



## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

**Contra Costa County Operations**  
*Service, Vision, Leadership, Technology*

**SOP #: 226**  
**IV Medication Storage and Maintenance**  
**Created: April 17, 2014**  
**Reviewed: February 1, 2020**

**Approved By:**

**Michael Johnson**  
**Regional Director**

### **A. Purpose**

The following procedure is intended to keep the potency of medications carried by ambulance units within normal limits secondary to the extreme temperatures that are encountered in the patient care compartment of the ambulance as well as storage of medication at AMR's three (3) deployment centers.

### **B. Policy**

Contra Costa County encounters extreme temperatures in the summer months where the patient care compartment can reach temperatures that can change the efficacy of medications/IV solutions. This policy is a seasonal policy and will be followed in the summer months (June - September) or during days when temperatures reach higher than 85°F. It will also be followed in the unlikely event temperatures fall near freezing for a prolonged period of time.

The storage of medication in the three (3) deployment centers shall be stored in a climate controlled location at all times.

### **C. Procedure**

1. While posting or en-route to a call, the rear AC/heater shall be running with the engine on to maintain, as best as possible, adequate temperatures in the rear of the ambulance where IV solutions and medications are stored.
2. While on scene of a call, the ambulance shall be in high idle with the rear AC/heater on to maintain adequate temperatures in the rear of the ambulance. High idle is achieved by having the unit transmission in the park position and the parking brake set to on. The unit, while running, will be **locked** when unattended by an ambulance crew.
3. Thermometers are placed in the rear of the ambulance to monitor the temperature of the medication cabinets. The thermometer will audibly alarm if extreme temperatures are hit.

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- a. Temperature checks will take place during your initial unit checkout prior to going in service to ensure the device is working properly. These checks will be documented on the Daily Activities Log.
  - b. If the thermometer alarm sounds indicating an extreme temperature, then a supervisor will be contacted to address the issue.
4. Supervisors will periodically audit the Daily Activities Log to ensure compliance.
  5. During extreme temperatures, all medications/IV solutions will be removed from the ambulance when out-of service or parked longer than eight hours. They will be placed in the confines of the supply or VST room which are climate controlled.
  6. During extreme temperatures, all medications/IV solutions will be removed and placed in the confines of the supply or VST room if the ambulance requires maintenance and has the possibility of being held by the mechanic for more than eight hours.
  7. Medications/IV solutions will not be used and returned to the logistics department for resupply if the medication/IV solution has any signs of:
    - a. Heat or cold exposure;
    - b. Tampering with or altering of;
    - c. Discoloration;
    - d. A different form (powder, liquid) than its original form;
    - e. If in the practitioner's opinion, the medication is not useable;The logistics department will return those medications to the supplier per prescribed procedure.
  8. The storage of medication in AMR's three (3) deployment centers shall be checked daily by the Vehicle Service Technicians (VSTs) and the temperature of the thermometer shall be recorded on the "temperature log" daily.

### **D. 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 #226