

Utah State Department of Health Bureau of
Emergency Medical Service EMS Committee
PO Box 142004
Salt Lake City, UT 84114-2004

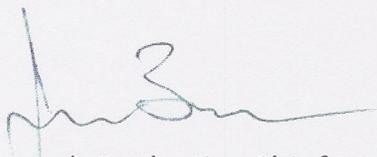
Re: Request for Authorization and Justification to Provide Paramedic Rescue
Service

Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Brigham City Fire Department provides prehospital medical care, interfacility transports and rescue services to the residents and visitors for all of southeastern Box Elder County, including Brigham City, Perry, Willard, Willard Bay, Corinne, Honeyville and as far west as Promontory. We also provide medical coverage for more than 22 miles of Interstate 15, many miles of Highway 89 and many other secondary highways. Our response area encompasses some of the most remote areas northern Utah has to offer. Total area covered is about 900 square miles which includes more than 600 miles of remote roads and trails. We also provide medical transports for Nucor Steel, Autoliv, Wal-Mart Distribution, Vulcraft, and Proctor and Gamble, Brigham City Regional Airport and a residential population of more than 22,400 citizens.

It is the desire of Brigham City Fire Department to secure a waiver and/or authorization to provide paramedic level services to the residents and visitors of southeastern Box Elder County and Brigham City when staffing is available.

Thank you for your time and consideration,



Joseph Bach, Fire Chief
Brigham City Fire Department

Proposed EMS Operations Plan

Overview

Brigham City Fire Department has been responsible for providing all emergency medical transport services and related services in south-eastern Box Elder County since 1951.

Brigham City Fire Department (BCFD) is committed to providing high quality service, and has committed significant time and financial resources ensuring the highest level of education to our staff resulting in a high level of patient care. When authorization is approved BCFD will begin providing paramedic service as soon as licensure and protocols are in place.

Description of Need

Providing prehospital care in our city and the surrounding rural area is vital to the residents and the millions of visitors who pass through on Interstate 15 annually. They come each year to participate in outdoor recreation in Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, Golden Spike Monument, Peach Days Celebration, and local historic sites unique to the area. The scenery and topography of this area attract many visitors for outdoor activities including bike, OHV, and jeep trails in the open desert and the mountains immediately adjacent to Brigham City.

Of the more than 3,000 calls annually, many of our calls for service involve extended patient contact times due to the complexities of accessing and transporting patients in remote areas in the back country of Box Elder County. Our agency transport times from remote scenes to the hospital can be more than 2 hours, especially during extreme winter weather conditions. The state average is 31 minutes.

Even with the availability of air transport, response time delays can be unacceptable to critical patients in need of immediate advance life support care. Many times air transport is not available due to weather and the closest Paramedic level ground unit can be hours away, depending on the scene location. Currently there are no Paramedic level services available within Box Elder County.

Brigham City Community Hospital (BCCH) is a level 4 trauma center located within the city limits. BCFD provides the interfacility transports between BCCH and various facilities though out the state. Many times patients are in need of Paramedic level care and support which BCFD currently cannot supply, and must wait for either arranged transport to a more appropriate facility by air, or for a

nursing transport team to be brought in.

For these many reasons we feel that our service is in need of providing paramedic advanced life support. BCFD operates on income from billing for our services, and tax resources provided by Brigham City for its operations. Our surrounding communities' base population is very low and therefore they do not have the means of providing any measurable tax support. We are requesting a waiver to operate with a single paramedic when available. This is a very economical solution to getting advanced level care out to our community while we work on the particulars of sustainable funding so that we can meet the state requirements for full licensure.

Budget

Brigham City has made significant financial commitments to provide a paramedic service. BCFD has maintained a sound financial structure since its inception and operates within its assigned budget from the City. The City Administrator has direct oversight of financial matters within BCFD and has adopted a 2014 budget that provides for the first step in funding a Paramedic Service. The Mayor and City Council have expressed their support for a 2015 budget that further supports providing a Paramedic transport service with full-time positions.

Scope of Operation

BCFD provides ambulance service to the residents and visitors of our communities and lands within 900 square miles. The area includes National and State parks, as well as very popular recreation land and large industrial facilities.

BCFD operates out of a base station located within Brigham City limits. We operate 5 ambulances and numerous fire apparatus from this location. EMS services are provided by an intermediate level ambulance 24/7 and by a paramedic level ambulance when available. Plans to add a paramedic for every 24 hour shift will be realized by mid-2015.

Chain of Command

BCFD operates under the incident command system for all appropriate incidents. The Fire Chief is responsible for the day to day operations and reports directly to the City Administrator. The department also maintains a part-time Fire Marshal

and several Company Officers who are able to fill in when the Fire Chief is not available.

