



MECKLENBURG EMS AGENCY

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Vehicle Operation Policy

## Mecklenburg EMS Agency Vehicle Operation Policy

Mecklenburg EMS Agency is committed to the safe and appropriate transport of all employees, patients, and passengers of the Agency units. Therefore, all operators must adhere to the guidelines set forth in this driving policy. Questions and additional information regarding vehicle operations should be directed to the Operations Supervisor or to the Risk and Safety Office.

Agency vehicles are intended for use in the conduct of Agency related business or activities that promote the Agency or facilitate efficiency.

### Agency Authorized Drivers

- Prior to operating an Agency vehicle you must:
  - Successfully complete the proper Medic required driver training program to include:
    - 8 hour navigation course and classroom instruction during New Hire Orientation
    - (2) 10 hour behind-the-wheel training courses during New Hire Orientation
    - Issued a Geotab key fob
  - Be properly trained and qualified on each vehicle type operated
  - Possess, carry, and maintain a valid driver's license (state DL must be obtained within 45 days of relocating to NC or SC)
  - Maintain an acceptable driving record as outlined in the Agency's Vehicle Record Guidelines (Attachment A, RS-002-02 Motor Vehicle Records Guidelines)
  - Employees are required to provide Risk and Safety a copy of their driver's licenses within thirty days of a change, renewal or re-issue.
- All vehicle operators (while running emergency traffic) must follow the Law of Due Regard.
  - Law of Due Regard: Sufficient notice of the ambulance's approach must be given to allow the other motorist and pedestrians to yield the right of way. Failure to give notice until a collision is inevitable generally does not satisfy the principal of "due regard".
- The Agency's independent insurance carrier reserves the right to declare an employee to be uninsurable based on the employee's driving/accident record. If deemed uninsurable, the employee will be unable to operate Agency vehicles.
- The ability to operate a vehicle is a requirement for most of the Agency's employees, specifically but not limited to, field medics and support services staff. Suspension of driving privileges may ultimately end in termination of employment with Mecklenburg EMS Agency.
- Having a valid driver's license is a requirement. Anytime there is a violation, conviction, or accident (outside of Agency operation) it must be reported to the Risk and Safety department within 72 hours.
- Motor Vehicle Records will be ordered and reviewed by the Risk and Safety department no less than twice a year.
- Employees shall not operate Agency vehicles while under the influence of medications and/or substances that are known to impair central nervous system functions (i.e. judgment, physical coordination and/or reaction time). Included in the categorization are prescribed medications that carry warnings against operating vehicles or machinery. Anytime there is a suspicion of impairment, drug use, or alcohol use a drug and/or alcohol screening will be completed.



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- While driving routine traffic, all agency employees will follow North Carolina state (in-state) vehicle operations laws.
- Failure on the part of any agency employee (driver, witness, passenger, etc.) to immediately report to a supervisor and CMED any vehicle collision or property damage will be subject to disciplinary action that may include termination.
  - Upon the occurrence of an incident, the Crew Chief, Team Leader, or Agency employee will contact CMED immediately and advise them of the unit's status. If there are any injuries, and to have law enforcement respond to the scene. The agency vehicle will remain on scene until law enforcement and the on duty supervisor arrive, unless advised otherwise. If vehicles involved are operable, they will be moved out of the lane of travel and into a safer area. Refer to RS-02-1 Vehicle Accident Policy for additional information.
- Seat restraints are to be worn at all times when the vehicle is in motion. Seat restraints are to be used on all persons riding in an Agency vehicle.
  - All patients are to be secured to the cot using all seat belts and the cot must be properly secured in the patient compartment.
  - All pediatric patients weighing under 40lbs (18kg) or under 40 inches in height (100cm) will be placed in the Agency provided car seat or pedi-mate. The car seat should be properly secured to the cot using the torso strap and the hip strap on the cot. The pedi-mate should be properly secured to the cot using the three provided straps. If the patient has a personal car seat then it shall be used if it can be properly secured to the cot. If the patient is in full spinal protocol, then they will be secured to the cot using the all seatbelts on the stretcher. Children will always be secured to the cot and will not be placed in a parents arms while the unit is in motion.
  - While caring for a patient, the crew member will attempt to stay restrained for as long as care will allow. It is neither possible nor practical for the care taker to remain restrained at all times. If the care taker must provide a service in which being restrained will not allow, they will carry through with the procedure and then restrain themselves using the proper safety restraints.
- Prior to use of unit, all warning devices (lights and sirens) shall be assessed for proper function. This will be performed at time of deployment from P100 outside of the bay.
- Cell phone use, including blue tooth or other hands free devices, and texting is strictly prohibited while operating an Agency owned/leased vehicle. Cell phone use of both members of the crew is strictly prohibited while the unit is being operated in an emergency mode. Company cell phone use, by the passenger, will only be allowed in the event of a failure of the dispatch system. Cell phone use by supervisors, managers and directors should be kept to a minimum and only used when necessary.
- The mobile mapping terminal is only to be operated by the passenger in the unit while the unit is in motion. There are instances when the mobile mapping terminal will need to be used without a passenger in the cab of the unit. At this time, use of mobile mapping will be kept to a minimum while operating the ambulance.
- Mobile radio use will be conducted by the passenger in the unit while the unit is in motion. If the mobile radio must be used by the driver, it will be done with extreme prejudice to the safety of the crew, passengers and those around the unit.



