
**Ocean City Fire Department
Standard Operating Guidelines**

EMS Operations

Subject: Exercise of Emergency Vehicle Driving Privileges During Ambulance Transport
Revised: 4-24-2014
Effective: 9-01-2012
Approved: 4-24-2012
Section: 303.00

303.01 Purpose

The purpose of this guideline is to provide for the safety and protection of personnel, patients, members of the public, and property during ambulance transport to healthcare facilities or to a MEDEVAC landing zone.

303.02 Definitions

For the purpose of this guideline, the following definitions apply:

- A. "Protocols" means the current version of the Maryland Medical Protocols for EMS Providers.
- B. Definitions from the Maryland Medical Protocols for EMS Providers:
 - 1. "Priority 1" means – Critically ill or injured person requiring immediate attention; unstable patients with potentially life-threatening injury or illness.
 - 2. "Priority 2" means – Less serious condition, requiring emergency medical attention but not immediately endangering the patient's life.
 - 3. "Priority 3" means – Non-emergency condition, requiring medical attention but not on an emergency basis.
 - 4. "Priority 4" means – Does not require medical attention.
- C. "Hot Transport" means – The driver of a department ambulance exercises emergency vehicle driving privileges as outlined in existing Maryland Code. When a driver exercises emergency vehicle privileges, the driver of a department ambulance shall use audible and visual signal as outlined in existing Maryland Code.
- D. "Cold Transport" means – The driver of a department ambulance DOES NOT exercise emergency vehicle privileges as outlined in existing Maryland Code. During a "Cold Transport", the driver of a department ambulance does not use emergency lights or siren. The driver complies with all applicable traffic laws and regulations, including posted speed limits, traffic control devices, and

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regulations governing direction of movement or turning in a specified direction.

303.03 Scope

- A. This guideline shall apply to all members operating a department ambulance in the course of their duties.
- B. This guideline applies to:
 - 1. Transport of a patient from the scene to an appropriate healthcare facility.
 - 2. Transport of a patient from the scene of a helicopter landing zone.
 - 3. Transport of a patient from one healthcare facility to another healthcare facility.
- C. This guideline does not apply to response to the scene on an emergency call.

303.04 General Guidelines

- A. All patients shall receive an appropriate patient assessment as described in the General Patient Care section of the Protocols.
- B. The patient shall be assigned a clinical priority consistent with the Protocols.
- C. In all circumstances, drivers of department vehicles are required to drive with due care for all persons.

303.05 Policy

- A. Priority 1 and 2 Patients:
 - 1. During transport of Priority 1 and 2 patients, the driver of a department ambulance may exercise emergency vehicle driving privileges as described in the existing Maryland Transportation Article. When exercising emergency vehicle driving privileges, the driver of a department ambulance is not relieved of the duty of care. At all times, the driver must exercise due care for all persons.
 - 2. When exercising emergency vehicle driving privileges, the driver of a department ambulance shall use audible and visual signals consistent with the existing Maryland Transportation Article.
 - 3. Regardless of a patient's priority, the EMS provider providing care for a patient may direct the driver of a department ambulance to "Cold Transport" to the hospital. The driver of the ambulance shall comply with the "Cold Transport" directive.

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- B. Priority 3 and 4 Patients:
1. "Cold Transport" shall be used for all Priority 3 and 4 patients. During a "Cold Transport", the driver of a department ambulance shall not use emergency lights or siren. The driver shall comply with all applicable traffic laws and regulations, including posted speed limits, traffic control devices, and regulations governing direction of movement or turning in a specified direction.
 2. In the event the patient's clinical priority changes during transport to Priority 1 or 2, the EMS provider caring for the patient may direct the driver of a department ambulance to "Hot Transport" the patient to the hospital.