

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



STEVEN BELLONE
SUFFOLK COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

GREGSON H. PIGOTT, MD, MPH
Commissioner

TO: All EMS Providers and Firefighters in Suffolk County
All Ambulance Services and Fire Departments in Suffolk County

FROM: Nathaniel Bialek, BS, EMT-P, CIC, CCHP *NB*
Director, EMS & Public Health
Emergency Preparedness

DATE: April 3, 2020

RE: EMD Protocol 36 and Radio Communications Policy

Effective at noon today, Friday, April 3, 2020, and at the direction of Dr. Jason Winslow, Suffolk County Medical Director, PSAPs across the county will join EMS providers in providing a pre-triage of low priority pandemic calls. The County will move to a level I pandemic response. Utilizing the already implemented EMD Protocol 36, dispatchers will leave surveillance (S) mode and interrogate for those with low priority, uncomplicated influenza like complaints. These callers will be directed to remain home and consult a medical professional in lieu of an EMS response. Police agencies likewise, taking their cues from the EMD, will defer their response on these low priority (alpha) level responses.

The move to level I response is complimentary to, and in line with, the NYS DOH “EMS Vital Pandemic Triage Protocol.” The desired result is it to relieve the burden on EMS agencies and reduce the surge on hospitals.

Your local PSAPs were briefed Thursday afternoon and are ready for this added responsibility.

Simultaneously, and out of necessity to provide real-time information for our Public Health partners, all ambulances are directed to transmit their response and unit status changes to FRES in addition to any routine procedure with their local PSAP or dispatch agency.

These transmissions will allow FRES to maintain a system-wide view of EMS calls, responses, and hospital turnaround times. If the pandemic stress on the system escalates, commercial and FEMA ambulances may be brought in to alleviate that strain. Having this component of our system, acting as one system, will be key to our combined success.

Attached you will find an FAQ sheet for completing that real time requirement with FRES.



Public Health
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Communicating with Fire/Rescue

All ambulances are required to communicate their status changes to FRES, *those agencies who currently communicate with FIRECOM meet this requirement.*

Communicating with MEDCOM/FIRECOM is in addition to any current procedure with your primary PSAP or dispatch agency.

Ambulances are required to communicate with FRES on the appropriate MEDCOM talk group: MEDCOM West for the 4 Western Towns; and MEDCOM East for the 6 Eastern Towns.

Units should communicate the following:

- Enroute status including nature and location;
- On-scene status;
- Transport status including name of receiving facility (if appropriate);
- Arrived at hospital (if appropriate);
- Leaving hospital (if appropriate); and
- Cleared status with disposition.

First responders and Chiefs are not required to communicate with MEDCOM. However, it may be helpful for the OIC or other unit to advise FRES of some particular status.

Far East end agencies with difficulty connecting to the County system will be advised of an East Hampton Town talk group that will be patched to MEDCOM East for use when necessary.

