

M A S S A C H U S E T T S
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENT MANUAL

EFFECTIVE DATE: August 10, 2022 **AUTHORIZATION:** W. Scott Cluett, III, Director

TITLE: Decontamination and Sterilization Cleaning Procedures for Ambulance Equipment and Interiors

SUPERSEDES: 8/87

Purpose: To define the minimum cleaning procedures necessary for decontamination and sterilization of ambulance interior surfaces and ambulance equipment, after each patient transport. Ambulance services may define in service policies and procedures above those set out in this administrative requirement. These (or any further service) procedures shall apply to all patients transported by the ambulance, including police dogs injured in the line of duty, pursuant to Chapter 23 of the Acts of 2022.

Definition: A “police dog” is limited to being “a dog owned by a police department or police agency of the commonwealth, or any political subdivision thereof, and used by the department or agency for official duties.” Only police dogs may be treated and transported by EMS, and only in accordance with Police K9 Protocols issued by the Department.

Procedures: Following completion of an EMS patient transport, all disposable patient care items utilized shall be discarded in an appropriate manner.

In all cases, when using cleaning solutions, follow manufacturer’s instructions for application and ensure proper ventilation. Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Never mix together different cleaning products. Don the appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE), which may include mask, gloves, goggles, gowns or protective suits.

Sheets, blankets, towels and pillowcases shall be changed after each use. Stretchers shall be kept clean, in good repair, and shall be disinfected after each use in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions, using an EPA registered disinfectant.

Reusable patient care items shall be disassembled, cleaned, disinfected, reassembled and tested for function as per manufacturer’s recommendations after each use. Disinfection shall be done in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions, using EPA registered disinfectant.

If the ambulance has been used to transport a patient known to have a dangerous or a highly contagious disease, the ambulance interior, all contact surfaces, and all exposed and contaminated equipment shall be cleaned in accordance with any U.S. Centers for Disease Control guidance specific to that pathogen, or otherwise in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions, using EPA registered disinfecting solution.

If the ambulance has been used to transport a police dog, or if a service animal has been transported along with a human patient, in addition to the requirements above, clean the patient compartment HVAC filter, as that is the most likely to harbor animal hair and dander.

All biohazard waste shall be properly disposed of in appropriate containers. Gloves and any other disposable PPE used for cleaning and disinfecting the vehicle should be properly doffed and disposed of after cleaning; wash hands immediately after removal of gloves and PPE with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.