

Emergency Medical Dispatch Protocol

GD99-009 Effective 15-Aug-2007 Revised 3-Aug-2007

Note: This chapter on Emergency Medical Dispatch Protocol is repeated verbatim in the Rice University Police Department Communications Standard Operating Procedures.

1. RUPD will dispatch REMS to all requests for emergency medical assistance, anytime HFD is dispatched to the Rice campus or University holdings, reports of working fires, or reports of chemical or industrial accidents within the REMS primary service area, as defined in *Definition of Service* § 1 of the REMS Standard Operating Procedures manual.
2. The on-duty In-Charge and/or EMS Director may supersede these dispatch directives at his discretion. (i.e. may ask for a supervisor only page when EMS group page is indicated, request an ambulance dispatched when not immediately indicated, etc.)
3. Upon receiving a request for emergency medical assistance the dispatcher shall elicit the following information:
 - Location of the incident.
 - Number of ill or injured parties.
 - Nature of injuries or chief complaint, including:
 - Is the patient conscious (able to talk)?
 - Is the patient breathing normally?
 - Potential hazards at the scene.
 - Call-back number and name if available.
 - Advise the party to stay on the line while resources are dispatched.
4. Depending on the urgency of the emergency the dispatcher may elect to dispatch REMS while keeping the caller on the line, and then go back to obtain additional information concerning the nature of the call.
5. The dispatcher shall refer to the REMS Dispatch Desk Reference Manual for further instructions. The initiation of an emergency response remains the number one priority and should not be delayed by additional caller interview.
6. All callers shall be given the following universal pre-arrival instructions:
 - Have one person stay with the patient
 - Request that a third person wait street-side near the front door or roadway to meet arriving police and EMS units.
 - Do not move the patient unless a failure to do so presents an immediate threat to life.
7. The dispatcher will ask the caller whether there has been a release of hazardous materials in the area and must alert EMS to this information in the appropriate spot of the alphanumeric paging template and by radio.
 - If there is a known chemical release the dispatcher should advise the patient to leave the scene immediately and proceed to a safety shower for decontamination. REMS will not enter the scene of any known chemical release until the scene has been cleared by Hazmat, or the chemical has been identified and scene safety is insured by checking an MSDS or similar resource.
 - If REMS becomes aware of a potential chemical release once they are on scene, they should immediately disregard any additional incoming units, exit the scene and proceed to a safety shower for decontamination. If the EMT believes he can remove the patient from the scene he may do so, but only if he feels confident the extrication may be conducted rapidly without

placing himself in additional danger. The EMT and patient should then proceed to decontamination.

8. Should RUPD dispatch receive a call for help on a city street adjacent to campus, he shall dispatch the EMS group. If the call is on a non-adjacent street, the Dispatcher will notify only the on-duty In-Charge and immediately notify the proper city agency of the location and nature of the incident, such that said agency may respond.
9. In addition to dispatching REMS, Houston Fire Department shall be requested when the calling party requests an ambulance, or for the following call types:
 - Cardiac Arrest
 - Chest pain
 - Choking
 - Drowning/Near-drowning
 - Electrocutation
 - Fire or explosion
 - Gun shot/Stabbing
 - Hazardous materials release
 - Industrial machinery accidents
 - Labor and delivery/Imminent birth
 - Mass Casualty Incident (MCI)
 - Severe burns
 - Stroke/CVA
 - Sudden Death*
 - Suicide

In all cases, the dispatcher shall notify REMS as to whether an ambulance is en route.

10. All calls other than those listed in § 9 will result in the dispatch of REMS only. REMS will notify dispatch if an ambulance is required.
11. Upon receiving a call for emergency assistance, the dispatcher will dispatch REMS to the scene via alphanumeric pager. The dispatcher will then transmit a general radio broadcast of the information in § 13. This will inform the on-duty police Officers of the EMS call in progress, and may allow REMS to respond to the call more quickly. At the discretion of the dispatcher, calls meeting the criteria in § 12 may be dispatched first to the police and then to REMS.
12. In cases of the following calls the dispatcher will advise REMS to stage for police near the scene of the incident:
 - Assault
 - Crime scene
 - Gun shot wound
 - Psychological emergency
 - Stabbing
 - Suicide
 - Violent patient

* In cases of sudden death, REMS, police, and HFD shall be dispatched. Until HFD can confirm the sudden death the call will be treated as a critical or unknown illness. Once an on-scene EMT reports a patient as DOA, the dispatcher will follow the department procedures for the discovery of a dead body.

