

**MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES POLICY & PROCEDURE**

Department: Health Services – Medical

Policy Number: HHS-HS-MED 1310

Policy Title: Against Medical Advice (AMA)


Attachments:

Revision History: New policy

Revised by/Date: Holly Hunter, Mark Bostrom 3/2021

Approved by: 
Jan Manary, Executive Director of HHS

Date: 4.2.2021

Approved by: 
Nicole Anderson, Commissioner of HHS

Date: 4-6-2021

POLICY STATEMENT: At times, patients choose to leave before an evaluation is complete and against medical advice (AMA). Patients may leave AMA for a variety of reasons, such as:

- The wait is too long
- Their expectations are not met
- They feel better
- They changed their mind

The Mille Lacs Band Health Services takes the AMA process seriously. The ultimate goal is to have the patient stay and complete the recommended treatment. If they still want to leave AMA, staff will utilize the tools defined in this policy as well as chart documentation and a signed AMA form to process through the situation.

PURPOSE: To identify AMA situations and to provide guidance on how to process through them.

PROCEDURE: The following guidance, in the form of “Do’s” and “Don’ts” will guide staff through how to handle a patient who chooses to leave AMA:

- **Don’t** ignore the patient who wants to leave AMA. If at all possible, stop what you are doing and prepare to address the issue.
- **Don’t** blame or berate the patient or anyone else for their desire to leave.
- **Don’t** express your frustration and anger to the patient. Instead, earnestly convince them that your overriding interest is their well-being. Make sure they know that you are on their side against a potential threat to their health.
- **Do** apologize if the patient has been waiting or if there have been delays in the patient care process.
- **Do** determine decision-making capacity of the patient. Do they comprehend the information and consequences and understand the risks and benefits of the options. Can they communicate these back to you?
- **Do** document the patient’s informed refusal of crucial diagnostic testing (e.g. blood work or X-rays), procedures, or treatments.
- **Do** document the details of the AMA patient encounter in the chart. Include documentation of the patient’s decision-making capacity, the specific benefits of your proposed treatment and risk of leaving

**MILLE LACS BAND OF OJIBWE
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES POLICY & PROCEDURE**

AMA. Have the patient sign an AMA form that addresses these details, witnessed by a family member or a staff member.

- **Do** include documentation of refusal if the patients refuses to sign or leaves prior to signing.

Internal and/or External References	The Sullivan Group – Do’s and Don’ts of patients who leave AMA
Compliance - Posting Date	4/6/2021 ¹⁰
Replaces – Policy Number	
Next Review - Due Date	4/6/2024



Against Medical Advice (AMA form)

I, _____, a patient at Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Health and Human Services Clinics, am refusing treatment/care/transport and am leaving against the advice of my attending physician(s), PA, NP _____.

Prior to leaving against medical advice and/or refusing transport to a higher level of care, the medical risks/benefits have been explained to me by a member of the medical staff. I understand those risks.

I hereby release the medical center, its administration, personnel, and my attending physician(s), PA, NP from any responsibility for all consequences, including death, which may result by my leaving against medical advice.

I understand that I may return at any time for further testing or treatment.

Patient Signature _____

Date _____

Medical Provider Signature _____

Date _____

Witness _____

Date _____