

To: All System Members
From: Kris Newcomb, BSN, PRHN
Date: October 9, 2023
Subject: Delayed or Missed 911 Response

Staffing shortages at EMS agencies across the state have increasingly impacted EMS coverage to their communities. Unfortunately, our system has not been exempted from these challenges. Now more than ever, we are dependent on our surrounding EMS partners to assure that our communities have optimal EMS transport available. While our policies support a system of mutual aid, the policy does not ensure minimal delays in response times. It is unacceptable for a transport agency to receive a 911 dispatch only to wait the 6 minutes before realizing that there are no providers available. This has resulted in response times exceeding 20 minutes.

Therefore, I am requiring all transport agencies ensure 24/7 scheduled coverage. If you are unable to secure minimum staffing, you will take your ambulance out of service with dispatch until you can provide the minimum staffing. Please notify the EMS office if your ambulance is taken out of service for greater than 24 hours. This will guarantee the timely dispatch of a transport agency to your community. While this undoubtedly will put strain on mutual aid partners, it will ensure timely patient care within our system.

The new operational requirements (Section 515.830 (m)) and the McLean County Area EMS Policy, which support this change, are listed below.

Thank you for all that you do for our communities.

Respectfully Yours,

Kris Newcomb, BSN, PHRN

EMS Code 515.830 (m)

Operational Requirements

- 1) *An ambulance that is transporting a patient to a hospital shall be operated in accordance with the requirements of the Act and this Part.*
- 2) *A licensee shall operate its ambulance service in compliance with this Part, 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Except as required in this subsection (k), each individual vehicle within the ambulance service shall not be required to operate 24 hours a day, as long as at least one vehicle for each level of service covered by the license is in operation at all times. An ALS vehicle can be used to provide coverage at either an ALS, ILS or BLS level, and the coverage shall meet the requirements of this Section.*
 - A) *At the time of application for initial or renewal licensure, and upon annual inspection, the applicant or licensee shall submit to the Department for approval a list containing the anticipated hours of operation for each vehicle covered by the license.*
 - i) *A current roster shall also be submitted that lists the System authorized EMTs, A-EMTs, EMT-Is, Paramedics, PHRNs, PHPAs, PHAPNs or physicians who are employed or available to staff each vehicle during its hours of operation. The roster shall include each staff person's name, license number, license expiration date and telephone number, and shall state whether the person is scheduled to be on site or on call.*
 - ii) *An actual or proposed four-week staffing schedule shall also be submitted that covers all vehicles, includes staff names from the submitted roster, and states whether each staff member is scheduled to be on site or on call during each work shift.*

MCAEMS Policy

Title of Policy: <i>Emergency Vehicle Response Greater Than Six Minutes</i>	Policy Number: AD-111
Effective Date: 10/2004	Review Date: 8/2023
Policy Area: Administration/Operations	Approvals: EMSSC, EMS MD

Background to Policy:

To ensure the caller of Emergency Medical Services has the right to know when the response time to the scene of an emergency will be longer than six minutes.

Policy Statement:

The following guidelines have been established for the purpose of providing direction to dispatch centers in situations where the EMS vehicle response time to the scene will be greater than six minutes.

Policy:

All EMS transport agency members of McLean County Area EMS System that provide emergency ambulance response to their respective service area have committed to an optimum response time of four to six minutes in their primary coverage area.

Each respective agency's response time to their secondary and outlying areas is greater than six minutes. If a call is received by any of the McLean County Area EMS System dispatch centers and it is known at the time of the call, for any reason the response time to the scene will be longer than six minutes by the responding agency, the following protocol shall be followed.

A. Calls received by the McLean County Area EMS System dispatch centers in the primary coverage area:

- Initiate mutual aid if ambulance or staffing is not immediately available.*
- Notify caller of the estimated time of arrival of the responding unit.*

B. Calls received by dispatch for the secondary and outlying areas:

- Initiate mutual aid if an ambulance or staffing is not immediately available.*
- Notify the caller of the estimated time of arrival of the responding transport unit.*
- Contact and request response of the nearest EMS first responder agency in situations of an emergency.*

C. Agencies who fail to respond to a 911 call due to lack of personnel or apparatus, issues must fill out an incident report within 24 hours.