13. Upon dispatching REMS, the Rice Police Dispatcher shall use the EMS Page Template, which should take the following form:
- Type: <Call Type> Loc: <Call Location> Cons: <Yes/No/Unk> Breath:<Yes/No/Unk> Hazmat: <Yes/No/Unk> Detail: <Any additional information that may be important>
- If the template is unavailable, any pages sent should contain the information in the template. The dispatcher may also elect to send supplemental pages with additional information as it becomes available such as updates on the patient's condition, changes in the patient location, etc.
14. The RUPD Dispatcher will maintain a log of the following times:
- Time call received.
 - Time of dispatch of REMS.
 - Time of REMS en route.
 - Time of REMS on scene.
 - Time of REMS patient contact.
 - Time HFD requested.
 - Time of HFD en route.
 - Time of HFD on campus.
 - Time of HFD patient contact.
 - Time of ambulance departure from the scene.
 - Time RUPD requested.
 - Time of RUPD on scene.
 - Time of return to service.
15. Should a REMS EMT come upon an emergency medical situation on campus, at University holdings, or on the surrounding streets, he must notify RUPD Dispatch. This includes any situation in which a REMS EMT is sought out by a member of the Rice community to provide care in an official capacity, regardless of the seriousness of the injury or whether the EMT is on or off-duty. The following steps should be taken:
- The EMT will have the RUPD Dispatcher notified, who will immediately notify REMS and the proper city agency, if applicable, of the location and nature of the incident, such that the appropriate agency may respond. The on-duty In-Charge must be notified of all such incidents.
 - The EMT shall take whatever steps are necessary to handle the incident until the appropriate services arrive to assume care.
 - In certain situations, the EMT providing care may request a supervisor-only page, in order to minimize the number of personnel on a scene. However, EMTs should use caution in exercising this option, and should request a normal EMS response if they have the slightest doubt regarding whether or not a situation requires a larger number of personnel.
 - If the EMT feels that the incident is very minor and that he does not need any further EMS he may request that the on-duty In-Charge be instructed to contact him. The on-duty In-Charge must be paged immediately.
16. If at any time an alphanumeric page is unsuccessful in dispatching REMS to a request for emergency assistance, the following procedure should be used:
- The EMS group's pager number: (713) 908-8300 or the supervisor group's pager number: (713) 908-8500 should be dialed via phone, depending upon the most appropriate response.
 - After hearing the tone, the following should be dialed: 6000 * 911 #
 - Upon receiving this page, the Duty Crew and the on-duty In-Charge will go en route to the call and request further details from RUPD Dispatch by radio.
17. If multiple requests for emergency assistance are received at the same time, or if a second request is received while REMS is engaged in a prior call, the dispatcher will follow the same procedures as described in § 13. The on-duty In-Charge will determine the appropriate course of action.

- 17.1. If an EMT has already made patient contact, then he or she will not leave that patient to respond to another call without ensuring the continuity of patient care, as this would constitute abandonment. The on-duty In-Charge will respond to the call of the highest priority.
 - 17.2. The on-duty In-Charge may request additional pages be sent out to activate off-duty personnel.
 - 17.3. If there are insufficient personnel to respond to a call, the on-duty In-Charge may request that the RUPD Dispatcher contact the caller to inform them that REMS is currently unavailable. The Dispatcher will give the caller the option of requesting an HFD ambulance or waiting until REMS becomes available.
18. The on-duty In-Charge may request a "Disregard" page sent to the EMS group if the call is minor and the In-Charge can adequately handle the call with the available resources. At no time will the on-duty In-Charge request a disregard page if there is any possibility that doing so could compromise patient care, provided that the scene is safe.
 - 18.1. RUPD Officers or REMS EMTs who arrive on-scene prior to the on-duty In-Charge may request a disregard page but the on-duty In-Charge must approve every such page before it is sent.
 - 18.2. All responding EMTs **must** honor disregard pages no matter how near the scene they are when the page is received.

