

Effective Date: June, 2004

GEORGETOWN-SCOTT COUNTY EMS

GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINE

PURPOSE: To provide a means of deciding whether or not to enter certain scenes. The guideline should provide confidence for employees who wait to enter a scene until it is secure.

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

OVERVIEW: *GSCEMS* recognizes the inherent dangers in providing medical care and transportation at accident scenes, or at patient's residences. Personnel are routinely called upon to provide treatment to victims of violent crimes, and at times to provide treatment to criminals who are also injured and may become ill. Personnel are also requested to provide aid at industrial sites, which also have unique dangers. While no guideline can anticipate all dangerous situations, this guideline should be utilized anytime danger can be anticipated. Situations falling outside this guideline should be handled with common sense and safety at the forefront. This guideline is intended to give a heightened awareness to employees about their own safety, and in no way is intended to absolve *GSCEMS* of its responsibility to adequately protect *GSCEMS* employees.

Waiting For Law Enforcement

Certain dispatches warrant having the scene secured by law enforcement personnel, prior to EMS arrival. EMS personnel should not enter the scene in the following cases, unless secured by law enforcement personnel (not all inclusive). It is recommended that the crew stage at least a block away from the scene and wait for the word from law enforcement that it is safe to approach.

- ALL calls involving weapons.
- ALL domestic violence calls.
- “Fight in progress” calls.
- Assaults where it is believed that the assailant is still on the scene, or nearby.
- Bomb threats.
- Attempted suicide calls should be handled at the crew’s discretion on information given by dispatch.
- ANY time the crew sees, hears, or senses something atypical and possibly dangerous about the call.
- Patient with a history of violence towards EMS.

Waiting For the Fire Department

Other scenes require specialized or technical rescue training and equipment that EMS may not possess. In these cases, the crew should report to the scene, but not enter the dangerous environment until the all clear is given by the fire department. Typical, but not all-inclusive sites include:

- House fires.
- Trench rescues (**PARK AT LEAST 50 FEET FROM TRENCH**).
- Confined space rescues.
- Hazardous Materials incidents (**REMAIN AT A SAFE DISTANCE**), (**ASSURE THAT THE PATIENT IS PROPERLY DECONTAMINATED PRIOR TO TRANSPORT**).
- Swift water rescues (**ALWAYS WEAR FLOTATION DEVICE NEAR SWIFT WATER**).

Universal Precautions

For specific and detailed information on exposure control and reporting, refer to the Bloodborne Pathogens Guideline. *GSCEMS* strives to equip all employees with the proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). *GSCEMS* also is continually looking for engineering controls to reduce the likelihood of needle stick injuries and other possible exposures. Basic precautions include:

- Wearing of Nitrile gloves for all patient contacts.
- Wearing of Eye Protection when splashing of infectious materials is a possibility.
- Wearing of N95 mask when concerned with communicable diseases.
- Wearing of leather gloves over Nitrile around glass or sharp objects.
- Wearing of rescue/fire helmet and goggles during extrications or anytime a danger of falling objects is present.
- Wearing of turnout coat during extrications.
- Immediately disposing of needles in the sharps box.
- Sanitizing units after all calls.

Travel and Scene Safety

Safety starts prior to arriving on scenes. Crews should drive with due regard for the safety of themselves and other motorists and pedestrians (see driver guidelines). At the scene, position the unit to provide easy egress and ingress between the ambulance and patients. Park on the same side of the road as the majority of the patients that you will be treating. Leave warning lights on when unit is near moving traffic. When the scene is in a roadway, or near moving traffic, always wear a reflective jacket, and/or the *GSCEMS* provided reflective safety vests.

Unsafe Workplace

GSCEMS will strive to provide the safest work environment, to include stations and vehicles. It is however, incumbent on employees to report any condition that the employee believes poses a danger. If the danger involves a vehicle, the employee should immediately notify the Operations Supervisor, who will determine if the vehicle will remain in-service. The employee will then fill out and submit the Vehicle Maintenance Request form, to assure the problem is addressed with the fleet maintenance officer.

If the danger involves a station, again the employee should immediately notify the Operations Supervisor of the situation. Also, the employee should document the danger, utilizing an Incident Report and submit it up the chain of command.