

**Manitoulin-Sudbury District Services Board
POLICY & PROCEDURES MANUAL**

Section: G. Paramedic Services	Effective Date: April 30, 2019
Topic: 3 Operational Directives	Replaces: November 8, 2017
Subject: 2 Vehicle Operation	
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PURPOSE

To ensure Paramedics are aware of the employer's expectation while in the care and control of vehicle operations.

APPLICATION

Paramedics, Paramedic superintendent, Senior Managers

RISK STATEMENT

To outline the responsibility of any Paramedic in control of any vehicle to ensure the safe operation of the vehicle with respect to traffic, weather, and other conditions which relate to patient(s), crew, and public speed limit.

PROCEDURE

VEHICLE OPERATIONS

It is the responsibility of any Paramedic in control of any vehicle to ensure the safe operation of the vehicle with respect to traffic, weather, and other conditions which relate to patient(s), crew, and public speed limit. Where emergency warning systems are not activated, speeds should not exceed the posted speed limit.

The Paramedic operating the vehicle shall at all times adhere to the Highway Traffic Act as it relates to the operation of the ambulance or Paramedic Response Unit. Headlights shall be on at all times during travel.

When any Paramedic Services vehicle is being operated by a mechanic, or is mobile for non-operational reasons, an "**Out of Service**" sign must be clearly visible to the public in the front and back of vehicle. The Central Ambulance Communications Centre (CACC) will be notified when an on-duty vehicle is subsequently taken out of service.

Procedure

1. The operator of the ambulance or Paramedic Response Unit is responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle and safety of its occupants.

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2. When backing a vehicle, it is the responsibility of the driver to ensure the attendant is at the rear of the vehicle, in view of the driver, in order to assist in guiding the vehicle. The back-up alarm and all emergency lights are to be activated. When the vehicle is carrying a patient, the attendant can look out the back window to assist the driver in backing. If applicable, when backing up with the patient on board staff should consider requesting assistance from Allied agencies.

WARNING SYSTEM ACTIVATION / HIGHWAY TRAFFIC REGULATIONS

It is always the driver's responsibility for the safe operation of the vehicle.

Procedure

The Ontario Highway Traffic Act permits the limited operating privileges to ambulances and PRUs, as set out in Section 144(1)(b)(ii), and includes the installation and use of a siren and red/blue lights in following situations:

1. While travelling Code 4.
2. To facilitate entry into the flow of traffic, when arriving or departing a scene.
3. On Code three (3) calls, during adverse weather conditions.
4. To enhance vehicle safety, while backing a vehicle.
5. Vehicle safety while parked to enhance conspicuity.
6. To mark a 'Landing Zone' for helicopter operations.
7. At a mass casualty, only the command post will have lights activated.

The driver of the vehicle will: Comply with the provisions of the Highway Traffic Act. The Highway Traffic Act permits emergency vehicles to exceed posted speed limits while responding to an emergency call or being used to transport equipment or a patient in an emergency situation.

The Highway Traffic Act permits emergency vehicles on which a siren is sounding and from which emergency lights are activated to proceed through a red light only after coming to a complete stop without a green indication being shown, when it is safe to do so.

It is the responsibility of every driver of any Paramedic Services vehicle to ensure the safe operation of the vehicle under their care and control, with respect to traffic, weather, and other conditions which relate to patient(s), crew, and public speed limit. Vehicle operations are monitored through an established speed audit process, excessive speeds will be addressed.

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Authorized Vehicle Operators

Only Paramedic Service operation staff members are authorized to drive the ambulance. In extreme circumstances, Paramedics may permit a Police Officer, Fire Fighter, or Paramedic from a neighboring Paramedic Service (Sudbury, Parry Sound, Nipissing, and Algoma) may drive the ambulance.

Under no circumstance is a member of the public, or unauthorized DSB employee permitted to drive a Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB Paramedic Services vehicle.