Radio Communications

GD99-010 *Effective 15-Aug-2007* *Revised 3-Aug-2007*

1. The on-duty In-Charge and on-duty EMTs will carry an issued portable radio at all times and monitor the primary frequency whenever possible.
2. It is the responsibility of the on-duty EMT to ensure that he has a charged battery at all times. A normal battery should be expected to last 10 to 16 hours. A double tone at the end of radio transmissions or a periodic double tone indicates a battery that should be changed immediately. Any poor battery performance should be reported to the EMS Operations Lieutenant.
3. The EMS Operations Lieutenant or his designee will perform radio and battery maintenance.
4. On-duty EMTs should keep radio transmissions to a minimum. At no time should a name be stated over the air. EMTs should use their assigned REMS radio numbers or call signs when communicating with each other over the radios.

The call numbers for on-duty EMTs will be EMS 1 and EMS 2, corresponding to the duty position.

1. All on-duty EMTs should call in to dispatch to announce:
 - “En route” when they begin heading towards the location of the call.
 - “On scene” when they arrive at the general location of the call.
 - “Patient contact” if they are the first EMT to arrive at the patient.
 - Notify dispatch upon the arrival of other agencies, including ambulances.
 - Notify dispatch of patient disposition and when EMS is clear and returning to service.
5. The RUPD Dispatcher retains control over the length and priority of radio transmissions at all times. Any request by the Dispatcher to maintain radio silence must be promptly honored.
6. Upon answering all radio transmissions EMTs will announce their EMT number or shift designation.
7. EMTs shall employ the following guidelines in making all radio transmissions:
 - 7.1. Whenever possible, plan the message. Key the microphone push-to-talk (PTT) button and wait until the end of the side tone (if applicable) before speaking. Wait approximately 1 second before releasing the microphone PTT button at the end of transmissions.
 - 7.2. Listen before transmitting to make sure that another transmission is not being interrupted.
 - 7.3. Use an even tone when speaking. Speak approximately 3 to 4 inches from the microphone and avoid covering the microphone grille.
 - 7.4. Speak in plain English. The use of medical jargon shall be avoided.
 - 7.5. Avoid any vocal displays of emotion.
 - 7.6. Keep messages as brief as possible. Lengthy messages shall be avoided. If necessary, break a lengthy transmission into segments, receiving an acknowledgment after each portion before commencing the next segment.
 - 7.7. When a transmission is received and understood, the acknowledgment “clear” or “received” should be used. When a transmission is not understood, a request to “repeat” should be made.
 - 7.8. The pronouns sir and ma’am may be used when appropriate.

7.9. Discourtesy and vulgarities will not be tolerated and may lead to disciplinary action.

Vehicle Operations

GD99-011 *Effective 15-Aug-2007* *Revised 3-Aug-2007*

1. While operating University vehicles in an official REMS capacity, all REMS personnel must carry a valid driver's license and their current Department of State Health Services EMT card as well as have prior approval by the EMS Director to operate the vehicle.
2. Seat belts are mandatory for all operators and passengers while the vehicles are in motion. Smoking in the vehicles at any time is strictly prohibited.
3. Operators are responsible for any citations received. Operators may also be liable for vehicle damage at the discretion of the EMS Director.
4. The REMS vehicle is considered an emergency vehicle by the State of Texas and should be operated in accordance with the State of Texas Transportation Code Section 546. Lights and/or sirens may be used only on emergency responses at the driver's discretion according to the following protocol:
 - 4.1. Emergency – It is REMS policy to respond Emergency to all calls, except as listed in § 4.2. Responding Emergency consists of the use of forward- and rear-facing warning strobes, forward- and rear-facing warning LED lights, and the Wig-Wag function of the takedowns and headlights. The vehicle's siren should be used at all times when the vehicle is responding to a call via an off-campus street. Drivers should avoid using the siren on campus, except for short whoops or bursts of the air horn to clear the right of way. The vehicle driver is allowed to disobey certain traffic laws and regulations as described in Texas Transportation Code Section 546, so long as he operates the vehicle in a safe manner.
 - 4.2. Non-Emergency – The on-duty In-Charge, at his discretion, may designate a call as non-emergency. If the caller requests a non-emergency response, it can be honored. When dispatched to a non-emergency call, the on-duty In-Charge may still elect to respond Emergency at his discretion. While responding Non-Emergency, the driver must obey all traffic regulations, and should not use any warning devices.

