



EMS Information Bulletin 2020-23

DATE: May 28, 2020

SUBJECT: Changes to the EMS Agency Licensure Inspection Process

TO: Regional EMS Council Licensure Coordinators
Regional EMS Council Directors
EMS Agencies
EMS Providers

FROM: Aaron M. Rhone, PhD
Bureau of Emergency Medical Services
PA Department of Health
(717) 787-8740

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "A. Rhone", written over a white background.

In response to the current COVID-19 pandemic the following ***guidelines*** have been instituted for on-site EMS Agency licensure inspections occurring in counties designated “yellow” under current COVID re-opening plans.

During this time there will be some minor changes to the inspection process that must be followed. Regional EMS councils will conduct a Pre-inspection review of documents as outlined below:

Pre-Inspection

EMS agency should email, fax or mail copies of the following documents to the Regional EMS in advance of the in-person inspection. Regional EMS Council staff will work with each EMS Agency to identify the most efficient process listed above for the individual agency. Documents will include:

- Current driver’s license (copy for each provider).
- Documentation, if applicable, of the initial and most recent review of each EMS providers competence by the EMS Agency Medical Director.
- Copies of documents by which it agrees to manage another EMS agency or to be managed by another entity.
- Call volume records from the previous year’s operations. These records must include a record of each call received requesting the EMS agency to respond to an emergency, as well as a notation of whether it responded to the call and the reason if it did not respond.
- A record of the time periods for which the EMS agency notified the PSAP, that it would not be available to respond to a call.
- Current EMS Agency Medical Director Agreement

- Current Vehicle Registration and valid Insurance Card for each vehicle scheduled for inspection.
- All required policies
- Schedule for the past one month to ensure 24/7 staffing.

EMS agency representatives will need to comply with the following during onsite inspections of vehicles:

PPE Requirement for On-Site Inspection

EMS Agency representative will be required to don the following PPE during a vehicle inspection supplied by the EMS Agency

- Face Mask: Meets requirements set forth by CDC/DOH for public face covering ex: Cloth face covering
- Exam Gloves
- EMS Agency will restrict inspection area access to all staff, with the exception of the agency representative(s).
- One agency representative will be required for each inspector. EMS Agency will be notified in advance with the number of scheduled inspectors.

Vehicle Inspection Requirement

Vehicle must be thoroughly disinfected prior to inspection, by following common disinfection guidelines approved by the CDC or PA Department of Health. Disinfection must occur between the most recent patient encounter and the inspection. Includes the cab and patient compartments.

- The Regional EMS Council representative may refuse to inspect any vehicle that has not been disinfected and appears to be grossly contaminated.
- Vehicles will be placed in an area that all doors can be simultaneously opened. Vehicle exhaust fan must remain running during the inspection.

EMS Agency representative(s) will be responsible to operate all vehicle specific controls

IE: Emergency Lights/Siren, Exterior and Interior Lights, HVAC and Onboard Suction, etc.

EMS Equipment Inspection

To maintain current social distancing guidelines and to ensure the safety of Regional EMS Council staff, any of the following guidelines may be instituted by the inspector.

- Regional EMS Council inspector may request, at their discretion, specific portable equipment to be removed from the ambulance or vehicle for inspection.
- EMS Agency may be asked to supply a portable table or work surface that will be placed outside of the EMS Vehicle in proximity for use during the equipment inspection along with disinfectant wipes to clean the surface. In instances where disinfectant wipes are not available a 1:10 bleach solution with some type of towel is acceptable.
- EMS Agency representative(s) will retrieve equipment from the EMS Vehicle and place it on the designated table at the request of the inspector.

All portable equipment bags/cases shall be properly disinfected prior to commencing the inspection. Additionally, any table of workstation engaged during the inspection shall also be disinfected. **Disinfection shall follow the current CDC/DOH guidelines. See decontamination criteria on the following page.**

Cleaning EMS Transport Vehicles after Transporting a PUI or Patient with Confirmed COVID-19

The following are general guidelines for cleaning or maintaining EMS transport vehicles and equipment after transporting a PUI:

- *After transporting the patient, leave the rear doors of the transport vehicle open to allow for sufficient air changes to remove potentially infectious particles.
 - *The time to complete transfer of the patient to the receiving facility and complete all documentation should provide sufficient air changes.**
- *When cleaning the vehicle, EMS clinicians should wear a disposable gown and gloves. A face shield or facemask and goggles should also be worn if splashes or sprays during cleaning are anticipated.*
- *Ensure that environmental cleaning and disinfection procedures are followed consistently and correctly, to include the provision of adequate ventilation when chemicals are in use. Doors should remain open when cleaning the vehicle.*
- *Routine cleaning and disinfection procedures (e.g., using cleaners and water to pre-clean surfaces prior to applying an EPA-registered, hospital-grade disinfectant to frequently touched surfaces or objects for appropriate contact times as indicated on the product's label) are appropriate for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) in healthcare settings, including those patient-care areas in which aerosol-generating procedures are performed.*
- *Products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims are recommended for use against SARS-CoV-2. Refer to [List Nexternal icon](#) on the EPA website for EPA-registered disinfectants that have qualified under EPA's emerging viral pathogens program for use against SARS-CoV-2.*
- *Clean and disinfect the vehicle in accordance with standard operating procedures. All surfaces that may have come in contact with the patient or materials contaminated during patient care (e.g., stretcher, rails, control panels, floors, walls, work surfaces) should be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected using an EPA-registered hospital grade disinfectant in accordance with the product label.*
- *Clean and disinfect reusable patient-care equipment before use on another patient, according to manufacturer's instructions.*
- *Follow standard operating procedures for the containment and disposal of used PPE and regulated medical waste.*
- *Follow standard operating procedures for containing and laundering used linen. Avoid shaking the linen.*

Approved by the CDC on March 10, 2020.

Agency Representative Screening Questionnaire

1. Have you had any signs or symptoms of a fever in the past 24 hours such as chills, sweats, felt "feverish" or had a temperature that is at or above 100.4 F?

Yes No

2. Current Temperature Reading?

_____ F

3. Do you have any of the following symptoms?

- Cough
- Shortness of Breath
- Sore Throat
- Myalgia (Body Aches)
- Loss of Taste and/or Smell
- Flushed Cheeks
- Fatigue
- Diarrhea
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Fever/Chills/Sweats

Yes No

4. Have you been exposed within the last 14 days with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 without the use of PPE (N95, gloves & face protection) and the patient/carrier was not masked?

Yes No

If an agency representative has been identified through the screening process above as meeting criteria for exclusion in the inspection process that individual should be referred to contact that primary care physician or seek further guidance from their employer on seeking medical evaluation and care.