

## **EMS Emergency Radio Communications Policy**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to establish standardized radio communication procedures for EMS personnel to ensure clear, accurate, and professional communications during emergency and non-emergency operations. Effective radio communication is essential to maintaining responder safety, coordinating patient care, and supporting efficient incident management.

### **Policy**

All EMS personnel shall use agency-issued or approved communication devices in a professional manner and in accordance with Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulations, agency procedures, and applicable local, state, and federal laws.

Personnel shall communicate clearly, accurately, and efficiently while maintaining patient confidentiality and operational security.

### **Radio Readiness**

At the beginning of each shift, assigned personnel shall:

- Verify that all assigned portable and mobile radios are present and operational.
- Ensure batteries are fully charged and spare batteries are available when applicable.
- Confirm the radio is programmed to the appropriate operational channels.
- Report any malfunctioning or damaged communication equipment immediately to a supervisor.

### **Radio Procedures**

Personnel shall:

- Listen before transmitting to avoid interrupting existing communications.
- Identify themselves using their assigned unit designation.
- Speak clearly, calmly, and at a normal pace.
- Keep transmissions brief and limited to essential information.
- Wait for acknowledgment before transmitting additional information when practical.
- Avoid unnecessary radio traffic during emergency incidents.
- Maintain professional language at all times.

### **Emergency Communications**

During emergency responses, personnel shall communicate:

- Unit identification.
- Response status (en route, on scene, transporting, available, etc.).
- Location updates when appropriate.
- Requests for additional resources.
- Changes in patient condition that affect operational planning.
- Scene safety concerns or hazards.

- Requests for law enforcement, fire, rescue, or additional EMS resources when needed.

Emergency traffic shall take priority over routine communications.

### **Race Track Communications**

During race track operations:

- EMS personnel shall monitor the designated event or Race Control radio channel at all times while assigned.
- Entry onto the race surface shall occur only after authorization from Race Control or the Incident Commander.
- Personnel shall immediately acknowledge instructions from Race Control.
- Radio transmissions should remain concise to minimize channel congestion during active race operations.
- Operational updates shall be communicated as directed by Incident Command or Race Control.

### **Patient Confidentiality**

Personnel shall protect patient privacy during all radio communications.

Whenever possible:

- Use unit numbers, patient age, sex, and general medical condition rather than patient names.
- Do not transmit Social Security numbers, driver's license numbers, insurance information, or other personally identifiable information over the radio unless specifically authorized and operationally necessary.
- Comply with HIPAA and all applicable privacy regulations.

### **Radio Discipline**

Personnel shall not:

- Use profanity or unprofessional language.
- Engage in unnecessary conversations.
- Make jokes, personal comments, or inappropriate remarks over agency radio channels.
- Broadcast confidential personnel information.
- Interrupt emergency traffic unless necessary for safety or higher-priority communications.

Personnel shall maintain professional radio etiquette at all times.

### **Equipment Care**

Assigned personnel are responsible for safeguarding communication equipment.

Personnel shall:

- Protect radios from damage and unauthorized use.
- Report lost, stolen, or damaged radios immediately.

- Return assigned radios and accessories at the end of each shift unless otherwise authorized.
- Ensure batteries are placed on chargers before leaving duty.

### **Communication Failures**

If radio communications fail:

- Attempt communication using an alternate radio channel if available.
- Utilize cellular telephones or other approved communication methods.
- Notify dispatch, Race Control, or Incident Command as soon as communications are restored.
- Report equipment failures to supervision before the end of the shift.

### **Documentation**

Significant communication failures, emergency communication issues, or equipment malfunctions shall be documented and reported through the appropriate chain of command.

### **Responsibility**

All EMS personnel are responsible for:

- Maintaining operational readiness of communication equipment.
- Following established radio procedures.
- Using professional communication practices.
- Protecting patient confidentiality.
- Promptly reporting communication equipment problems.

Supervisors are responsible for ensuring personnel receive appropriate training in radio operations and that communication equipment is maintained in proper working condition.

### **Compliance**

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action. Proper radio communications are critical to responder safety, patient care, and the efficient management of emergency incidents. All personnel are expected to use agency communication systems professionally and responsibly at all times.