

COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



STEVEN BELLONE
SUFFOLK COUNTY EXECUTIVE

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

GREGSON H. PIGOTT, MD, MPH
Commissioner

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

FROM: Thomas Fealey *TF*
Deputy Chief, EMS Operations

DATE: October 30, 2020

RE: **Extreme Temperatures and Medication / Fluid Maintenance**

As we are approaching the winter / cold weather season, and with a National Weather Service “Freeze Warning” in effect this evening, we are taking this opportunity to remind ambulance and first response services of the need to maintain medication and fluid storage, as well as battery-powered medical electronic devices, in areas that protect them from exposure to extremes in temperature.

According to NY State Department of Health Policy Statements 09-12 *Storage and Integrity of Prehospital Medications and Intravenous Fluids*, and 09-11 *Storage and Safeguarding of Medications Administered by EMT-Bs*, medications and fluids must be stored at temperatures that range from 59 degrees to 77 degrees Fahrenheit.

While most ambulances are parked in climate-controlled firehouses and ambulance garages, first response & other apparatus may be parked outside, and may sit idle for prolonged periods of time, increasing the risk that medications, fluids, and electronic medical devices stored in these vehicles may be susceptible to damage from excessive cold.

We encourage all agency Chiefs and Supervisors to take appropriate precautions, such as removing medication bags and other equipment to appropriate locations indoors, during times when the vehicle’s interior temperature is likely to drop below 59 degrees F.

Attached for your convenience are the links to the above referenced policies.

<https://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/ems/pdf/09-12.pdf>

<https://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/ems/pdf/09-11.pdf>

Please do not hesitate to call the EMS Division office at 631-852-5080 or email Thomas.fealey@suffolkcountyny.gov should you have any questions or require any additional assistance.



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