



City of Virginia Beach

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CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

OPERATIONAL RESPONSE PLAN For the Department and the Volunteer Rescue Squads of Virginia Beach

Designated Response Agency

Emergency Medical Services in Virginia Beach are provided by a combined force of career and volunteer personnel. In accordance with City Code Sec-2-421, the Virginia Beach Department of EMS is the Designated Emergency Response Agency (DERA) for the City of Virginia Beach. As such, the Department of Emergency Medical Services shall be responsible for controlling and supervising the provision of pre-hospital emergency medical and rescue services in the city to protect and promote the health, welfare and safety of the general public. The Director of EMS and the Operational Medical Director are responsible for the supervision and control of all department personnel engaged in providing emergency medical and rescue services.

Department Membership

The Department of EMS consists of the career and volunteer employees of the department, the members of the operational volunteer rescue squads serving the City, personnel assigned to the Department of Fire Protection when engaged in EMS activities, municipal early defibrillation teams, and members of the Emergency Communications Division while engaged in emergency medical dispatch activities.

The following rescue squads are formally considered a part of the Department of EMS:

- Ocean Park Volunteer Rescue Squad (#1)
- Davis Corner Volunteer Rescue Squad (#2)
- Chesapeake Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad (#4)
- Princess Anne Courthouse Volunteer Rescue Squad (#5/21)
- Creeds Volunteer Rescue Squad (#6)
- Kempsville Volunteer Rescue Squad (#9/19)

Blackwater Volunteer Rescue Squad (#13)
Virginia Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad (#8/14)
Plaza Volunteer Rescue Squad (#16/18)
Sandbridge Volunteer Rescue Squad (#17)

Each rescue squad is considered to be a citywide responder for purposes of deployment. While fund drive boundaries and primary rescue squad zones may be established, dispatching and response is conducted under the overall umbrella of the Department of EMS DERA. Each individual rescue squad maintains its own corporate charter and EMS agency licensure.

Virginia Beach City Code sections related to EMS are provided in Attachment A. A map of station locations is provided in Attachment B.

Virginia Beach Emergency Response System

Coordination and operation of the various organizations under the Department of EMS agency are conducted as part of an overall concept known as the Virginia Beach Emergency Response System (ERS). Under the ERS, policies, training standards, medical protocols, administrative requirements, equipment, etc are all standardized to ensure a unified approach to providing pre-hospital patient care and rescue services across the community. This systems approach is the foundation for organizational design and customer service delivery.

Training and Certification

The Department of EMS maintains a full time training staff and offers a variety of training programs. Coordination is maintained with training officers from all ERS agencies to ensure that appropriate medical instruction is provided.

Patient care provider certification and sanctioning guidelines are established by the Chief of EMS and the Operational Medical Director. Any member who is released to function at a designated level under the Department of EMS is authorized to provide that service anywhere in the City on any ERS apparatus. While an individual may have a primary affiliation with a particular rescue squad, he/she is always considered a member of the Department when acting as a DERA responder. For example, a member of the Creeds Volunteer Rescue Squad who is certified as an ambulance attendant-in-charge (AIC) may function as an AIC on a Sandbridge Volunteer Rescue Squad ambulance. In the event there is a question about a individual members' credentials, rescue squad commanders have access to master training records for any member of the organization.

To facilitate sharing of personnel resources, career EMS Department employees are affiliated as members of each rescue squad. For affiliation purposes, they are classified as auxiliary members.

Any member of the Department assigned to drive either a city-owned or volunteer-owned vehicle must meet both baseline Virginia Department of Health regulations as well as complete the Department of EMS driver certification program.

ERS Vehicles

The various organizations functioning under the Department of EMS provide a wide range of vehicles and equipment. The Department of EMS itself maintains and operates a number of permitted non-transport vehicles, special operations units and staff vehicles. Ambulances are owned by each of the ten volunteer rescue squad transport agencies. Some rescue squads also operate non-transport vehicles. The Fire Department operates a large fleet of vehicles. Any Fire apparatus engaged in EMS response is permitted as a non-transport vehicle under the Department of EMS agency license.

Any Department of EMS member meeting City administrative and training requirements is authorized to operate any ambulance or auxiliary vehicle operated by any of the City's volunteer rescue squads. Any driver meeting requirements for operation of a large vehicle may operate any squad truck owned one of the City's volunteer rescue squads. All qualified personnel are authorized to operate one of the Department's quick response zone cars.