Procedure

1. If in the opinion of the Paramedic, an extreme circumstance exists; they should endeavor to have a Fire Fighter or Police Officer with the proper license to drive the vehicle.
2. This person should be familiar with the operation and controls of all the accessory equipment.
3. In instances where additional assistance is required in the rear of the ambulance, every effort should be made to use the Fire or Police personnel in the back of the vehicle, and have a Paramedic drive the vehicle.
4. Should an extreme circumstance exist, and the crew has someone other than the regular Paramedic drive, the Superintendent shall be notified and an Incident Report outlining the circumstances surrounding the events should be completed by both members of the crew.

Note: During ACP intercept, a DSSAB Paramedic may drive a Greater Sudbury Paramedic Services vehicle from the rendezvous point to hospital. They are prohibited from responding to calls while driving a Greater Sudbury Paramedic Services vehicle.

Securing of Occupants and Equipment

All occupants in a Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB vehicle shall wear their seat belt. The single exception to this direction is where the attending paramedic or other person in the patient compartment can't perform necessary care while wearing a seat belt. Where possible, the vehicle will be stopped in a safe location to allow the patient care to occur, and the seatbelts will then be worn.

In addition to the direction regarding occupant use of seatbelts, all equipment must be securely stowed away, all stretchers, including incubators must also be secured within the locking systems designed for that style of stretcher.

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All infants transported in incubators must be secured within the incubator by the restraint system designed for that transport incubator and secured within the vehicle.

Procedure

- Where a Paramedic is providing active patient care, the seat belt may be removed to allow the Paramedic access to the patient that cannot be performed when belted. Extreme caution shall be exercised any time the Paramedic is not secured.
- The Paramedic crew is responsible to ensure patients are secured on the stretcher utilizing all of the (shoulder, waist and leg) belts provided. Also, all infants shall be properly secured in a transport isolette.
- Paramedics shall ensure that children less than 40 lbs. (18 kg) are properly secured using the Pedi-mate or approved securely mounted car seat.
- Persons refusing to wear seat belts will not be permitted vehicle access.
- Paramedics traveling in the vehicle cab will wear seat belts at all times.
- Vehicle occupancy is limited to the number of seat belts.
- Luggage/personal items shall be restricted due to space.
- All luggage/personal items shall be secured to the vehicle.
- Alternate transportation should be arranged for wheelchairs.
- Items deemed to be dangerous shall not be placed onboard.

Misuse of Vehicles

Any employee found misusing or abusing vehicles or equipment will be subject to disciplinary action. Vehicle and equipment conditions will be monitored by Paramedic Services staff, maintenance personnel and through the AceTech system. Vehicle/equipment misuse/abuse includes, but is not limited to:

1. Causing willful damage to vehicle and/or equipment.
2. Overly aggressive driving practices.
3. Throwing or intentional dropping of equipment.
4. Using vehicles or equipment other than for their intended use.
5. Unauthorized use of vehicles or equipment.

It is the responsibility of every operator of a Paramedic Services vehicle to ensure the safe operation of the vehicle under their care and control, with respect to traffic, weather, and other conditions which relate to patient(s), crew, and the speed limit. Vehicle operations are monitored through an established speed audit process.

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With warning systems activated, and safe to do so, the maximum allowable speed will be lesser of either 50% greater than the posted speed limit (i.e. posted 60kph – max is 90kph), or a maximum of 130 KPH. Excessive speeds will be addressed through progressive processes

Vehicle Anti-idling

Vehicles idling needless produce harmful emissions that contribute to air pollution such as smog and climate change. Combustion by-products such as nitrogen oxide and sulfur dioxide are precursors to smog, whereas carbon dioxide and methane are greenhouse gases which affect the rate at which the Earth's climate is changing.

We recognize that daily operations may require the vehicle to remain idling (i.e. patient comfort, on-scene during emergency calls, to prevent drugs from freezing, in the event the vehicle is unable to park in a heated garage area). However, our objective is to eliminate all excessive vehicle and/or equipment idling by employees.

REFERENCE

Highway Traffic Act R.S.O. 1990,