

Bureau of Emergency Medical and Trauma Services

IOWA EMS SERVICE PROGRAM DRIVER SKILLS PROCEDURES GUIDANCE August 2023

PURPOSE:

To guide Iowa-authorized nontransport and transport EMS service programs concerning policy development for the skills and procedures that drivers may or may not perform and assist with.

DEFINITIONS:

- “Ambulance” means any privately or publicly owned ground vehicle equipped with life- support systems and specifically designed to transport the sick or injured who require emergency medical care.
- “Emergency vehicle driver” or “driver” means a currently licensed driver rostered with the service program or other emergency response personnel with emergency vehicle driving training.
- “First response vehicle” means any privately or publicly owned vehicle that is not an ambulance and that is used solely for the transportation of personnel and equipment to and from the scene of an emergency.
- “Medical director” means a physician designated by the service program and responsible for providing medical direction and overall supervision of the medical aspects of the service program.
- “Nontransport service” means any privately or publicly owned service program which does not provide patient transportation and provides emergency medical care at the scene of an emergency.
- “Scope of Practice” identifies the psychomotor skills and knowledge necessary for the minimum competence of each identified level of state certified EMS provider. It describes the authority vested by the State of Iowa to individuals that are certified as EMS providers and provides distinction between State of Iowa certified EMS providers and the lay public.
- “Service program” or “service” means any transport service or nontransport service, inclusive of associated satellites, that has received full or conditional authorization from the department.
- “Transport service” means any privately or publicly owned service program which utilizes ambulances in order to provide patient transportation.

GUIDANCE:

Iowa nontransport and transport EMS service programs shall define in policy what skills and procedures their service’s drivers are allowed to perform and assist with as defined by this document. This policy shall be developed with service stakeholders to include ownership representatives, legal counsel, and the physician medical director. The completed policy shall be approved by the EMS service programs service director and physician medical director.

EMS service program drivers are allowed to perform the following:

- 1) Operate the EMS service program vehicle (ambulance, nontransport response vehicle) after having attended and completed emergency vehicle driver training as defined by the EMS service program's driver training policy.
- 2) Assist with lifting and moving of patients when under the direction and supervision of a certified EMS provider, including the utilization and application of a long backboard, stair chair, soft stretcher, ambulance stretcher, manual lifting procedures, and other lifting devices such as the "Binder Lift". EMS service programs shall maintain documentation that education concerning these skills and procedures has been completed.
- 3) Assist with and perform skills and procedures related to "Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation" or "CPR" when under the direction and supervision of a certified EMS provider. It is recommended that the driver completes a nationally recognized CPR class, such as AHA or Red Cross, to receive certification. If the driver has received certification in CPR they can perform skills and procedures for which they have received certification and the individual, along with the authorized EMS service program, shall not be held in violation of the Iowa Emergency Medical Care Provider Scope of Practice concerning said certified skills and procedures, to include bag- valve-mask (BVM), jaw thrust, mouth-to-barrier, mouth-to-mask, mouth-to-mouth, mouth-to-nose, obstruction-manual dislodgement, and defibrillation-automated/semiautomated. EMS service programs shall maintain documentation of the driver's CPR certification if completed.
- 4) Assist with and perform skills and procedures related to hemorrhage control when under the direction and supervision of a certified EMS provider and certified in "Stop the Bleed". If the driver has received certification in "Stop the Bleed" they can perform skills and procedures for which they have received certification and the individual, along with the authorized EMS service program, shall not be in violation of the Iowa Emergency Medical Care Provider Scope of Practice concerning said certified skills and procedures, to include hemorrhage control-direct pressure, tourniquet use, and wound packing. EMS service programs shall maintain documentation of the driver's "Stop the Bleed" certification if completed.
- 5) Assist with the application of a mechanical CPR device when under the direction and supervision of a certified EMS provider. Drivers **CANNOT** operate the machine, to include positioning/repositioning of chest compression plunger/band, starting/pausing/stopping the machine, and changing the compression rate/ratio.

EMS service program drivers CANNOT perform the following:

- 1) Any skills authorized by the Iowa Emergency Medical Care Provider Scope of Practice unless certified in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and "Stop the Bleed" as previously defined in this document.
- 2) Obtain vital signs through manual and/or automated means.
- 3) Placement of ECG pads and cables to obtain a 3-lead, 4-lead, or 12-lead ECG.
- 4) Glucometer operations to obtain a blood sample.