

# Delaware County Emergency Medical Service Standard Operating Guidelines

Subject	Effective	Supersedes	This Sheet	Total
Safe Customer Escort	August 1, 2007	All	1	2

The following procedure identifies factors to consider when deciding to allow a customer escort in County Medic vehicles during patient transportation to the hospital.

It is the policy of Delaware County EMS to extend the highest customer service to all we encounter in our daily activities. This includes allowing friends or family members to travel with a patient in a Medic during patient transportation, when appropriate. Each escort in a Medic increases the number of possible exposures to infections, contamination and physical dangers to personnel. This procedure may help to reduce the number of exposures to personnel while transporting patients to the emergency department. This procedure requires personnel to balance customer service considerations to the escort during patient transports versus safety in regards to physical danger, infectious exposure and possible contamination to personnel.

## Customer Service Considerations

The following may be reasons for transporting an escort with your patient in the Medic:

- Patient Care - is augmented by having an escort for the patient in the Medic. An example would be having an escort who has the knowledge of a second language, such as Spanish, American Sign Language, etc.
- Family Member (Escort) Care - is augmented by having the family member escort the patient in the Medic. An example would be an elderly spouse wanting to be with their critically ill mate who is being transported.
- Parent Escort - augments pediatric patient care, customer service and meets legalities for transporting and treating agencies. An example would be a parent or caregiver escorting a minor child for treatment.

## Exposures, Contaminations and Physical Danger Considerations

The following considerations may be used to refuse an escort in a Medic when transporting a patient to the emergency department:

- Infectious Exposures - when information indicates possible infectious exposure to the patient or DCEMS personnel by the escort. An example may be information that the escort has active TB.
- Contamination - when information indicates possible contamination that may expose DCEMS personnel, equipment or vehicle. An example may be that the escort has signs of obvious body fluids on their skin, clothing or possessions.
- Danger to Medic Driver or Patient - when information indicates possible physical danger to DCEMS personnel or to the patient by the escort. An example may be that the escort exhibits signs of social or behavioral stress, possible alcohol or drug intoxication, or there was a previous altercation between the patient and the escort.

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## Medic Crew Responsibility

It is the responsibility of DCEMS personnel to discuss the above considerations with the on-scene Incident Command (if established) prior to allowing an escort to travel in the Medic. Use of Seat Belts by the escort is absolutely mandatory. Small adults or young children should not ride in any Medic cab with passenger side airbags installed.

## Company or Command Officer Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the ranking officer on-scene to obtain and consider the above information before a decision is made to allow an escort to ride with the patient in the Medic. When the negative considerations outweigh the positive considerations, an escort is not advised. The officer on-scene will make the final decision.

In the spirit of customer service, information on other means of transportation should be provided to the customer such as taxis, private automobiles, buses, etc, if possible.

Issuing Authority:



DCEMS Chief Rob Farmer

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Date