



Operations Policy

Department	Operations Division
Title	OPS Policy # 134– Ride Along Program Policy

Effective Date	Approval Date	Approved By
January 1, 2011	January 1, 2011	General Manager

Purpose

This policy outlines the conditions for non-IEMS staff riding in Island EMS system vehicles.

Definitions

- 1.0 **Ride-Along** – A person riding in the ambulance who is either observing the Island EMS system or is participating in patient care as a Student-in-Training.
- 2.0 **Approved Allied Health Programs** – Post Secondary or Graduate Programs which are associated with nursing, medicine, health service administration.
- 3.0 **Students in Training** – Students of an Island EMS recognized educational program with current learning contracts with the Ground Ambulance Contractor, and the contract is on file at Island EMS Inc.
- 4.0 **Errors and Omissions Insurance** – Insurance coverage for medical errors of omission or commission.
- 5.0 **Island EMS Ride Along Coordinator** – The Operations Officer in charge of overseeing the approval and coordinating of the Ride Along Program.
- 6.0 **Medical First Responder (MFR)** – A public safety provider(s) such as Police Officers, Fire Fighters, and others who provide or coordinate patient care support as part of the Emergency Medical Services System, either as responders arriving at emergency scenes before ambulance arrival, or support paramedics during patient care.

Candidate Ride Along Classification

- 1.0 **Category 1** Students in Training, of Approved Allied Health Programs that are pre-approved as part of their training program and where a formal agreement is in place between their educational institution and the ground ambulance Contractor. The various education programs will maintain an ongoing liaison with the contractor's designated officer for placement and approval. All students are required to complete the required application and other documents.

- Recognized programs must provide proof of insurance consistent with this policy prior to the ride along.
- 2.0 **Category 2** Members of the Health Care Team including nurses, physicians and others may benefit professionally by exposure to the Island EMS system. Physicians taking on patient care responsibilities must be provided a copy of the "Physician on Scene" policy and be made aware of these implications prior to beginning the ride along shift. Allied health providers must provide proof of all insurance required in this policy before being permitted to participate in ride along and/or patient care.
- 3.0 **Category 3** Includes members of the Media, Government Officials, other Contractors, Elected Officials, and visitors from other public safety systems if it does not pose any risk to patients in the system, and if their participation is deemed appropriate. In certain cases, it may be appropriate to allow representatives from these groups to ride along for the enhancement of the Island EMS programs, enhancements of the individual's knowledge of the system, or sharing of information.
- 4.0 **Category 4** Medical First Responders registered with the PEI Firefighters Association (PEIFFA) who are participating in a ride along as part of their continuing education and may benefit professionally by exposure to the EMS Services System. As part of the formal application process, each application shall be reviewed by the Island EMS MFR Coordinator to ensure the appropriate documentation and proof of insurance exists.
- 4.1 Those Fire Departments (MFR's) which **show proof** of Errors & Omissions Insurance may participate in patient care when called upon to do so by the paramedics. This may include such assistance as; vitals, oxygen therapy, immobilization etc...
- 4.2 Those Fire Departments (MFR's) which **do not** have Errors & Omissions Insurance the individual ride along candidate will be permitted to **observe only** and will not be permitted to participate in patient care.
- 4.3 Clarification of 4.1 and 4.2 will be declared in advance of the ride along by the MRF Coordinator who will apprise both the MFR candidate and paramedic crew.
- 5.0 **Category 5** Are not approved to ride along in ambulances, although they are permitted to visit base stations and meet with paramedics to discuss ambulance service, or other educational opportunities provided by Island EMS and approved by Island EMS. This includes individuals considering entry to the Island EMS system, potential employees, educational "job shadowing" or any individual seeking ride along opportunities for general interest.

Patient Care Guidelines

- 1.0 The Paramedic crew assigned to the vehicle or facility is responsible for the Ride Along participant and has final authority as to the level of participation, including patient care contact.
- 2.0 Students in Training are the only ride along persons that are permitted to participate in patient care.

- 3.0 Category two and three (2 and 3) ride along participants are permitted to function as observers only and are not permitted to participate in patient care. Non-P.E.I. certified Paramedics are not permitted to take the place of a regular IEMS crew member.

Procedure

- 1.0 Only those persons with advance approval from the Island EMS Ride Along Coordinator are permitted to participate in the Ride Along program.
- 2.0 Ride Along participants and/or their sponsoring organization must provide complete proof of Errors & Omissions Insurance as well as person injury/death insurance with their ride out application. Participants must acknowledge that Island EMS will not accept any liability for injury, illness or death sustained while participating in an Island EMS Ride Along by completing a waiver prior to ride out.
- 3.0 Patient confidentiality and system security must be protected at all times, Ride Along participants are prohibited from using patient family names, descriptions, photographs or other that will compromise patient care or privacy in any way without the prior written permission of Island EMS.
- 4.0 Once approved, ride along assignments must be coordinated through the area Supervisor. Paramedics responsible for ride alongs must be given as much advance notice as possible.
- 5.0 Ride along names and activities must appear on all documentation when they are involved in the delivery of patient care.

Restrictions

- 1.0 All ride along candidates are required to:
 - 1.1 be at least 19 years of age
 - 1.2 complete a ride along request
 - 1.3 read and understand the terms and conditions of the ride along
 - 1.4 sign the ride along release and confidentiality agreement
 - 1.5 maintain strict patient confidentiality
 - 1.6 strictly follow the instructions of the on-duty paramedic crew
 - 1.7 comply with the dress code described in this policy
- 2.0 Approved ride alongs are for specific dates and times only. Approvals for unconditional or extended periods of time are not permitted. Unless unusual circumstances exist, ride along approval is limited to the following:
 - 2.1 Students in Training per approved contracts
 - 2.2 Other allied health care employees: 2 x 12-hour shifts
 - 2.3 Visitors and others: 1 x 12-hour shift
- 3.0 On-duty members of the health care team who are in the ambulance as part of the continuum of care to patients or are returning to their home hospitals after patient transportation are not considered Ride Alongs for the purposes of this policy.
- 4.0 Members of the general public and family members who are accompanying patients in the ambulance to/from/within a health care facility are not considered Ride Alongs with the purposes of this policy.

- 5.0 This Policy will be applicable under all circumstances with the exception of instances where Island EMS approves or supports alternate Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) regarding ride alongs.

Dress

- 1.0 All ride along candidates must be in compliance of the following dress code:
 - 1.1 CSA approved footwear (black)
 - 1.2 Black/Navy socks
 - 1.3 Black/Navy trousers
 - 1.4 White Shirt (dress or golf type)
 - 1.5 Black/Navy sweater (optional)
 - 1.6 Black/Navy jacket (optional)
 - 1.7 All ride along participants must wear an approved "Ride Along" or "Student" identification.
- 2.0 Non-Island EMS Paramedics and students of approved training programs are permitted to wear their regular uniform if deemed appropriate by the Supervisor, e.g., visitor from other system.
- 3.0 Ride along participants are not permitted to wear any advertising or trademark if it is deemed inappropriate to the protection of the image of professional ambulance service, Health P.E.I. or the contractor.

Reporting

Island EMS will maintain complete records of all ride along activities. These records will be kept by the Island EMS Ride Along Coordinator.

Appendices

- Appendix A Request for Ride Along
- Appendix B Ride Along Statement
- Appendix C Approved Ride Along Program
- Appendix D Ride Along Pass

References

Last Reviewed

Revisions

Article #	Date	Text

Related Policies and Procedures

P & P Manual	Section	Title