

**PHOENIX REGIONAL
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

Emergency Transportation Safe Customer Escort

M.P. 205.08B

04/18

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Purpose

The following procedure identifies factors to consider when deciding to allow a customer escort in rescues during emergency transportation to the hospital.

Background

It is the policy of the Phoenix Fire Department to extend the highest customer service to all those we encounter in our daily activities. This includes allowing escorts to travel with a patient in a rescue during emergency transportation. Each escort in a rescue increases the number of possible exposures to infections, contamination and physical dangers to fire personnel. This procedure may help to reduce the number of exposures to fire personnel while transporting patients to the emergency department. This procedure requires fire personnel to balance customer service considerations to the escort during emergency transports, versus safety in regard to physical danger, infectious exposure and possible contamination to fire personnel.

Customer Service Considerations

The following may be reasons for transporting a patient with an escort in the rescue.

- *Patient Care.* Patient care is enhanced and assisted by having an escort for the patient in the rescue. Examples may be having a mother escort her young child for comfort during patient care or fire personnel requiring an escort who has the knowledge of a second language, i.e., Spanish, American Sign Language, etc.
- *Family Member (Escort) Care.* Added value service is enhanced by having the family member escort the patient in the rescue. An example would be an elderly spouse needing to be with their critical family member who is being transported.
- *Parent Escort.* Enhances child patient care, customer service and meets legalities for transporting and treating agencies. An example would be a parent escorting an under-legal age child for treatment and consent purposes.

Use of seat belts by the escorts is mandatory. Small adults or young children should not ride in any rescue cab with airbags installed.

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Exposures, Contaminations, and Physical Danger Considerations

The following considerations may be used to refuse an escort in a rescue when transporting a patient to an emergency department.

- *Infectious Exposures.* When information indicates possible infectious exposure to the patient or fire personnel by the escort. An example may be information that the escort has active TB.
- *Contamination.* When information indicates possible contamination that may expose fire personnel, equipment or vehicle. An example may be that the escort has signs of obvious body fluids on their skin, clothing or possessions.
- *Danger to Rescue Driver or Patient.* When information indicates possible physical danger to fire personnel or to the patient by the escort. An example may be that the escort exhibits signs of social or behavioral stress, or possible alcohol or drug intoxication.

Rescue Crew Responsibility

It is the responsibility of rescue personnel to discuss the above considerations with the on-scene fire officer prior to allowing an escort to travel in the rescue.

Company Officer Responsibility

It is the responsibility of the Company Officer on scene to obtain and consider the above information before a decision is made to allow an escort to ride with the patient in the rescue. When the negative considerations outweigh the positive considerations, an escort is not advised. The Company Officer on scene will make the final decision.

In the spirit of customer service, information on other means of transportation should be provided to the customer such as taxi services, private automobiles, buses, safe ride, etc.