

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Ambulance Vehicle Inspection and Pre-Shift Checklist

This SOP details the **ambulance vehicle inspection and pre-shift checklist**, covering comprehensive vehicle safety checks, equipment functionality verification, emergency supply inventory, communication system tests, and documentation procedures prior to each shift. The goal is to ensure that ambulance vehicles are fully operational, safe, and ready to provide efficient emergency medical services at all times.

1. Purpose

To establish a consistent protocol for pre-shift ambulance vehicle inspections ensuring safety, operational readiness, and compliance with legal and organizational standards.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all EMS personnel responsible for operating ambulance vehicles at the start of each shift.

3. Responsibilities

- Assigned crew members perform the inspection as per checklist.
- Team Leader ensures compliance and reviews documentation.
- Immediate reporting and rectification of faults prior to vehicle deployment.

4. Procedure

1. Vehicle Exterior Inspection

- Check for visible damage (body, undercarriage, windows, lights).
- Inspect tires (pressure, tread, damage, and spare tire).
- Test lights (headlights, taillights, brake lights, indicators, warning lights).
- Check mirrors and wipers for functionality and cleanliness.

2. Vehicle Interior Inspection

- Ensure seatbelts and seats are operational and clean.
- Check dashboard warning lights (ignition test for alerts/errors).
- Test air conditioning/heating and ventilation systems.

3. Engine and Fluid Levels

- Check oil, coolant, brake, windshield washer, and transmission fluid levels.
- Inspect for visible leaks under the vehicle.
- Start engine and listen for any unusual noises.

4. Emergency Equipment & Supplies

- Verify presence and quantity of all medical supplies and medications (per inventory list).
- Inspect and test operation of stretchers, backboards, immobilization devices.
- Check all oxygen tanks (pressure, secure housing, mask/tubing availability).
- Test suction units, defibrillators (AED), monitors, and batteries.
- Confirm trauma kits and personal protective equipment (PPE) are stocked and accessible.

5. Communication Systems

- Test radio and backup communications for functionality and clarity.
- Check mobile data terminal/tablet (if present) for connectivity and charge.

6. Documentation & Reporting

- Complete the vehicle inspection checklist (paper/electronic).
- Report any deficiencies or hazards to the supervisor immediately.
- Do not deploy vehicle until critical issues are resolved.

5. Pre-Shift Vehicle Inspection Checklist Sample

Inspection Item	Status (OK/Needs Attention)	Comments
Tire pressure & tread		
Exterior damage		
Warning/emergency lights		
Fluid levels (oil, coolant, brake, washer)		
Seatbelts/seats		
Medical supplies		
Oxygen tank (pressure, mask/tubing)		
Suction unit/defibrillator		
Radio/communication system		
Documentation form completed		

6. References

- Local/state EMS vehicle safety regulations
- Ambulance service policy manuals
- Vehicle manufacturer manuals

7. Review & Approval

Prepared by: _____ Date: _____

Reviewed by: _____ Date: _____