



SENECA COUNTY

Emergency Services



Standard Administrative Guideline

Subject: Communications

Reference Number: 12

Effective Date: 1-2008

Reviewed/Updated: Annually, 2-2020

COMMUNICATIONS

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the communications guidelines and procedures for all Seneca County Emergency Medical Service Members.

Background:

This policy was adopted by Seneca County EMS to establish communications procedures utilizing the many methods of communication available to the service.

The chain of command shall be utilized by all members of SCEMS.

1. OFFICE COMMUNICATIONS

The SCEMS Office is located at the Seneca County Public Safety Building, 126 Hopewell Avenue, Tiffin OH (in the Seneca County Fair Grounds)

Mailing and Shipping Address:

Seneca County EMS
126 Hopewell Ave.
Tiffin OH 44883-2636

Telephone Number:

419.447.0266

Fax Number:

419.448.5064

Office Hours:

8:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.

Monday – Friday

Seneca County Emergency Services Director:

Ken Majors RN, NRP Call Sign – “EMS 1”

Office: 419-447-0266 x 11

Cell Phone: 419-618-3892

Email: kmajors@senecacountyohio.gov

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Seneca County Emergency Services Administrator:

Danielle Gebauer, NRP

Call Sign – “EMS 2”

Office Phone: 419.447.0266 X 12

Email: dgabauer@senecacountyohio.gov

The Seneca County EMS staff is normally available during regular business hours. After hours, the Emergency Services Director, Emergency Services Administrator, or Seneca County Echo Paramedic may be reached by radio, cell phones, or through Dispatch.

2. MOBILE RADIOS

All mobile radios should be left in the “ON” position at all times. On all squads, the radios will shut off when the battery switch of the squad is turned to the “OFF” position.

- A. **PRIMARY COMMUNICATIONS:** The ‘SAFE’ radios are to be used as the primary radio for all communications with the squads.

SAFE WEST

Bascom

Bettsville

New Riegel

Tiffin

Fostoria

SAFE EAST

Bloomville

Republic

SAFE ATTICA

Attica

3. PORTABLE (2 WAY) RADIOS

- A. Each SCEMS squad has been provided with two UHF Portables. Upon request, each squad will be allowed to purchase additional portables for the use of the squad personnel. These portables are to remain on the squad at all times and are to be used for communication with Dispatch, other responders, and hospitals. On scene, one should be used to monitor SAFE at all times while the other may be used to monitor the working channel or to communicate with the hospital or air ambulance.
- C **BATTERIES FOR PORTABLES:** The portable radios have a Lithium Ion battery. These batteries do not require periodic maintenance.

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4. PAGERS

A. RESPONSE PAGERS:

1. **PAGER TESTING:** the dispatcher should provide a test at approximately 6:00 PM each day. At that time, you will hear a solid tone when the pager activates and this tone should last approximately 5 seconds. If your pager does not activate during this test each day, notify your local coordinator.

2. **PAGER BATTERIES:** SCEMS pagers are powered by Lithium Ion batteries. Charge the pager as needed. Do not leave the pager on in the charger for extended periods of time. They will go dead. If this happens, turn the pager off, remove it from charger for a few seconds, and replace in the charger. The pager will be fully charged in 8 hours. Batteries should last for 3-5 years; replacements are available at the EMS office.

5. CELL PHONES:

Cell phones are **not** to be used to contact hospitals or dispatchers unless all radio options have been tried and failed. If this happens, the squad is to utilize the “Communications Failure Incident Report” found in the Seneca County EMS Medical Protocols. The mobile phone provided to each SCEMS squad shall be kept in the squad and on charge at ALL times. These phone are NOT to be used for personal communications. They are only to be utilized to contact hospitals for patient information, dispatch, or EMS staff. No Text Messaging or Data shall be transmitted from these phones. Any attempt to defeat the security on these phones will result in disciplinary action, and the local squad shall be responsible for any fees associated with the tampering.

6. TESTING COMMUNICATIONS:

When the squad has the opportunity (and the other agencies have time), perhaps at squad meetings or other times through the month, radio checks between the squads and the dispatchers, local receiving hospitals, and local fire base may prove helpful so that squad members and the other agencies can confirm the radio systems are intact. Report any and all problems to the emergency services office.

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7. RECEIVING EMERGENCY CALLS LOCALLY

SCEMS is set up for a central dispatch through the Seneca County Sheriff's Office utilizing the Enhanced 911 system. The sheriff's office is the only agency in Seneca County other than the Emergency Services office that can activate the SCEMS pagers for emergency calls. All emergency calls should be encouraged to be placed through the 911 system. If a walk-in comes on to your station, contact the sheriff's office on SAFE frequency to advise of current situation *or call 911*.

Local law enforcement and fire departments are discouraged from handling emergency EMS calls and, if calls are received by these agencies, the information should be immediately forwarded to the sheriff's office so an expeditious dispatch can be achieved. If possible, after the emergency is complete, attempts should be made to advise the caller that the improper agency was called and they should be advised of the proper phone numbers for emergency dispatch. This should help eliminate future calls of this type coming from the same location. Individual EMTs should never be contacted directly by a patient. Please encourage the use of 911 from the citizens in your local area or contact 911 immediately if contacted by a potential patient in need.

Care should be taken to not make guarantees of recovery, aid or outcomes. Reassure the victim that a call has been made to 911 and help is on the way.

If a "walk in" call for help arrives at your station, immediately render aid while other personnel call 911 to initiate the process of dispatching all services necessary to your station. This also initiates the IamResponding network and begins the dispatch logging process for proper documentation and information handling of data necessary for Federal, State, and local compliance.

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8. Communications to Receiving Hospitals

Communications with receiving hospitals are to be established on ALL runs in which a transport is made.

Early notification is important if a major trauma, medical, or HAZMAT emergency is involved. Early notification is also important for multiple patients or other “out of the ordinary” situations exist.

The UHF radio in the patient compartment of the squad is routinely used for squad to hospital communications. The hospital name is clearly displayed on the radio screen to determine the correct channel/frequency to be used.

If radio communications fail for whatever reason, the Squad Cell phone should be used. The manner of communications that was used to deliver the patient care report to the hospital shall be clearly documented in the pre-hospital care report.

The minimum information to be relayed to the receiving hospital shall be:

1. Age, Sex, and level of consciousness of the patient
2. The chief complaint of the patient
3. Mechanism of injury (trauma)
4. Significant Past Medical History
5. Physical Exam and/or pertinent findings
6. Vital Signs (BP, Pulse, Respiratory Rate, Pulse ox)
7. Any treatments, meds given, and effectiveness

Other information that should be relayed include:

1. Lung Sounds
2. Cardiac Rhythm to include 12 lead if necessary
3. Estimated Time of arrival (in minutes)

Any orders received from receiving hospital shall be repeated back to physician/nurse on the radio for clarification.

Anytime a radio/communications failure occurs, a Special Report regarding the failure shall be completed in EMS Charts and sent to the attention of the EMS director immediately.

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