

Alleghany County Ambulance Transport Policy

Purpose: To establish criteria and guidelines for transports of patients to or from a facility outside of Alleghany County. These guidelines will include plans for Ambulance Availability, Transports with distance further than 85 road miles, Critical Care Patients, and Inclement Weather.

Policy: The primary responsibility of Alleghany County EMS is to provide emergency care, treatment, and transport to the sick and injured citizens of Alleghany County. Transports to facilities, other than Alleghany Health, will be accommodated under the following guidelines.

21.1 (General / Ambulance Availability)

(a) During the hours of 8am to 8pm, only one (1) ambulance will be available to transport routine situations outside of the county. This will leave one (1) ALS unit available to respond to calls within the county. This includes transports to out of county doctor appointments, scheduled procedures, etc. Alleghany Health will be responsible for notifying the EMS supervisor on duty in advance of patients requiring transport to other facilities so calls can be triaged and handled appropriately. Between the hours of 8 pm until 8 am, **NO** routine out of county transports will be provided. The only routine transfers during that time will be patients from and back to extended care facilities within Alleghany County, provided they meet the criteria for ambulance transport. If an out of county routine transport is requested after 9 pm, destination and turnaround time will be considered before acceptance by EMS supervisor or designee. The goal is to have the second ambulance back in Alleghany County before or soon after midnight.

(b) Emergency transports will be taken according to ambulance availability. Between the hours of 8 pm and 8 am, emergency transports will be taken only if all other transport resources have been exhausted. If EMS personnel are uncertain as to whether a particular case is an emergency transport, he or she will use their discretion in accordance with OEMS guidelines. To be categorized as emergent transport, patients must meet the following criteria.

1. STEMI being transported **directly** to cath lab at a PCI center
2. Stroke//CVA being transferred for **immediate intervention** at the receiving hospital (If TPA has been started then the patient is already receiving an intervention.)
3. Surgical (medical or trauma) patients being transported **directly** to the OR at a receiving facility.

a) Transport will be prioritized at the discretion of the EMS Shift Supervisor (or designee). The Supervisor will have the authority to prioritize transports in a case where multiple transports are pending.

b) Transports originating from a point or facility outside of Alleghany County that are returning to the County will be handled on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the EMS Shift Supervisor or designee and will only be transported during the hours of 8 am and 5pm. Alleghany EMS will make every effort to handle these transports, depending on ambulance availability.

- c) All inter-facility ambulance transports must originate and/or end in Allegheny County.

Allegheny EMS requests that Allegheny Health continue to look at using other transport options when more than two out of county transports are pending (other transport service provider contact information is attached).

21.2 (Transports with distance further than 85 miles)

As a general rule, Allegheny EMS will only accept transports less than 85 miles. Exceptions to this rule are all other (list attached) resources have been exhausted, wait time greater than 8 hours, and the patient falls under the following special categories:

- (a) Transplant Patient
- (b) Cancer
- (c) Burns

If a patient is needing to be transported to a facility that is further than 85 road miles (one way), Allegheny County EMS will use the following guidelines. Due to only having two (2) ALS units staffed by Allegheny County, these guidelines will be followed to help conserve resources within the county.

- (a) After notification of the transport, the EMS supervisor will attempt to call in a third crew, if needed to cover the county while the transport is being conducted. If unable to find personnel, the transport will not be taken.
- (b) Transports further than 85 miles will only be handled in a routine manner. Emergency transports shall be handled by other means (ie: critical care team from receiving facility).
- (c) No transports over 85 miles will be taken between 18:00 (6 PM)-08:00 AM.

21.3 (Critical Care Patients)

If Allegheny County EMS is transporting a critical care patient, from Allegheny Health, that requires special equipment (ie: ventilator), Allegheny Health will be required to send appropriate personnel to assist with patient care during the transport. Due to limited personnel, equipment, and resources, the hospital should attempt to use a critical care transport team or helicopter as a primary mode of transport before contacting / using Allegheny EMS. If Allegheny Health is unable to send personnel to assist, the EMS supervisor will use his or her discretion on the transport.

21.4 (Inclement Weather)

When Allegheny County and/or surrounding counties are experiencing inclement weather resulting in hazardous road conditions, out of county transports will be delayed until road conditions improve. At no time will a transport be taken when the lives or safety of the crew and/or a patient is at substantial risk due to a weather-related accident. Every effort will be made to transport patients, as long as the safety of the crew and patient is reasonably certain. If road conditions are questionable outside of Allegheny, then the EMS Supervisor will contact other counties to ascertain road conditions before committing to the transport. With consideration for the safety of the crew, patient, and general public, the EMS Supervisor or designee on duty will use their discretion when to accept transports during inclement weather.