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EMS Dispatch Change – March 1, 2019

On March 1, 2019, we will implement a significant change in EMS Dispatching: **Bravo calls will be dispatched as Priority 2 responses.** This trend, implemented by many major municipal departments over the past two years, has improved safety for responders and the public as well as significantly decreased wear and tear on vehicles, all without impacting patient outcomes. Our new response grid will be:

Saratoga County EMS Dispatch rev. 3-2019			
Priority Code	Response Level	Who	Suggested Response Mode
3	Standby/xpt	BLS	COLD
2	A (Alpha)	BLS ¹	COLD
2	B (Bravo)	BLS ¹	COLD
1	C (Charlie)	ALS ²	Closest BLS – HOT ALS – HOT All other units/ambulance – COLD ³
1	D (Delta)	ALS ²	All units – HOT
1	E (Echo)	ALS ²	All units – HOT
<small>NOTE: Omega response not used in Saratoga County (Dispatch any Ω determinant as Alpha) ¹ Fire assist applies to B, C, D, and E calls. Fire also goes to <u>all</u> traffic accidents (A-E). ² Response levels Charlie, Delta, and Echo require ALS, if available. ³ if the ambulance carries ALS gear or ALS provider, response mode should be HOT. For questions, contact Mike McEvoy, EMS-1 at (518) 383-8608</small>			

From an operational perspective, there will **be no change** in fire department automatic EMS assists. The recommended response mode for all units on Bravo calls is **COLD**. There are situations, like encountering a congested roadway when arriving at a motor vehicle crash, where crews will need to exercise common sense and appropriate discretion with use of lights and sirens.

A review of Bravo responses in Saratoga County from January 1, 2001 through June 30, 2018 (18+ years) was conducted. Using multiple databases including NEMSIS, emsCharts, DOH, and a NYS hospital patient database, 59,970 Bravo responses were examined. The chart on the following page shows the numbers and dispositions of those calls.

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n=	Disposition	%
2,910	Assistance Call (Lift or Other)	4.9%
3,940	Cancelled	6.6%
740	Dead at Scene, NO Resuscitation Initiated	1.2%
4,670	No Patient Found	7.8%
10,670	RMA BLS or ALS Treatment, NO Transport	17.8%
16,630	Treated, Transported ALS - No Lights / Sirens	27.7%
3,550	Treated, Transported ALS - Lights / Sirens	5.9%
16,860	Treated, Transported BLS - No Lights / Sirens	28.1%
59,970		100.0%

More than a third of these responses did not result in transport (38.2%). Of the 37,040 patients that were transported, very few were admitted to a hospital (565) and of those, only 3 were admitted to ICU beds. These data strongly suggest that safety benefits for responders and the public, coupled with reduced costs from less wear and tear on response vehicles *FAR* outweigh any potential risks to patients. The Saratoga County EMS Council has twice unanimously voted to support implementing this change. Many ambulance corps started responding Priority 2 on Bravo calls last year.

After implementation of the dispatch change, we'll continue to monitor Bravo calls and patient outcomes. I would appreciate your feedback on any issues you encounter. Let me know if you have any questions before the implementation. Please share this memo with all of your members so they understand that this change is being made out of concern for their safety. The Office of Emergency Services, the Saratoga County Sheriff's Department and the Saratoga County EMS Council want to make sure that every responder goes home after every call. This change will help make that happen.



Mike McEvoy
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