

Northwest Community EMS System **POLICY MANUAL**

Policy Title: MedENGINES (Alternate response vehicles)

No. M - 9

Board approval: 3/13/25

Effective: 3/01/25

Supersedes: 03/14/19

Page: 1 of 3

Reference: IDPH EMS Act, Section 3.10(a)(b)(c); EMS Rules Section 515.825 Alternate Response Vehicle (effective November 1, 2024); EMS Education Standards; National EMS Scope of Practice Model; Illinois Expanded Scope of Practice Model

I. Definitions and IDPH policy

A. Ambulance Assistance Vehicles

1. "Ambulance assistance vehicles are dispatched simultaneously with an ambulance and assist with patient care prior to the arrival of the ambulance. Ambulance assistance vehicles include fire engines, trucks, squad cars or chief's cars that contain the staff and equipment required by this Section. Ambulance assistance vehicles shall not function as assist vehicles if staff and equipment required by this Section are not available. The agency shall identify ambulance assistance vehicles as a program plan amendment outlining the type and level of response that is planned. The ambulance assistance vehicle shall not transport or be a primary response vehicle but a supplementary vehicle to support EMS services. The ambulance assistance vehicle shall be dispatched only if needed. Ambulance assistance vehicles shall be classified as either:
 - a. Advanced ambulance assistance vehicles shall be staffed with a minimum of one Paramedic, PHRN, PHPA, PHAPRN or physician and shall have all of the required equipment.
 - b. Intermediate ambulance assistance vehicles shall be staffed with a minimum of one EMT, EMT-I, A-EMT, Paramedic, PHRN, PHPA, PHAPRN, or physician and shall have all the required equipment.
 - c. Basic ambulance assistance vehicles shall be staffed with a minimum of one EMT, EMT-I, A-EMT, Paramedic, PHRN, PHPA, PHAPRN or physician and shall have all the required equipment; or
 - d. EMR assistance vehicles shall be staffed with a minimum of one EMR, EMT, EMT-I, A-EMT, Paramedic, PHRN, PHPA, PHAPRN or physician and shall have all the required equipment." (EMS Rules Section 515.825)

B. Non-Transport Vehicles

1. "Non-Transport Vehicles are dispatched prior to dispatch of a transporting ambulance and include ambulances and fire engines that contain the staff and equipment required by this Section. The vehicle service provider shall identify non-transport vehicles as a program plan amendment outlining the type and level of response that is planned. Non-transport vehicles shall be staffed 24 hours per day, every day of the year."
 - a. "**ALS Non-Transport Vehicles** shall have a minimum of either one System authorized Paramedic or one PHRN, PHPA, PHAPRN, and one additional System authorized Paramedic, A-EMT, EMT-I, EMT, PHPA, PHAPRN, or physician, and shall have all of the required equipment."
 - i. Two Paramedics or PHRNs are preferred but not required by the System. If an alternate response vehicle (MedEngine or Squad) is identified in an agency's EMS plan as reserve, it may respond with one paramedic and 1 EMT, EMR, or firefighter if it is responding due to multiple simultaneous calls.

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Page: 2 of 3

- b. **“ILS Non-Transport Vehicles** shall have a minimum of either one System authorized A-EMT, EMT-I, Paramedic or PHRN and one additional System authorized EMT, A-EMT, EMT-I, Paramedic, PHRN, PHPA, PHAPRN, or physician and shall have the required equipment.”
 - c. **“BLS Non-Transport vehicles** shall be staffed by two System authorized personnel, unless the provider is functioning within the requirements of Section 515.830(i). The vehicle shall be staffed by an EMT or higher on all responses and shall have all the required equipment.” (EMS Rules Section 515.825)
- C. **Advanced Life Support Services (ALS) Services** – *an advanced level of pre-hospital and inter-hospital emergency care and non-emergency medical services that includes basic life support care, cardiac monitoring, cardiac defibrillation, electrocardiography, intravenous therapy, administration of medications, drugs and solutions, use of adjunctive medical devices, trauma care, and other authorized techniques and procedures as outlined in the provisions of the National EMS Education Standards relating to Advanced Life Support and any modifications to that curriculum specified in rules adopted by the Department pursuant to this Act. (Section 3.10(a) of the Act)*
- D. **Intermediate Life Support Services (ILS) Services** – *an intermediate level of pre-hospital and inter-hospital emergency care and non-emergency medical services that includes basic life support care plus intravenous cannulation and fluid therapy, invasive airway management, trauma care, and other authorized techniques and procedures as outlined in the Intermediate Life Support national curriculum of the United States Department of Transportation and any modifications to that curriculum specified in rules adopted by the Department pursuant to this Act. (Section 3.10(b) of the Act)*
- E. **Basic Life Support (BLS) Services** – *a basic level of pre-hospital and inter-hospital emergency care and non-emergency medical services that includes medical monitoring, clinical observation, airway management, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), control of shock and bleeding and splinting of fractures, as outlined in the provisions of the National EMS Education Standards relating to Basic Life Support and any modifications to that curriculum specified in rules adopted by the Department pursuant to this Act. (Section 3.10(c) of the Act)*

