



Chattahoochee Hills Fire Rescue Department

Patient Transport

Georgia law enacted in early 1980 directed patient transport services be handled by private contractors to facilitate economic growth in Georgia. Thus, a fire department that did not already possess a patient transport license at that time could not be granted a license in the future. Consequently, departments that allowed their transport license to lapse could not have it re-instated.

Emergency Medical Services and the transport of patients in Georgia (by fire departments and ambulance companies) is carefully regulated by the Georgia Department of Human Resources and its Department of Emergency Services. According to Georgia law (O.C.G.A. 31-11), regional councils must facilitate and maintain an emergency medical services system in multi-county areas. The Region III EMS Council serves the following eight counties: Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fulton, Gwinnett, Newton, Rockdale.

A primary responsibility of the Region III EMS Council is to recommend the manner in which the regional ambulance zoning plan is to be conducted. To this end, the Region III Council directed a "Request For Proposal" be conducted in 2001 and a contractor was chosen to provide patient transport services in the region (including north and south Fulton zones). Rural Metro Ambulance (RMA), now doing business under new ownership as American Medical Response (AMR), was chosen and presently provides services to the eight counties and their zones.

The FACTS expanded ...

- Chattahoochee Hills has never held a patient transport license and must engage transport services via AMR according to Georgia law and the directive of the Region III EMS Council.
- However, Chattahoochee Hills Fire Rescue Department is allowed to transport a patient under three "exigent" criteria (and assuming transport and ALS resources are available):
 1. On-scene medical personnel affirm the patient is experiencing "life threatening" problems
 2. "Medical Direction" at the receiving medical facility agrees an immediate transport is critical and will assume responsibility for transport outcome and patient care
 3. The transport contractor cannot provide a transport unit on-scene in a reasonable amount of time
- All other times, Chattahoochee Hills Fire Rescue is required (by law) to utilize AMR units/personnel to handle patient transport. In accordance with Georgia law, Chattahoochee Hills cannot summarily refuse to use the zone provider (AMR) and establish its own ambulance service to transport patients related to all incidents.
- However, the Region III Council may be entreated to evaluate the level of service by the existing contractor serving the South Fulton Zone, and if services are found to be deficient, the Council could initiate a "Request for Proposal" for patient transport services by other licensed ambulance companies.

Important Reminders ...

- Immediate patient transport does not always equal saving a life.
- "Life threatening" is defined according to the emergency medicine protocols established by the fire department's "Medical Director" (physician) and as interpreted by the ranking medical professional on-scene ... personal requests for immediate transport may not be consistent with medical personnel's assessment for transport.

2016 AMR Transports & Response

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	TOTAL
# of Transports	15	24	31	25	41	33	16	17	18	26	23	33	302
ALS Transports	7	17	25	20	35	23	12	14	11	20	18	22	224
>15 min response	6	9	15	8	19	15	8	7	4	8	7	14	120
>30min response	1	4	1	2	4	2	1	2	2	3	3	4	29

IMPORTANT NOTES

- **BLS** – “Basic Life-Saving” care (triage index ALPHA – CHARLIE)
- **ALS** – “Advanced Life-Saving” care (triage index BRAVO – ECHO)
- **Triage Dispatch Index** – an international index of 37 medical “complaints” fitted to ALPHA–ECHO prioritization for response to scene and patient care (ALPHA = lowest, general sickness, not life-threatening)

Consider ...

- National EMS benchmark is to provide ALS care within 8 minutes of “patient down”
- ALS calls account for 74% of CHFD's medical incidents/transport
- CHFD averages 44 ALPHA calls annually (ALPHA = general sickness, not life-threatening complaint/symptoms)
- CHFD response from dispatch to arriving on-scene (dept. avg. of 9.26 mins.):
 - <8 min = 28%
 - >8 min = 72%
- AMR response in Chattahoochee Hills:
 - >15 min response = 54% of transports
 - >30 min response = 13% of transports