Policies: Asystole C3; PEA C2; Cardiac Arrest Policy, VFib/Pulseless VTach C1
- Cold Induced Injuries E2
- Trauma Triage and Destination Guideline Policy 4613