



# BULLETIN

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL ATTENTION AT FAIRS/FESTIVALS

Despite all the preventive efforts made by the sponsoring organization and the respective supporting groups, patrons, and participants can have injuries and a variety of other health problems while on premises. Some problems can be life threatening emergencies. While most are not, the insured has a responsibility to see that a reasonable emergency medical system (EMS) is provided for whatever happens and whether it happens on premises.

The goal of EMS is to provide anyone on premises with rapid access to basic emergency care, advanced paramedic interventions, and medical treatment. The goal of a system is to have the respective parts and available resources fit together. Of preference for meeting both goals is to delegate by contract or employment the sponsor's EMS responsibilities to one who is trained and experienced at least at the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) level. Through pre-planning, such an EMT can captain a team and system that offers:

(1) A volunteer, employed, or contracted staff that is briefed on recognizing emergency medical problems and summoning the proper help; (2) Immediate attention to the sick and injured with at least basic EMT competence; (3) Ability to communicate by radio or phone any need for advanced emergency medical care through the community's EMS system; (4) Interim on-site use of essential basic EMS equipment (e.g., oxygen, backboard, neck collars); (5) Availability of a clean comfortable first aid area off the concourse for patient evaluation and attention; (6) Traffic routes for responding ambulances to the appropriate pick-up point; (7) Backup care and hospital transport methods while maintaining crowd coverage; and (8) Good documentation of all incidents, attentions given, and refusals of care.

A well-planned EMS system assures reasonable readiness for spectator care that is geared to the size of crowd and the community's resources. A participant's medical support person should be relied upon for the care of a patron only as a backup, and an on-site ambulance staffed by paramedics may be infeasible for small crowds. Key to this system is early recognition of an emergency and then **no delay** in the EMS team's calling in more qualified medical attention when needed. Public access to aid can be promoted through scorecard notices, message board and public address announcements, and identifiably dressed EMT's.

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