

**OKALOOSA COUNTY  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

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**Title:** Workplace Safety  
**Policy:** 301.00  
**Purpose:** To control hazards and minimize the risk of workplace injuries & illnesses. It is the expectation of OCEMS that these policies are observed and followed at all times.

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**Policy:**

**All areas**

Safe Workplace Conditions

Fire extinguishers and smoke detectors will be provided in all stations.

Seatbelts shall be provided in vehicles at all approved seating positions.

Personal Protective Equipment

Gloves, masks, eye protection and gowns will be provided in appropriate areas for protection against bloodborne disease.

“Universal precautions” using appropriate personal protective equipment must be taken whenever blood or body fluids are present.

PPE will be worn by all responders entering a vehicle or in area immediately around vehicle during patient extrication

Safe Work Practices

Report all unsafe conditions to your supervisor.

Report all occupational accidents, injuries and illnesses to the Shift Supervisor.

Horseplay and use of intoxicating substances is prohibited.

Smoking is prohibited in all OCEMS buildings and vehicles.

If fire occurs, employees must place safety for themselves and others ahead of concerns for vehicles and property.

Any fire, which cannot be quickly extinguished, must be reported to 9-1-1 and the building evacuated.

If fire occurs in a moving vehicle, stop in a safe area and request assistance by radio or cellular phone, then ensure that engine and all electrical circuits are turned off.

Employees shall not attempt to fight fuel fires.

If vehicles or buildings are abandoned due to spreading fire, withdraw at least 1500 feet due to hazard from rupturing oxygen/compressed gas cylinders.

Fire extinguishers shall be maintained, tested and recharged at appropriate intervals and kept accessible at all times.

Fire extinguishers should only be operated by employees trained in their use.

Fire extinguishers may be used on small fires after all occupants have exited the vehicle.

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Smoke detectors must be operational at all times. Battery removal or other means of disabling smoke detectors is strictly prohibited.

Worn or frayed wiring shall be promptly reported for repair or replacement.

Exits shall be kept clear, well lit and will be able to be opened from the inside without taking extra steps to unlock the door.

Excessive paper shall not be stored in work areas.

Aisles and hallways to be kept clear at all times.

Hand carts and dollies shall be available for heavy loads.

Work, break and storage areas shall be kept clean, orderly, clear of debris and floor storage and electric cords at all times.

Cords and cables are to be secured out of the way to prevent tripping and fraying hazards.

File cabinets must have only one drawer open at a time. Close drawer when finished.

Empty file cabinets shall be filled bottom to top.

Desk chairs shall be adjustable.

In locations where disinfectants are used, closed containers shall be provided and placed away from food preparation areas.

Security chains must be adjusted and re-attached after moving compressed gas cylinders.

Valve caps (threaded protective covers for use on large compressed gas cylinders) shall be used on all "M" cylinders

Seatbelts shall be worn at all times except when providing specific patient care which prevents such use.

Employees shall not attempt to lift loads heavier than their ability. Assistance must be obtained prior to moving overly heavy loads.

When necessary to lift and turn at the same time, employees shall move feet rather than twisting torso whenever possible.

Lift properly using bent knees and straight back.

Vary position periodically during prolonged activity.

**EMS Operations**

**Safe Workplace Conditions**

Impervious needle disposal containers and red plastic Biohazard bags shall be provided on every ambulance.

Waterless hand cleaner for use in the field shall be provided.

HazMat reference materials shall be provided.

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Personal Protective Equipment

Gloves, masks, eye protection and gowns shall be available at all times in the ambulance for protection of the employees

Safe Work Practices

Smoke detectors shall be maintained in all crew quarters.

Stretchers shall be serviced at regular intervals in accordance with manufacturer's instructions. Employees must report to their Shift Supervisor any equipment in need of repair.

While responding the driver shall never drive faster than is safe for conditions with due regard for the safety of all persons using the highway.

While responding the driver must continuously exercise due regard for the safety of all persons using the highway.

While responding the driver must come to a complete stop at every stop sign or red light, proceeding slowly through the intersection after obtaining clear passage with due regard for the safety of all persons using the highway.

When responding along the shoulder of a highway, the driver must slow and proceed only when safe to do so with due regard for the safety of all persons using the highway.

Employees shall keep windows tightly shut when the siren is in operation.

The ambulance shall be parked out of the line of traffic, whenever possible at the scene, and shielded by other emergency vehicles.

Employees shall wash their hands after every patient contact, using waterless hand cleanser when running water is not available.

When unloading a patient, employee shall confirm that the stretcher is locked prior to transferring weight to lowered wheels.

The inclined loading position of the stretcher shall only be used to load and unload; never to roll for any distance.

Crews shall seek assistance, whenever possible, when carrying patients downstairs.

Employees shall not place themselves in hazardous extrication situations.

Crews should stage their vehicle some distance away from unsecured crime scenes and not approach until advised by dispatch that the scene is "secure".

Employees should request police assistance any time they believe they are in danger of assault by patients or bystanders.

Employees should plan an "escape route" whenever interacting with a disturbed patient; similarly allowing the patient a perceived route of "escape".

Crews should clearly identify themselves and their mission to people present in potentially threatening situations.

If physically assaulted, employees must Retreat if possible, and summon assistance using Defensive physical techniques only (dodge, deflect, block, etc.). Offensive techniques (punch, jab, kick, etc.) are only to be used if cornered with no escape route and being physically assaulted.

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Crews should approach all scenes with caution, alert to the possible presence of unrecognized hazardous materials.

If first on scene of a HazMat incident, crews must withdraw an appropriate distance as trained. Request additional assistance, isolate the scene, and deny entry.

Employees must remain in the cold zone at all times during HazMat incidents and must only care for properly decontaminated patients.

Employees shall utilize incident - specific advice from Poison Control vs. HazMat officials when determining decontamination requirements and secondary contamination risks to themselves and others, when no other Public Safety representative is available.

Employees shall at all times function in accordance with company and jurisdictional HazMat policies.

Personal Protective Equipment

Employees shall wear appropriate personal protective equipment when exposed to blood and specific body fluids when performing procedures.

Employees shall wear latex gloves, surgical masks, protective eyewear, waterproof shoe covers and biohazard - type impervious gowns when the potential for exposure exists and as outlined in the bloodborne pathogen exposure control plan.

Employees using high-level disinfectant solutions to treat airway/ventilation instruments are required to wear impervious gloves and eye protection when exposed to solution.

**Accountability and Compliance:**

It is the responsibility of all employees to maintain workplace safety according to the definitions and procedures outlined in this policy.

Any workplace safety deviations should be documented and sent to a Shift Commander for correction.

EMS logistics will repair or replace all faulty or broken equipment in a timely manner.

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