



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Contra Costa County Operations

“Patient Focused, Customer Centered, Caregiver Inspired”

SOP #: 219

Approved By:

Ambulance Status and Readiness
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Regional Director

A. Purpose

The following procedures have been designed to facilitate the most expeditious and concise method for the successful readiness and movement of field units at all times while in service.

B. Policy

1. Units Coming into Service

- a. Units will advise the Communications Center that they are available for calls from the deployment location within twenty (20) minutes after their scheduled on-duty time. If the unit is not available for service within 20 minutes, the Communications Center will place the unit Out of Service (OOS) and page the EMS Supervisor.
- b. If a crew (whether hot bunk or standard deployment) is unable to locate their assigned physical within the first ten (10) minutes after their scheduled on-duty time; the crew members are to utilize a backup physical unit located in the backup locker.
 - i. When using a backup physical, the crew members shall text their EMS Supervisor’s phone from the mobile phone of the physical they are utilizing at time of logon.
- c. It shall be the crew member’s responsibility to notify the EMS Supervisor if unable to locate their physical’s key pouch or a backup physical’s key pouch within the first ten (10) minutes of the shift.
- d. All units will advise the Communications Center of their employee numbers, physical unit number, mobile phone number and do a pager and radio (mobile and Portable) check within twenty (20) minutes after their scheduled on-duty time.
- e. All units with malfunctioning GPS systems require immediate EMS Supervisor notification and will be pulled from service if necessary.

- i. All information entered into the MDT is part of an official record and must be professional and accurate.
 - ii. Crews experiencing difficulty with connectivity must notify their EMS Supervisor immediately.
 - iii. Devices must remain on and charged throughout the shift.
 - iv. EMS Supervisor notification is required for all units that do not show on the GPS system or at any time during the shift fail to show in the system.
- f. If there is a status change (employee, physical unit, etc.) on the unit anytime during the shift, it is the crew's responsibility to immediately notify the Communications Center of the change.

2. Units Going Off-duty

- a. Units can be released to the deployment location thirty (30) minutes prior to their scheduled off-duty time if the area that they are clearing is at sufficient levels.
- b. The released unit will remain in-service and available, enroute to the fueling or deployment location. The released unit will NOT be available for calls unless:
 - i. They are in view of an incident
 - ii. The area they are clearing falls below sufficient levels
 - iii. There is an EMS Multi-Casualty Incident
 - iv. They are the only unit able to meet a Code 3 call within compliance
 - v. Operational need (EMS Supervisor approval needed)
- c. The unit shall be stocked and fueled prior to logging off for the day.
- d. The released unit will request final off-duty status with the Communications Center no sooner than ten (10) minutes prior to the scheduled end of shift or a time approved by the EMS Supervisor. Dispatch will do a final GPS check prior to the unit being placed "out-of-service" at the deployment location. Once this has occurred, the unit/crew is cleared to clock out after the narcotics, computer, radios, mobile phone, DAL, paperwork (all calls transmitted) are placed into their appropriate locations and/or turned over to the oncoming crew (lockers etc).

3. Holdover Procedures

- a. A unit that is being held in service past its scheduled off-duty time shall be done in accordance with Article 10.9 of the CBA.
- b. Units that are not on an active call shall be placed in "OD prep" 30 minutes past the end of the unit's scheduled shift.

c. Units placed in "OD Prep" shall continue to be available for calls or posting should any of the following occur:

- i County Disaster
- ii Low Level Event
- iii The crew on the unit agrees to further assignment.

d. Units being held (30) minutes for a Low Level Event shall be released at one hour unless they are assigned to a call.

4. Reporting Status Change

- a. Any time a unit moves from an operations center, station, hospital, post, scene etc. the crew MUST notify the Communications Center of their status (and location if necessary) via MDT. In the event the MDT is not working; the crew shall update the Communications Center via radio.
- b. The crew will ask for a radio check and shall give their location anytime the crew leaves the ambulance other than on a call.

5. Dispatch to a Call (**Time Call Received to "En Route"**)

- a. Upon identifying the most appropriate unit to respond, the Communications Center will provide the ambulance crew with the information to initiate a response. This information may be provided by radio communication, MDT, pager and telephone.
 - i. Once in the ambulance the crew will receive the call via the MDT as well as via radio dispatch.
 - ii. If crew members have a twenty (20) ETA or greater, the crew may advise the Communications Center of their responding from location. The reporting unit shall not inquire as to the location of other units after the call assignment. Questioning of the Dispatcher regarding a call will not be tolerated.
 - iii. If a problem arises with the Communications Center, the crew must complete the assignment and report the incident AFTER THE CALL IS COMPLETED to their EMS Supervisor verbally and complete the dispatch feedback application.
- b. Response Performance
 - i. All units will go enroute to the call via the MDT. In the event the MDT is not working; the crew shall update the Communications Center via radio.
 - ii. All units must go enroute to all calls **within one (1) minute** regardless of the time of day. This means that all crewmembers are in the unit and responding (wheels rolling).
 - iii. The EMS Supervisor and the Data Analyst will investigate all delayed responses and take appropriate action.

6. Arrival on Scene

- a. The definition of Arrival on Scene is the time when the responding unit arrives at the scene of the incident. The responding unit will status themselves "on scene" via MDT. In the event the MDT is not working; the crew shall update the Communications center via radio.
 - i. On arrival at the REPORTED street address of the incident
 - ii. Upon staging for an un-secure scene
- b. If the Communications Center asks for an ETA to the scene of a call, the crew will respond with the estimated time in minutes, and the current location of the unit described by the nearest major thoroughfare.

