



Virginia Beach Department of Emergency Medical Services



CASS # 103.01.01

Index #

Operations

OBSERVER POLICY

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to establish criteria for allowing certain individuals of the general public to observe rescue squad operations, to gain an understanding of rescue squad functions and to encourage system awareness and recruiting.

APPLICABILITY: This policy shall apply to all individuals requesting authorization to ride as an observer on rescue vehicles insured by the City and under the auspices of the Department of Emergency Medical Services.

POLICY STATEMENT: When deemed in the best interest of the department by the EMS Chief or his/her designee, an individual may ride as an observer. The following general rules shall apply:

- A. An observer must be at least eighteen (18) years of age or older.
- B. A Release of Liability form containing the established rules and responsibilities for observers must be completed by the individual and endorsed by the Rescue Captain or his designee (if applicable) prior to the individual riding. This form must be forwarded to EMS Headquarters no later than seventy-two (72) hours after the observer has ridden.
- C. The Rescue Captain or his designee shall notify the Duty EMS Chief prior to the observer riding.
- D. The attendant-in-charge will orient the observer to the rules, regulations and confidentiality of the patient and patient information.
- E. The attendant-in-charge will supervise the observer during the shift.

OBSERVER POLICY

Page 2

- F. All individuals must wear the appropriate Department Observer ID badge issued by the Rescue Captain or his designee while riding as an observer.

An observer may NOT:

- ? Render any patient care
- ? Communicate on the radio
- ? Drive an EMS vehicle
- ? Assist with lifting or moving a patient
- ? Participate in any activities, other than observing

PROCEDURE:

1. The individual requesting observer status must complete a Release of Liability form.
2. A copy of the individual's driver's license shall be obtained.
3. The Rescue Captain or his designee must approve the Release of Liability form. The Rescue Captain shall notify the EMS Duty Chief prior to the observer riding and forward the executed form to EMS Headquarters within seventy-two (72) hours of the observer riding.
4. The individual will be issued a Department Observer ID badge by the Rescue Captain or his designee, which will be worn on the outer layer of clothing, clearly visible on the right collar.
5. The Rescue Captain or his designee will schedule the individual to ride and instruct the duty crew as to the rules and responsibilities of the observer prior to the shift.
6. The attendant-in-charge will be supervise the conduct of the observe at all times during the shift. Clear direction will be provided to the observer regarding activity limitations, patient confidentiality and safety considerations.

OBSERVER POLICY
Page 3

7. Should it be deemed necessary for any reason, the attendant-in-charge, any Squad Officer or higher EMS Officer, may remove the observer from the rescue vehicle and terminate the observation period.
8. Upon completion of the shift, the attendant-in-charge will return the Observer ID badge to the Rescue Captain or his/her designee.

This policy shall become effective upon the approval of the Chief of Emergency Medical Services.

APPROVED:

 1/1/2008

EMS Chief

Date

Originated
11/17/1986

Revised
1/1/2008