



HIRÐARHÖFÐINGJAR ÚLFHÉÐNAR HIRÐ EIN

SUBJECT: **EMERGENCY CARE RESTRICTIONS ON FEMALES IN NORTH AMERICA (ENGLISH)**
DATE: **2015-11-13**

All personnel are hereby advised to refrain from providing emergency care to female subjects in the states of California and Oregon in the United States, and in the provinces of British Columbia and Ontario in Canada, particularly in urban areas.

Good Samaritan legislation shields first responders from litigation in the event of the subject's death or injury, provided first responders follow all first aid and medical guidelines and protocols, included but not limited to various actions that involve contact with a subject's body, including mouth and chest/breasts for CPR, and entire body, including groin and buttocks for secondary assessments.

Any physical contact with a female, whether conscious or not, and particularly if unconscious, may give rise to claims of sexual harassment and assault, and thus, expose first responders to litigation and social stigmatization as Good Samaritan laws do not apply to sexual assault and harassment. As a reminder, some of our staff were recently accused by a female of sexual harassment and assault, following their oral explanation, without demonstration or physical contact, that the treatment of hypothermia in a wilderness environment should involve skin to skin contact, even between different genders. At the same time, avoiding contact with different parts of a female body would reasonably increase the risk of the subject's death or injury in view of medical science, research and standards of care, and would therefore constitute negligence, specifically excluded from Good Samaritan law. There is currently no legal requirement in North America to assist an individual unless a duty of care is present. In such instance, failure of duty of care would give rise to civil litigation rather than criminal charges. **For the purpose of risk management, it is therefore best for all personnel to not provide first aid to female subjects in the aforementioned regions.** In line with this new reality, we will also be progressively phasing out the offering of courses to women in the coming months and years, with a goal of all courses being male-only by early 2019.

Note that this policy does not apply to other regions, specifically Europe, where there is no legal basis for claims of sexual assault or harassment in a first aid or medical context, and where you are required by law to assist individuals in distress at the risk of facing criminal proceedings.



Áskunnr hinn gullúlfr Þórolfrsfélagi
Þórolfr hinn grárúlfr Áskunnarfélagi