In accordance with this Response Plan, all rescue squads participate in a shared vehicle arrangement. Authorization to operate a vehicle is in no way related to the member's status as a career or volunteer member of the department. Nor is authorization related to the member's status as a member of a particular Virginia Beach rescue squad agency.

Operations

1. All members function under unified operational policies as outlined thru the Department of EMS Rules, Regulations, and Policies Manual and City Code.
2. All patient care providers function under the Tidewater EMS Council Regional Protocols as amended by the OMD.
3. Responders are dispatched by the Virginia Beach Emergency Communications Center. This center provides Emergency Medical Dispatcher (EMD) services under the oversight of the Department of EMS.
4. All rescue squads and City responders are considered mutually supporting as one unified citywide DERA. Response citywide is automatic and should not be considered as mutual aid even though a rescue squad may cross boundaries established for fund raising purposes.
5. Ambulances and zone cars are staffed via a coordinated scheduling process that aligns the personnel resources of the rescue squads and career medic force. While individual member preference and home squad will be a consideration for

assignments, a baseline level of strategic ambulance placement is maintained (i.e. at least three staffed ambulances will be staffed at stations along the I264 corridor).

6. Virginia Beach EMS utilizes a fixed station model for initial apparatus assignments. However, supervisors can and will relocate ambulances to alternate stations or posting locations in order to optimize deployment of resources to meet ongoing demands for services.
7. The closest available ambulance is dispatched to all calls regardless of rescue squad primary service zone. Pagers for closer rescue squads may also be activated to alert off duty volunteers.
8. When closer by time and distance than the ambulance to Priority 1 calls, a first response unit is also dispatched. The closest available first response apparatus is dispatched to all calls regardless of engine company primary service zone. First responders are deployed in non-transport vehicles such as fire engines, ladder trucks, and squad trucks. Early defibrillation teams may also be activated, when appropriate.
9. A first responder may also be dispatched to Priority 2 calls when the ambulance is responding from a distance. This is done via CAD recommendation, by request of the ambulance crew, or by request of an EMS supervisor.

Response Time Standards

A core philosophy of the Virginia Beach ERS is to provide the most appropriate response unit in a timely fashion. As such, the primary performance measure is based on the unit arriving first to the scene of the emergency. This unit may be an ambulance or a non-transport vehicle. Rescue squad or engine company district boundaries are not a consideration. In conjunction with the ERS Executive Committee, the Department of EMS will develop goals for first response, ALS, and transport unit arrival. Response times will be monitored by the Department of EMS. An annual report shall be provided to the OMD and Chief of EMS.

Mutual Aid

Mutual aid agreements will be maintained between the Virginia Beach Department of EMS and the DERAs in Norfolk, Chesapeake and Currituck County. As feasible, agreements should be created Northampton County, Norfolk International Airport and local military bases.

Any time the duty EMS Supervisor or any other EMS chief officer feels that an ERS resource will not arrive within a timely fashion, he/she is authorized to contact the appropriate mutual aid agency for assistance. Consideration shall be given to nature of the call, travel time, and potential availability of a closer local unit response. Mutual aid may be requested for first response, ALS response, and transport response as needed.

All requests for mutual aid assistance from a neighboring jurisdiction will be forwarded to the duty EMS Supervisor. He/she will evaluate current resources and provide the requested assistance whenever possible.

Communications

1. Primary communications between Department of EMS agencies and the Virginia Beach Emergency Communications Center is via 800 mghz radio. Complete interoperability exists between all permitted EMS vehicles owned by the City and any volunteer rescue squad.
2. Hospital communication is via 800 mghz portable radios and COR mobile radios.
3. All apparatus are equipped with mutual aid radio capability to communicate with Norfolk, Chesapeake, Norfolk International Airport, and military fire departments.
4. All ambulances and primary Department of EMS apparatus are equipped with VHF radio capability.

Medical Direction

All members of the Department of EMS function under a single Operational Medical Director (OMD) appointed by the City Manager as specified in City Code.

Quality Management Plan

The Department of EMS employs a full-time Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Coordinator. This officer shall monitor system performance in all areas of patient care. This work will also be supported through the analysis function provided by the department's Planning and Analysis Office. The Department of EMS participates on quality improvement committees hosted by local hospitals and the Tidewater EMS Council. A continuous dialogue is maintained between the CQI Coordinator, the OMD, training staff, and operational officers of all participating agencies.