Upon arrival at the scene, emergency lighting shall be turned off, except in cases when the vehicle is parked in a position that may create a traffic hazard or if emergency lighting is deemed necessary to facilitate a response by an outside agency. At such time, the lights shall be kept in operation with the engine running and the vehicle locked. If it is necessary to turn off the engine, the operator shall make certain that all lights have been turned off.
5. The driver is responsible for the safety and security of the REMS vehicles during his assigned shift and will take due precautions to ensure the vehicles' safety and security.
6. At scenes likely to involve a response by the Houston Fire Department, the on-duty In-Charge shall position the vehicle so that it will not hinder or be hindered by the operation of said departments. If the on-duty In-Charge or any REMS EMT is asked to move his vehicle by any member of HFD or responding police agency, he will comply as soon as possible.
7. In order to prevent exposure when requested to the scene of a possible hazardous materials spill or fire, whether in a Rice University facility or a city street, the on-duty In-Charge and responding units will comply with recommendations for proper staging of vehicles.
8. Headlights shall be turned on when weather conditions require the use of windshield wipers and at night.
9. The REMS vehicles may be parked in any yellow zone that does not obstruct traffic, or may be parked in any staff/faculty, visitor, resident, or commuter space. The vehicles shall be backed into

spaces in order to avoid accidents when responding to a call. Handicapped parking spaces may not be used for routine parking.

10. Speeding, hard braking, and hard steering shall be avoided.
11. The EMS vehicle may be driven off-campus provided it remains in the vehicle service area as defined by the area created by Kirby, Main and Bissonnet. The vehicle may be driven outside of this area for special purposes with the authorization of the EMS Director.
12. If approved by the EMS Director, REMS EMTs may use their personal vehicles in order to respond to calls. The EMS Director may also approve the use of emergency warning devices in personal vehicles for emergency response. If a personal vehicle is used to respond while on-duty, it must be operated in a safe manner, obeying all laws and traffic regulations. In all cases, the on-duty REMS EMT will prominently display a REMS parking placard such that it is clearly visible from a position outside the vehicle. REMS is not responsible for any tickets received as a result of not adhering to the parking policy or those received while off-duty. Any parking citations received while on-duty should be given to an In-Charge with an explanation for appeal.
 - 12.1 During a call, the on-duty EMT should park as close to the scene as possible without obstructing additional responders, including a fire engine or an ambulance. Also, avoid blocking the flow of traffic. Handicapped spaces, fire lanes, slashes spaces, and restricted spaces are all acceptable. The on-duty EMT will move his vehicle as soon as possible after the scene is clear. If the call is on a city street adjacent to campus, park on campus as close to the scene as possible and walk to the call. Never park a personal vehicle on a city street.
 - 12.2 While on-duty and not responding to a call, EMTs should park their vehicle close to themselves during their shift. Do not park on two-way streets like Campanile, Alumni and Entrance 3 Road. Do not park in handicapped spaces, in crosswalks, or in front of bus stops. All resident/commuter parking spots are acceptable places to park. In general, spots should be occupied in the following order: Student, Staff, Visitor. Avoid parking in fire lanes, loading docks and slashed spaces. Park in a space, not in a restricted area.
13. Duty EMTs responding with or without a POV are responsible for maintaining the proximity cards. If the card needs to be replaced, the Duty EMT responsible for losing the card is required to pay the \$25 replacement fee.
14. Operation of the EMS cart must be in accordance with all regulations stated above. In addition to these, the following regulations apply solely to the operation of the cart:
 - 14.1. In order to be eligible to operate the cart, EMTs must attend an orientation by an In-Charge or the EMS director.
 - 14.2. EMTs without use of a POV have priority for cart usage.
 - 14.3. The cart may only be used by an on-duty EMT or by an EMT with the permission of the on-duty In-Charge or the EMS Director.
 - 14.4. The cart may not be operated outside of the Rice campus.
 - 14.5. The cart will only be driven on campus roadways and on areas designated on the map posted in the cart unless responding to a call or directed by an In-Charge. Only when responding to emergencies or when charging the vehicle can the driver leave campus roadways.
 - 14.6. Escort of any person that is not a patient or another on-duty EMT is strictly prohibited.
 - 14.7. Patient escorts shall be limited to escorting a patient to a transport vehicle, in cases where the call location is not readily accessible by vehicle, or as deemed necessary by an In-Charge. While escorting a patient, the speed should be such that a pedestrian is easily able to walk beside the cart during transport.