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- Use of tobaccos products and e-cigarettes are prohibited inside any Agency owned/leased vehicle.
- Agency ambulances must utilize a backer/spotter when available.
  - Backing accidents that are deemed preventable will result in both employees receiving corrective action following the PIPD process and may result in both receiving one-on-one drivers training. Refer to RS-02-1 Vehicle Accident Policy for additional information.
  - Spotters must be placed on the driver's side rear of the unit. This will ensure full vision of the spotter by the driver.
  - The spotter must be in place prior to the unit being placed into reverse.
  - Universal hand signals shall be used by the spotter to communicate to the driver. Refer to Appendix A of this document.
  - The unit must not exceed 1-2 mph while in reverse.
  - Use a backing spotter every time and everywhere you back with the following exception:
    - If you need to back on a busy highway or Interstate, use your lights and sirens and back with due regard. Do not get out of the ambulance in traffic to push the spotter button.
- Agency vehicles are prohibited from passing a stopped school bus with its stop sign extended (this includes routine and emergency traffic modes).
  - The bus driver may signal the unit to proceed around the school bus while it is stopped with the sign extended. If this occurs, proceed with extreme caution around the bus.
- Agency vehicles will comply with traffic signals, signs and school crossing guard signals in school zones during school hours and anytime children are present.
- Audible and visual warning devices must be utilized together when operating in emergency mode regardless of the time of day or traffic conditions.
- Agency vehicles are prohibited from parking in fire lanes unless they are on a patient care assignment.
- Employees must adhere to all safe parking principals which include:
  - Apply parking brake
  - Apply appropriate transmission (park or neutral)
  - Utilize wheel chocks, if applicable
  - Apply safe positioning of vehicle at scenes and posts as to allow easy egress
  - Activate high idle while on calls
  - Keep vehicle locked while unattended
  - Connect shoreline
  - Use appropriate warning lights while parked, if applicable
- Employees are encouraged to park in areas where backing can be avoided and egress is not compromised.
- Employees will maintain a following distance of 6 seconds while in an Agency owned/leased vehicle. This distance will increase by the following for each change in driving conditions:
  - Rain conditions - add one second
  - Snow conditions - add two seconds
  - Ice conditions - add three seconds
  - Use personal prudence with any non-listed situations

## Emergency Traffic

- Agency vehicles shall not exceed the posted speed limit by more than ten miles per hour, with a maximum of 75 miles per hour on the interstate. When operating in school zones (during school hours) and/or in high pedestrian traffic areas, the posted speed limit must not be exceeded.
- The operator will acknowledge that by use of audible and visual warning devices, they are only asking for the right of way and are not granted it.
- The operator will always attempt to pass stopped traffic on the left side. If this is not possible, the operator will use the lane of least resistance while using extreme prejudice for the crew's safety and the safety of those in and around the unit.
- When approaching an intersection with a yellow light, red light, stop sign or with no traffic control devices, the operator will come to a complete stop and assess all lanes of travel one at a time for oncoming or impeding traffic. The operator will not exceed a speed of 15 miles per hour when clearing the entire intersection.
- Traveling in the opposing lane of traffic should be avoided at all cost, however, when it is warranted, the operator will not exceed a speed of 15 miles per hour. The operator will utilize both sirens (if unit is equipped) and will utilize the air horn multiple times to alert oncoming traffic.
- At times patients will have family members, co-workers, friends, etc. that will want to accompany them during transport. All passengers will be secured in the unit with the appropriate seat belt or restraint. Accompanying persons will not be allowed to ride if they are under the influence of any mind-altering substance or pose as impedance in safe vehicle operations. Ultimately, this is the decision of the Crew Chief or Team Leader.

The Agency reserves the right to require drivers to attend re-training anytime it is deemed necessary.

Appendix A  
Proper Backing Hand Signals

***Stop***



***Back Straight***



***Distance from Object***



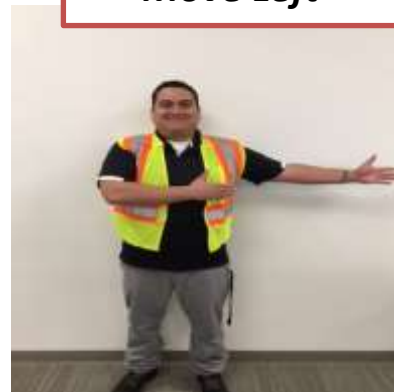
***Slow Down***



***Move Right***



***Move Left***



## MEDIC Motor Vehicle Record Guidelines

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### Attachment A, Vehicle Operations Policy RS 002-2

All MEDIC applicants, who apply for positions that involve vehicle operations, and all current employees who have a position that involves vehicle operations, are required to have clean driving records with the Department of Motor Vehicles.

The following defines a “clean” driving record:

With 2-4 years total driving experience; no more than one ticket or at-fault accident during that period;

With 5 + years total driving experience; no more than two tickets and two at-fault accidents;

No convictions of DWI in the last 5 years;

No convictions of reckless driving;

No suspensions of driving privileges in the last 7 years

Additional Requirements:

Must be 18 years old or older:

Must possess a valid driver’s license:

All operators of agency vehicles must satisfactorily complete behind-the-wheel training, including skills tests and classroom instruction, under the instruction of approved agency trainers. These drivers may be required to complete annual refreshers as needed.

Medic reserves the right to evaluate unusual cases on an individual basis in order to determine employment eligibility. This may include requiring applicants to attend a driving class with the Safety and Health Council of NC prior to and/or after hire. This class will be attended during non-work hours and the employee/potential employee will not be compensated for the time spent at the class.

All driving infractions must be reported to Risk and Safety. Motor Vehicle Records will be reviewed by Risk and Safety no less than twice a year.