

# Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

## Continuous Communication with En-route Ambulance Crews

This SOP details the procedures for **continuous communication with en-route ambulance crews**, ensuring real-time updates on patient status, location, traffic conditions, and estimated arrival times. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining clear and reliable contact between dispatch centers and ambulance personnel to enhance coordination, improve response efficiency, and ensure timely medical intervention. The protocol includes communication methods, information sharing standards, and contingency plans for communication disruptions to support seamless emergency medical services.

### 1. Purpose

- Maintain continuous, two-way communication between dispatch and en-route ambulance crews.
- Facilitate real-time updates regarding patient status, location, and external conditions.
- Ensure reliable coordination for efficient and timely emergency response.

### 2. Scope

- This SOP applies to all dispatch personnel and ambulance crew members engaged in emergency medical responses.

### 3. Communication Methods

- Primary: Two-way radio communication (fleet-provided digital/analog radios).
- Secondary: Secure mobile phones or dedicated emergency communication apps.
- Tertiary: Backup satellite phones (where available) or similar devices for coverage gaps.

### 4. Procedures

#### 1. Dispatch to Ambulance Crew:

- Provide initial dispatch details: location, nature of emergency, patient demographics, hazards, and access issues.
- Verify crew receives and acknowledges the information.

#### 2. Ongoing Communication:

- Ambulance crew provides dispatch with:
  - Departure confirmation and intended route.
  - Regular location updates (every 5 minutes or as protocol specifies).
  - Traffic, road conditions, and alternate route reports.
  - Estimated time of arrival (ETA) updates, especially after delays or route changes.
- Updates on patient status, interventions performed, and changes in condition.
- Request for en-route support, additional resources, or hospital notifications.

#### 3. Arrival Notification:

- Inform dispatch upon arrival at the scene and/or receiving facility.
- Provide brief summary of patient status and further needs.

### 5. Information Sharing Standards

- Use clear, concise, and non-ambiguous language.
- Minimize background noise during communication.
- Repeat critical or complex instructions for confirmation.
- Log all communications for reference and auditing.

### 6. Contingency Plans for Communication Disruptions

- Establish backup communication channels (secondary and tertiary methods).
- Define time intervals for **check-in** if continuous communication is lost (e.g., every 10 minutes via alternate device).

- Instruct units to stop and reestablish communication where feasible if contact is lost for predetermined period.
- If communication persists as lost, follow agency escalation protocols and notify law enforcement if safety is a concern.

## **7. Documentation**

- Record all significant communications and updates in the dispatch log and patient care report.
- Note any issues or disruptions in communication and actions taken.

## **8. Review and Training**

- Regularly review communication protocols with staff.
- Include communication drills in ongoing training programs.
- Revise SOP as needed based on incident debriefings and technological updates.

## **9. References**

- Agency Communication Policy
- Emergency Medical Services National Standards
- Equipment Manuals for Approved Radios and Devices