

**OKALOOSA COUNTY
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

Title: Press Releases / Media Relations
Policy: 121.00
Purpose: To provide procedures for handling requests by members of the media and to ensure all media relations handled by Okaloosa County EMS are done so with knowledge, trust, credibility, and understanding.

Policy:

All media requests for information will be forwarded to the Shift Commander and/or the EMS

Chief:

REQUESTS

A. News is defined as those events that occur outside the parameters of normal circumstance and behavior.

B. All requests for information shall be referred to the EMS Shift Commander. If the EMS Shift Commander is not available, the request should be referred to the EMS Chief or designee.

INFORMATION NOT TO BE DISCUSSED

A. Do not publicize or release any information that may be construed as confidential to any source:

1. Patient information, including assessment of injuries and treatment
2. Information prejudicial to Law Enforcement investigations
3. Information not based on fact

B. Do not use “no comment” as a response or discuss anything “off the record” to the media. INFORMATION WHICH MAY BE DISCUSSED

A. Location of the incident

B. Patients receiving facility

REQUESTING MEDIA

COVERAGE

A. Any materials developed for external publication on any matter involving or referencing Okaloosa County EMS must have prior approval of the EMS Chief and Public Safety Director.

B. The EMS Chief or designee will contact the appropriate media contacts when an incident or event occurs that will generate positive media coverage.

Accountability and Compliance:

It is the responsibility of all OCEMS employees to adhere to the above policies and exercise sound judgment when responding to information requests by media personnel.

A. The OCEMS Command Staff will ensure that all press releases are handled in an appropriate manner with appropriate content.

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B. The OCEMS Line Staff will ensure that all request for information are sent to the duty shift commander.

C. The duty Shift Commander will ensure that the Public Safety Director and EMS Chief are properly notified of all information request.

D. Anything published in newspapers or other publications pertaining to the organization is removed, logged and filed.

E. The date, title of the publication, and location of the publication is captured.

F. The log is maintained by the Training Staff and cataloged in the Department's e-file system.

Policy #: 121.00
CAAS: 105.03.01
Author: Vause
Reviewed: Leadership
Approved: Leadership
Status: Active
Effective Date: 10/01/2015
Revision Date: 07/27/2016