



HELICOPTER UTILIZATION



Escambia County, Florida - ALS/BLS Medical Protocol

All Escambia County Public Safety Paramedics, the Escambia County Emergency Communications Center (ECC), Baptist Life Flight Dispatchers and Flight crew, and any other helicopter services used are encouraged to adhere to this policy/procedure.

All supervisors and/or managers are tasked with ensuring employees are in compliance with this policy/procedure.

Initiation of Calls

The ECC shall request a helicopter by contacting Baptist Hospital's LifeFlight Dispatch by telephone. All calls shall be screened by Baptist Life Flight Dispatch to determine that a helicopter is needed. Baptist Life Flight Dispatch shall contact the ECC after accepting the call. The ECC shall dispatch an ambulance and the appropriate first responders.

Helicopter Stand-by

Escambia County Bureau of Public Safety Paramedic or ECC may request that the helicopter be placed on stand-by at anytime. When the helicopter is on stand-by, the ECC shall notify Baptist Life Flight Dispatch as soon as it is determined whether the helicopter shall be launched or the stand-by is canceled.

Helicopter Launch

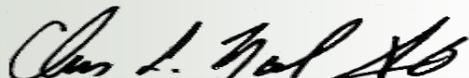
1. The helicopter shall be launched under the following circumstances:
 1. An on-scene paramedic indicates there is a risk of mortality or increased morbidity to the patient if the patient were not transported by air ambulance.
 2. The call is designated a Priority 1 response by the ECC and a ground ambulance would take more than fifteen minutes to reach the patient.



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3. When terrain or obstructed traffic would result in a significant delay in patient care or transport.
4. When no ground vehicle is available to respond and a call is designated a Priority 2 or Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA) response.
5. When the responding paramedic has received information that the patient is in critical condition and the time period for the patient to arrive at an emergency room can be reduced.
6. The helicopter shall launch but not land without a secure landing zone as determined by the helicopter pilot. A fire department engine at the scene is desirable, whenever possible.

Landing

1. Normally, fire department personnel must secure a landing zone (LZ) before the helicopter can land.
2. The helicopter pilot may elect to land without a secured LZ only under conditions that are safe for the helicopter crew and anyone on the ground.

Transport

1. **Public Safety crew on-scene:**

The Public Safety paramedic and the helicopter crew on-scene shall decide appropriate mode of transportation (air or ground ambulance) for the patient. If a patient requests an inappropriate type of transportation, the personnel on scene shall explain the reason for a specific type of transportation. The decision on whether to transport the patient by air or ground ambulance shall

be made based on the patient condition, regardless of who arrives first. The helicopter crew and Public Safety crew shall assist in readying the patient for transport and loading the patient into the appropriate vehicle.



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2. Ambulance en-route to a hospital

Ambulance crews may request a helicopter for transport after they have begun transporting a patient, if they determine that transport by helicopter would reduce the patient's total out of hospital time. The helicopter and ambulance crews shall make a collaborative decision as to the most appropriate site to transfer the patient.

Baptist LifeFlight Unavailable

Baptist Life Flight Dispatch shall notify the ECC whenever the helicopter is unavailable to respond to calls for any reason. Baptist Life Flight Dispatch shall determine the availability of other area medical helicopter services, along with their response time(s) to the scene, and notify ECC with the obtained information. If a helicopter is available, ECC shall advise Baptist Life Flight Dispatch whether to respond a helicopter or decline their services based on the criteria listed above for Helicopter Launch.

Helicopter assistance for search and rescue missions:

Assistance may be provided when a Public Safety or EMS Agency requests aid in locating confirmed missing persons. The helicopter shall be launched only after a well defined search area has been established and there is potential for finding the victim alive. Search and rescue missions of this nature shall be accepted at the discretion of the Baptist Life Flight's Chief Flight Nurse or Director of Baptist Life Flight or person responsible for making the decision at other services.

Weather factor affecting helicopter launch

The ECC shall initiate calls for helicopter response without regard to weather conditions.

The helicopter pilot shall determine whether the helicopter shall be able to respond. Baptist Life Flight Dispatch shall notify the ECC as soon as this determination is made.



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Response time for helicopters

Helicopter service shall respond to all requests for launch in an expeditious manner. A specific response time shall not be published in the interest of safety. The helicopter shall be launched as soon as the pilot has completed the pre-flight check of the aircraft and determined that the weather conditions in the area of response are in accordance with accepted aviation operation standards.

Response to Century Correctional Facility

Helicopter service shall be dispatched to the Century Correctional Facility for all "Priority 1" level calls. The EMS crew on scene shall make the decision to cancel or land the helicopter after they have assessed the patient(s).

Once the decision has been made to land the helicopter, the Fire Department shall be dispatched to the pre-designated landing zone located on the east side of the prison, in the field in front of the mobile home park.

Inmate(s) must be restrained with handcuffs and leg-cuffs at all times. A guard shall accompany the inmate(s) at all times. This includes in the ambulance and the helicopter.



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