7. Status Checks

- a. Scene Safety Status Checks- It is the Company's goal to ensure field personnel safety. Assaults, shootings and other violent nature type calls are considered unsecured until notified by the appropriate agency. It is the responsibility of the Communication Center and the field unit to communicate with each other to determine scene status and to check with the appropriate agency.
 - i. On all system calls and on non-system calls to locations other than medical facilities, the ambulance crew shall report to the Communications Center on their safety status with the appropriate radio code.
 - ii. This will be accomplished within fifteen (15) minutes of the crew's arrival on scene
 - iii. Units will respond immediately to a status check.
 - iv. The radio response to a secure scene will be "**Code 4**"
- b. Emergency Status-If crews find themselves in a situation that requires the assistance of law enforcement for protection of the patient or the crew, crews shall use the terminology "Code 20" or "Code 30." This terminology indicates that the crew is in a situation where they require assistance but are not able to explain or elaborate due to the proximity of patients, family, or bystanders. Requests for the assistance of Law Enforcement do not need to go through the IC if the IC has not yet arrived, and crew, patient, bystander safety is endangered.
 - i. "**Code 20**" shall be declared on the radio in situations where Law enforcement is needed for assistance but not in an emergent time frame. Law Enforcement will be dispatched code 2.
 - ii. "**Code 30**" shall be declared on the radio in situations where eminent harm may come to the crew or civilians without immediate Law Enforcement intervention. This equates to the older code 11-99. If a Code 30 is declared, any and all Law

Enforcement units in the area will respond code 3. This is considered a very significant crew emergency.

- iii. If the situation allows for free radio communication, crews will ask for Law Enforcement by the Code that they are requested and the reason for the request.

8. Enroute to the Hospital

- a. All units will inform the Communications Center if they expect to be delayed on scene of a call greater than twenty (20) minutes. Units will advise the Communications Center of their transport code when initiating transport.
- b. The Communications Center must be contacted immediately if the response code is changed or there is a deviation from the reported facility destination.

9. Arrived at Destination

- a. The unit will status themselves "At Hospital" via radio at the time when the vehicle is parked at the destination.
- b. At this time, the crew will immediately inform the Communications Center of any anticipated delay at the destination and the reason.
- c. Acceptable reasons for anticipated delay (extended time) are:
 - i. Multiple patients
 - ii. OB/Cath Lab
 - iii. No beds available
- d. Any delay in status **must** be updated every fifteen (15) minutes with dispatch.

10. Transfer of Patient Care

- a. Unit will alert the Communications Center via radio upon the completion of the transfer of patient care. (Transfer of patient care is defined as the patient being transferred to the hospital bed and a verbal report given to RN at receiving facility.)

11. Available at the Destination **(956)** and Clear of the Destination

- a. Available at the Destination (956) is defined as available for call assignment; not available for post assignment
- b. Clear of the Destination" is defined as available and assigned to a post.
- c. The standard is established that units are to be available at destinations to respond to calls within a maximum of thirty **(30) minutes** after arrival and at thirty-five **(35) minutes** after arrival for Code 3 returns.

- d. Units shall status themselves "Available" via MDT prior to the (30) minute window unless approved for extended time.
- e. Thirty (30) minutes after arrival for Code 2 returns and at thirty five (35) minutes after arrival for Code 3 returns, the unit is automatically considered "Clear of the Destination" by dispatch. The crew must status available. The unit will be closed out of their previous call and posted to the appropriate post location or given a call assignment.
 - i Exception: Approved delay notification and approval per section 7
- f. If the crew is unable to meet the time standards listed above
 - i The unit will be put out of service and the EMS Supervisor notified by the Communications Center. The EMS Supervisor will require direct contact from the crew.
- g. Upon completion of the transfer of patient care **both crewmembers will ready the ambulance for the next call.**
- h. Due to inconsistent radio, pager and cellular reception at most medical facilities, upon turning over patient care, **at least one member of the crew must remain outside the facility monitoring radio traffic.**
- i. All units unable to clear within the allotted (30) and (35) minutes dependent on their codes of return, will be expect to be clear and available within ten (10) minutes of the transfer of patient care.
- j. Departure from any destination requires immediate notification to the Communications Center via radio without exception and an appropriate status of the MDT.

12. Post Assignments

- a. All units must go enroute to post assignments **within one (1) minute.** This means that all crewmembers are in the unit and responding.
- b. For safety reasons, field personnel are prohibited from sleeping at any time while in the ambulance (including on post assignment).
 - i. The crew will status themselves as "EM" (Enroute Move Up) via MDT when moving to a post location.
 - ii. Units will respond in the most direct and expeditious manner to the designated post. All units must status themselves "IQ" (In Quarters) via the MDT when they have arrived within their posting radius.
 - a) All posted ALS units will remain within a one (1) mile radius of the assigned post (including stations as posts)

- e. Any unit moving to another geographic area of the county will inform the Communications Center immediately upon entering that area. (Example: M55 moving from a Central County post to the Highway 4 and Railroad Road post will state over the radio " M55 now in East County" immediately after crossing the Willow Pass hill)

C. Enforcement of Policy

- 1. Violations of this policy are subject to corrective action up to and including termination of employment.

American Medical Response :
Contra Costa County Operations
Standard Operating Procedure #219