

Delaware County Emergency Medical Service Standard Operating Guidelines

Subject	Effective	Supersedes	This Sheet	Total
Firearms Handling on Incidents	July 1, 2008	All	1	2

On April 8, 2004, it became legal in Ohio for properly licensed individuals to carry a concealed firearm in public. This law provides that such licensed individuals may carry their firearm while driving or riding in a motor vehicle. The laws constantly change, however our responsibilities to remain safe will never change, and the need to safely transport patients in our vehicles **MUST** remain a priority.

Firearms (and other personal weapons) encountered at the scene of an emergency should, to the extent possible, remain at the scene. Weapons must not be transported in County vehicles except as outlined in this policy.

If a firearm is encountered and law enforcement is not already on the scene, departmental personnel must immediately ensure notification of the Delaware County Sheriff's Office (regardless of the crew's location in the County) and the appropriate on-duty DCEMS Captain **MUST** be dispatched to the incident location.

PROCEDURE:

1. It shall not be the goal of any DCEMS personnel to authenticate the validity of any individual's State of Ohio Concealed Carry License. The following policy shall be in effect for ANY individual in the possession of a weapon, legally licensed or not. A DCEMS crew member should **NEVER** ask to see a patient's CCW license. That is the responsibility of law enforcement.
2. Firearms will not be allowed to remain in the possession of ANY patient while he/she is being treated or transported by a DCEMS crew. The **ONLY** exception to this **SHALL** be when treating or transporting a law enforcement officer acting in an official capacity.
3. If a patient is recognized as carrying a weapon, personnel should request that the patient safely disarm him or herself and allow the weapon to be secured with a family member or responsible individual of the patient's choice. If the patient refuses, this **SHALL** be considered a refusal of care, and the patient should be informed of such. DCEMS members shall safely withdraw from the scene and contact Central Dispatch to notify Law Enforcement and the on-duty DCEMS Captain of the circumstances on scene. The circumstances of the incident should be carefully documented in the run's documentation.
4. If the patient is unable to comply due to injuries, illness or altered level of consciousness, and a law enforcement officer or a responsible individual or family member is not available to secure the weapon, personnel will control the weapon by carefully placing the weapon (while still in its holster when possible) in a department issued gun case. **AT NO TIME SHALL ANY DCEMS CREW MEMBER MAKE ANY ATTEMPT TO SAFETY THE WEAPON BY "CHECKING" OR UNLOADING IT. MINIMAL HANDLING SHALL BE THE GUIDELINE.** A numbered zip lock shall then be applied to the gun case. The weapon is then to be locked into the designated compartment in the emergency vehicle. Immediately after securing the firearm in the vehicle, if not yet on scene, the on-duty DCEMS Captain is to be notified over the 800 MHz radio system that this procedure is complete. The Captain will be required to meet the personnel at the receiving hospital to take possession of the weapon.

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5. The Captain will contact Central Dispatch, via 800 MHz radio or recorded phone line, to be connected with the Delaware County Sheriff's Office to make arrangements to secure the weapon before the Medic vehicle returns to the EMS Station. (This is required in order to provide a recorded transcript regarding where said weapon is to be taken and as to whom will assume custody of the weapon.)
6. **DELAWARE COUNTY EMS WILL NOT RETAIN POSSESSION OR RESPONSIBILITY OF ANY PERSONAL FIREARMS.**
7. Be sure to fill out a "Concealed Weapons Chain of Custody Form" and be sure that it travels with the weapon (in the gun case). Both the Company Officer and the Captain must sign the form.
8. If the patient is a law enforcement officer, his/her weapon is to be secured by another law enforcement officer when possible.

In the event that a firearm is not discovered until transportation is already in progress, the following additional safety steps must be taken:

1. The driver of the Medic SHALL be instructed to bring the truck to a **complete stop** with the transmission placed in the PARK position, **regardless of patient condition**, in a safe location.
2. One member of the crew will remove the weapon from the patient (in the holster if possible) and place it in a department issued gun case. AT **NO TIME** SHOULD ANY CREW MEMBER MAKE **ANY** ATTEMPT TO SAFETY THE WEAPON BY "CHECKING" OR UNLOADING IT. MINIMAL HANDLING SHALL BE THE GUIDELINE. The weapon is then to be locked into the designated compartment in the emergency vehicle. Only then may transportation of the patient be resumed. All additional steps as listed above in this guideline should still be followed.

If there are any questions as to the circumstances of an incident involving a weapon on the scene of and EMS incident, guidance shall be obtained immediately from the appropriate DCEMS Captain, and if necessary, the Assistant Chief or Chief of EMS by direct telephone contact. In addition, Delaware County Sheriff's Office should ALWAYS be involved.

Issuing Authority:



DCEMS Chief Rob Farmer

07/01/2008

Date