- 14.8. The cart will be kept behind the police department and plugged in when not in use. The key will be kept with dispatch.
- 14.9. The cart and key must be returned to the police department or exchanged with the next duty EMT at the end of each shift.
- 14.10. In addition to an equipment report, the REMS driver shall conduct a vehicle maintenance check at the beginning of his shift. The check shall include a check of the head and tail lights, windshield visibility, tire condition, power level of batteries and general appearance. Any discrepancy in vehicle condition should be reported to the on-duty In-Charge immediately.
- 14.11. The cart should be charged when not in use and must be charged when batteries reach less than half full.
- 14.12. Keys should never be left in an unattended cart and any equipment left in an unattended cart must be secured and locked.
15. Operation of bicycles owned by Rice EMS must follow all previous regulations, assuming they can be applied to a bicycle. In addition, the following pertain to operation of bicycles:
 - 15.1. The bicyclist must wear a helmet any time he is riding the bicycle. The helmet must be purchased by the EMT.
 - 15.2. Any EMT wishing to use a REMS bicycle must first attend an orientation session provided by an In-Charge. Completion of an IPMBA EMS Bicycle course is highly recommended, though not required.
 - 15.3. When on-duty, an EMT must not leave the duty bag unattended. The bag must be carried into any buildings the EMT enters while on-duty.
 - 15.4. The REMS bicycles must be kept locked at all times when left unattended. When not responding to a call, the EMT must follow campus regulations with regard to parking of bicycles. Briefly, an EMT is prohibited from locking the bicycle to anything except a University-installed bicycle rack, and the bicycle should never be locked to railings on stairwells or ramps. When responding to calls, the EMT using the bicycle is allowed to lock the bicycle to a prohibited object, provided that the call is serious enough to make locking the bicycle in an approved location detrimental to patient care.
 - 15.5. The bicycle keys are to be kept with dispatch when the bicycles are not in use.
 - 15.6. Bicycles are designed for one rider only. EMTs should never use a REMS bicycle to carry another EMT, a patient, or someone not affiliated with Rice EMS.
 - 15.7. Any problems with the operation of a REMS bicycle should be promptly reported to the Operations Lieutenant.
 - 15.8. All regulations pertaining to the use of bicycles on campus, as described in the campus parking and traffic regulations guidebook published by the parking office, should be followed at all times. Exceptions are made for regulations governing the use of approved sidewalks when the EMT is responding to calls.

Vehicle Maintenance

GD99-012 *Effective 15-Aug-2007* *Revised 3-Aug-2007*

1. The vehicle should be washed as necessary or at least once a week.
2. The interior of the vehicle shall be kept clean by the REMS In-Charges, and should be cleaned as necessary by the on-duty In-Charge.
 - 2.1. If contaminated materials are discovered, the on-duty In-Charge shall observe universal precautions and follow the guidelines in the Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan. If necessary, Environmental Health and Safety shall be paged to assist in clean up and disposal of biohazard materials.
3. The on-duty In-Charge shall conduct a vehicle maintenance check at some point during the beginning of his shift. The check shall include all items in *Appendix B* of this manual. The EMS Director shall be notified of any discrepancies in vehicle condition.
4. If at any time a REMS EMT discovers a discrepancy in the vehicle that may interfere with safe and timely operation, the EMS Director and the RUPD dispatcher shall be notified. The vehicle shall be removed from service until such time that repairs are completed. The on-duty In-Charge noting such a defect shall complete an incident report. Necessary equipment will be transferred to vehicle 2 and the on-duty In-Charge will respond in that vehicle until the EMS vehicle can be used.
5. The vehicle will undergo an oil change and a fluid check every 3000 miles or three months, whichever comes first. The vehicle will be delivered to the appropriate dealership service department for a preventive maintenance check every 6 months. All other maintenance will be performed in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations or as recommended by a maintenance check.
6. Maintenance for the EMS cart will be performed as necessary to ensure safe and effective operation of the vehicle.
7. Maintenance for the EMS bicycles will be performed as necessary to ensure safe and effective operation of the bicycles.