

Effective Date: March 4, 2003

GEORGETOWN-SCOTT COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

VEHICLE OPERATOR'S GUIDELINE

PURPOSE: To provide safe and expeditious transportation to all patients and employees of Georgetown-Scott County Emergency Medical Services (GSCEMS).

SCOPE: These guidelines apply to all employees of GSCEMS, both full and part time and regardless of classification.

OVERVIEW: GSCEMS recognizes the inherent difficulties and dangers of operating emergency vehicles. By keeping well-maintained vehicles and an ongoing driver's training program we can minimize accidents, injuries and vehicle down time.

It is not within the scope of these guidelines to cover all situations. Common sense and driving with due regard for the safety of all persons should always be the standard.

Vehicle Inspection

- Prior to the beginning of each work shift, the crew will perform a unit inspection (for each unit assigned to a particular station), and complete and submit the “GEORGETOWN-SCOTT COUNTY EMS UNIT STATUS REPORT”. The crew will also:
- Document and correct all fluid deficiencies;
- Document and have all non-working lights replaced by fleet maintenance personnel;
- Document and report any safety concerns to the supervisor or acting supervisor and remove the unit from service if the condition warrants; and
- Assure that all equipment is secured and all compartment doors closed prior to responding on a call.

Safety Belts

- Prior to any GSCEMS vehicle moving, the operator will assure that he/she, patient, family and partner (unless patient care prohibits) are restrained.

Backing

- Avoid backing up whenever possible;
- Prior to backing any GSCEMS vehicle, the operator will have his/her partner (unless patient care prohibits) or another public safety officer guide them from outside the vehicle. Anytime the operator loses sight of the person guiding, the operator will come to a stop until eye contact is regained; and
- Ensure back-up alarm is functioning.

Cell Phone and Radio Usage

- The operator of a GSCEMS vehicle in motion should not utilize cell phones (except in situations where it is unavoidable). In route to a scene, the passenger should handle all communications.

Tobacco

- Tobacco use is prohibited in GSCEMS ambulances.

Driving (non-emergency)

- While operating any GSCEMS vehicle in a non-emergent fashion (no lights and siren), the operator will obey all posted traffic signs, signals and speed zones; and
- The operator will always drive with due regard for the safety of his/her self, partner, patient and other motorists.

Driving (emergency)

- While operating any GSCEMS vehicle on an emergency run, the operator will assure that all warning equipment is functioning (lights and siren), regardless of time of day and/or traffic conditions. It is not appropriate to utilize emergency lights only, even when transporting a patient;
- The operator will drive with due regard for the safety of all persons, including other motorists; and
- The operator will go no faster than 15 M.P.H. over the posted limit, even in ideal road conditions (slower in less than ideal road conditions).

Intersections

- When approaching an intersection, the operator will slow, cover the brake and if a stop sign or red traffic light, will come to a complete stop and only proceed when he/she is sure it is safe to do so. The driver will also:
- *Not* rely on warning devices to clear traffic;
- Scan the intersection in all four directions for possible hazards and for passing options;
- Avoid using the opposing lane of traffic-if at all possible;
- Have his/her partner communicate when all is clear;
- Establish eye contact with other vehicle drivers;
- Reconfirm that all other vehicles are stopped; and
- Proceed one lane of traffic at a time, treating each lane of traffic as a different intersection.

Non-emergency vs. Emergency

- When traveling to the scene of a run, the crew must use their best judgment in deciding whether or not to utilize lights and siren or to respond routine. Examples of routine responses: stand by at a fire scene (no injuries), patient assist, transfers, lock-outs, lost children and other runs when it is clear that no urgent condition exists. When there is doubt or it is clear that an emergency exists, the crew will proceed with lights and siren; and
- When traveling from the scene to the hospital the crew must decide if the patient's condition warrants the use of lights and siren or not. BLS runs should always be transported routine.

Authorized Drivers

- Only employees of GSCEMS, on-duty Georgetown or Scott County Firefighters, on-duty Georgetown Police Officers or on-duty Scott County Sheriff's Office Deputies are authorized to drive GSCEMS vehicles.

Responding in Private Vehicles

- If an employee is near to a call and elects to respond to a scene in his/her privately owned vehicle, he/she will strictly follow all applicable motor vehicle laws.