II. **POLICY**

- A. It is prudent and in the best interest of patient safety to have EMS equipment and licensed EMS personnel specified by IDPH Rules and System standards immediately available if an alternate response Fire Department apparatus responds to a call for EMS response prior to a state-authorized ambulance. The System supports Providers' efforts to enhance their preparedness, response capabilities, and customer service.
- B. Staffing and stocking a Fire Department vehicle as an EMS alternate response vehicle is purely optional. The System does not require EMS personnel or supplies on non-ambulance fire apparatus. These vehicles shall be identified in the Provider's EMS program plan outlining the level of response that is planned in compliance with IDPH EMS Act, Rules, National Standards and Guidelines, and System policy.
- C. This policy is not intended to specify the drugs and equipment required on ALS squads specifically licensed for an EMS response. Squads shall meet the requirements specified on the System Drug and Supply List for ambulances.

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Page: 3 of 3

III. **Registration of Non-transport Provider Agencies**

"Each non-transport provider shall complete and submit to the Department either the EMS non-transport provider application or EMS non-transport application for an existing transport provider, available on the IDPH website. The EMS Administrative Director shall process the completed application with IDPH.

IV. **Issuance and Renewal of License:** Upon payment of the appropriate fee, qualifying non-transport providers shall be issued a provider license that lists a number for each level of care approved. Licenses will not be issued for individual Non-Transport Vehicles. Providers shall inform the EMS System and the Department of any modifications to the application, using the System Modification forms (sys-mod). The EMS Administrative Director shall forward the signed sys-mod forms to IDPH.

- A. Licenses will be issued for one year and will be renewed upon completion of the self-inspection.
- B. Agencies that have both Transport and Non-Transport licenses will have one EMS agency number. Add-on letters to the Transport License Number will signify the type of additional provider services licensed by IDPH for that provider. Example: A.B.C. EMS service Transport provider number 8300
 - 1. A.B.C. EMS service Non-Transport provider number 8300NT
 - 2. A.B.C. EMS service Stretcher Van transport service number 8300SV

V. **Non-Transport vehicle Inspections:** Initial inspections shall be scheduled and completed by the IDPH state ambulance inspector. If an ALS or ILS NT vehicle, the assigned Hospital EMSC/Educator must complete the initial ALS or ILS portion of the inspection. Thereafter, the provider agency shall perform the annual BLS self-inspections, using forms supplied by IDPH on their website. ALS and ILS inspections using this policy shall be completed every other year by the assigned Hospital EMSC/Educator. They shall be completed in the alternate years by the EMS agency.

- A. **All alternate response vehicle inspections for the NWC EMSS are due in September of each year.**
- B. All completed inspection forms shall be forwarded to the EMS System. EMS Administrative Director for processing with IDPH. The agency shall pay all applicable fees directly to IDPH in compliance with the instructions issued by IDPH.
- C. IDPH will also perform inspections randomly or as the result of a complaint.

VI. EMS personnel responding on an alternate response vehicle are held to the same **scope of practice and standards of care** as comparably licensed EMS personnel on ambulances within the limits of the supplies and equipment available to them. They have the same liability protection under the EMS Act. EMS personnel shall initiate care under the System's SOPs, Policies, and Procedures within their scope of practice and based on available equipment. They shall assist in an orderly transition of care to the responding ambulance crew as specified in System policy.

VII. EMS products on Alternate Response Vehicles must meet specifications listed on the Non-Transport Drug & Supply/Equipment List

Matthew T. Jordan, MD, FACEP
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