Quality management activities include, but are not limited to:

- Random customer surveys
- Review all cardiac arrest cases
- Review all trauma alert patients transported to Virginia Beach General Hospital
- Random EMD tape review
- Review all early defibrillation service AED uses
- Monthly reviews of alternating call types
- Review of high risk skills performance (i.e. needle cric.)
- Individual technician reviews as needed
- Peer review

Regulation and Enforcement

The Department of EMS has a designated officer assigned to oversee compliance issues for all ERS agencies. This officer serves as the primary link to the Virginia Office of EMS.

All City departments and volunteer rescue squads are expected to complete their bi-annual agency inspections via a consolidated process arranged with the Virginia Office of EMS.

The Department of EMS issues permits to all non-DEIRA EMS agencies operating in Virginia Beach. This allows for local regulation as defined by State Code.

Records

By direction of the Operational Medical Director, all Department of EMS responses are documented via field electronic reporting. Reports are submitted to a central database. Data element reports for the Department of EMS and the volunteer rescue squads are submitted by the Department of EMS on a monthly basis.

Copies of personnel and training records for Department of EMS and each rescue squad are maintained at the Department of EMS administration office. These files are considered the official file of record for purposes of internal human resources processes, including promotions and disciplinary matters. Personnel and training records for Virginia Beach firefighters are maintained by the Virginia Beach Fire Department.

Infection Control

The Department of EMS provides infection control and occupational safety support for both department employees and the volunteer rescue squads. The Fire Department and Police Department provide their own coverage in these areas. All City agencies fall under the City of Virginia Beach Exposure Control Plan.

Major Incident Response

The ERS system follows the Tidewater EMS Council Regional MCI Plan. The Department of EMS is also an active participant in the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS).

The Department of EMS jointly maintains a MCI response truck at the Haygood and General Stations (#2 & 21). While each squad has access to at least 75 triage tags, caches of tags are assigned for rapid deployment citywide on the following apparatus:

- EMS supervisor trucks
- Volunteer rescue squad heavy rescue trucks
- MCI trucks

Other ERS specialty resources include:

Two volunteer rescue squad heavy rescue trucks	EMS marine rescue team
Two Fire Department heavy rescue trucks	EMS SAR/Bike team
Fire Department technical rescue team	
Fire Department hazardous materials team	
EMS tactical paramedics	

Vehicle Maintenance

All city-owned vehicles are maintained by the Department of Public Works in accordance with manufacturers recommendations. Records are maintained at the City Garage.

Individual rescue squads are responsible for the maintenance of their vehicles. Some squads opt to utilize the City Garage to provide this service.

Vehicle Sharing/Insurance Coverage

Rescue squad and EMS Department vehicle accidents are investigated by Department of EMS officers. Fire Department vehicle accidents are investigated by Fire Department officers.

Insurance coverage for all Department of EMS vehicles, regardless of ownership, is provided by the City of Virginia Beach via the Risk Management Office. The City of Virginia Beach is self-insured.

System Improvement Process

Committees are established to enhance ERS performance. These committees are comprised of stakeholders from across the system including hospital staff, dispatchers, and field providers. An executive committee of senior staff reviews and implements recommendations from the working groups as appropriate.

An ERS liaison officer is assigned in each participating City department. This officer serves as the primary link between that agency and the Department of EMS medical and operational control system.

APPROVED:

Signatures on file

Bruce W. Edwards EMS Chief	Date
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Signatures on file

Stewart Martin, MD, FACEP Operational Medical Director	Date
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APPROVED (cont):

Signatures on file

Ocean Park Volunteer Rescue Squad	Date
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Davis Corner Volunteer Rescue Squad	Date
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Chesapeake Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad	Date
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Princess Anne Courthouse Volunteer Rescue Squad	Date
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Creeds Volunteer Rescue Squad	Date
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Kempsville Volunteer Rescue Squad	Date
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Blackwater Volunteer Rescue Squad	Date
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Virginia Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad	Date
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Plaza Volunteer Rescue Squad	Date
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Sandbridge Volunteer Rescue Squad	Date
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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Virginia Beach City Code sections related to EMS

Attachment B – Map of station locations

Last update: 1/15/15