



Scarborough Fire Department Scarborough, Maine



Standard Operating Guidelines

Book:	Emergency Operations
Chapter:	Medical Emergencies
Subject:	3410 - Transport of Mentally Ill & Deviant Behavior Patients
Revision Date:	6/15/2004
Approved by:	<i>B. Michael Thurlow</i>

PURPOSE

- A. This policy is intended to provide Scarborough Fire Department personnel guidance in determining the most appropriate means of transport to an approved medical facility, when the need arises to transport persons displaying behavioral disorders.
- B. The goal of this policy is to work cooperatively with police agencies to jointly determine the best means of transport at the time of an incident using the factors outlined in the procedure section of this SOP.
- C. As a general rule, police officers shall routinely transport persons who in the officer's opinion pose a threat to themselves or other people. In cases where an officer feels there is a concern for a medical condition, a safety concern (including restraining a combative patient), and or an available resource issue the officer may ask for a rescue unit to evaluate and transport the patient.

POLICY

The Scarborough Fire Department shall provide for the safety of its employees while providing the most appropriate transport method when dealing with mentally ill and deviant behavior patients.

SCOPE

This policy shall apply to Scarborough Fire Department EMS crews when responding to calls for mentally ill and deviant behavior patients.

PROCEDURE

- A. When called to evaluate a patient who displays signs of deviant behavior and/or mental illness, the EMS providers will assure that any and all possible medical conditions are evaluated and treated.
- B. If the patient is suspected of alcohol use/abuse, drug reaction or overdose, complaint of any other medical or trauma related complaint, then transport via an ambulance is appropriate.
- C. If the patient, after evaluation by EMS has been deemed to be clear of medical or traumatic concerns, a determination of the best means of transport will be made between the police officer and the EMS provider in charge at the incident. In determining the best method of transport, the patient's condition, available resources and staff safety must all be considered.
- D. Combative patients and/or patients who are at risk of further injury may best be transported via ambulance. However, efforts must be made to minimize the potential of equipment in the patient compartment from becoming potential weapons.
- E. If the determination is made that the patient needs to be taken into "protective custody" and is hand cuffed, a police officer will accompany and ride in the ambulance to the hospital. When the patient is in protective custody and not hand cuffed, then a determination will be made between the police officer and the EMS provider in charge, if the officer needs to ride in the ambulance or follow the ambulance to the hospital.
- F. Maine Medical Center must receive a phone call prior to transport of any agitated and/or violent patients regardless of the transport method. Upon arrival at the MMC Emergency Department the ambulance or police officer will be met by an Emergency Department coordinator to determine where the patient will be placed.
- G. Non-agitated and/or violent patients transported to MMC can go directly to triage using a standard enroute notification method.
- H. The best interest of the patient shall always be considered when making the decision to transport via ambulance or police vehicle.
- I. A Maine EMS run report will be completed on every call for evaluation/transport/treatment of mentally ill patients, regardless of the end result of method of transport.
- J. Response code shall be left to the judgment of the responding EMS crew based on the nature of the call, dispatch information, location, and any known prior experience with the individual involved.
- K. The EMS crew will stage away from the scene until such time as the scene has been declared safe by the police department.
- L. To contact the MMC, call 871-2950, Mercy Hospital 879-3265, and SMMC 283-7100.

DEFINITIONS

- A. **MMC:** Maine Medical Center
- B. **Triage:** The process used at the hospital to sort the priority of patients
- C. **REMIS:** Regional Emergency Medical Information Services (at MMC)
- D. **SMMC:** Southern Maine Medical Center

RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. It will be the responsibility of both the Scarborough Police and Fire Department staff to place safety first in all cases of interaction with the mentally ill victim/patient while assuring the victim/patient receives appropriate treatment.
- B. Any problems that arise as a result of this policy will need to be reported and reviewed by the command staff of both departments.

REFERENCES

- A. Maine EMS protocols Gray 13 and 17
- B. Maine Law Title 34-B, chapter 3, ss 3862, M.R.S.A.
- C. Scarborough Police Department General Order #2-20
- D. Memo from MMC of 8/29/02