Staffing

BCFD currently operates as a part-time department. Ambulance crews are made up of 2 individuals who are EMT, AEMT certified or higher. While on shift members are required to be within 5 minutes of the ambulance station. When a call is received, members report to the station and respond to the call. Every day there is an OIC (officer in charge) on shift. They utilize a department quick response vehicle and respond directly to the scene of life threatening emergencies. OICs are also required to recruit back up crews so that we always maintain a crew ready for service. BCFD has a roster of 73 of which 43 are AEMTs, 20 are EMTs, 1 is a Paramedic, 2 are currently in Paramedic programs and 8 have Fire only certifications. BCFD employs a full time paramedic Fire Chief, and has approval to hire 4 additional Part-time paramedics for 2014. In 2015 we will be submitting a budget that includes 6 Full time paramedics.

BCFD has a part-time training officer who will also be a certified paramedic within 2 years. Department medical trainings are held twice per month and cover all necessary Utah BEMS recertification requirements. Additionally once per quarter we hold a special training and skills day to help our EMTs continue to advance their knowledge and skill level.

Fleet

BCFD maintains a fleet of 5 ambulances and 1 quick response vehicle. Monthly maintenance inspections are performed to be sure that our vehicles are in top operating condition. Our ambulance fleet is replaced according to our City Fleet policy. Existing ambulances are equipped with mobile and portable radios capable of receiving and transmitting with local county-wide capability. BCFD has maintained several employees who are emergency vehicle operations (EVO) certified. Our policies will be changing to require EVO certification within one year of employment.

EMS Protocols/Standing Orders

BCFD operates under strict treatment guidelines developed by our Medical Director (Dr. Barry Gardner). Dr. Gardner will be reviewing upcoming state protocols as well as other paramedic level service protocols and will develop treatment guidelines that make sense for our unique service area. Each of our members is given access to an electronic copy of our treatment guidelines, which specify standing orders, treatment, triage, and transport guidelines. BCFD meets quarterly with BCCH Trauma Committee to review our quality of care concerns. We also meet quarterly as an EMS Committee to review our department's medical protocols and our clinical goals. This group also scrutinizes any deviation from the protocols by our EMTs. The committee includes our agency medical director, training officer and key members of our department.

Equipment and Medications

BCFD ambulances and quick response unit will carry all equipment and medications required by Utah R426-15. EMS vehicles will contain equipment to operate both at the intermediate and paramedic level; however, medications and equipment that pertain only to paramedic level service will be kept in a separate locked and tagged container with access available to the on-duty paramedics only. Weekly checks and inventory are conducted on all medical supplies and medications. All controlled narcotics are kept in an onboard medication safe under lock and control tag. Narcotics used during patient care are documented in writing on the Inventory Control Log, signed by both the EMS provider responsible for administration, and witnessed by a second EMS provider. All narcotic waste is done in the presence of another EMT, nurse or other licensed health care provider. The crew leader on-duty is responsible for the medication Inventory Control Log and any breakage, loss, theft, or other decrease in inventory is reported immediately to the Fire Chief for investigation, and if necessary reported to law enforcement and the agency medical director.

Communications

BCFD is dispatched by the State Dispatch Center located in the Box Elder County Sheriff's Office (BECD) dispatch center. All calls for EMS within the BCFD

department response area go to the BECD and then to EMS personnel via radio/voice tone pagers.

Communication between dispatch and responding units is then handled through the county's VHF and 800 radio networks. Communication plans include mutual aid agencies, law enforcement, hospitals, air transport, search and rescue and other regional and statewide event channels. Back up communications plan includes the use of cell and satellite phones.

EMS Interface

BCFD has contingency plans to provide multiple ambulances in times of high service demands. Because of our location we have mutual aid agreements that include the neighboring community transporting agencies of Tremonton and Fielding as well as Weber County, Ogden and Cache County EMS providers. When our resources have been exhausted we rely upon our neighbors for assistance. BCFD has also developed relationships with our local Search and Rescue and Fire departments to provide manpower when our resources are exhausted.

BCFD works very closely with Box Elder County Search and Rescue and has members who serve on the team. Our teams work together and use common language and written response plans.

Currently no surrounding agencies provide paramedic level of service. If a paramedic is needed and one is not available from BCFD, the service will operate as an Advanced level service and transport to the nearest appropriate facility.

BCFD also utilizes air transport units whenever patient condition, location, and transport times deem it necessary. Air transport requests and guidelines are contained within our COGs.

Conclusion

The unique service area of BCFD and the remote nature of access to high levels of care, justify the BCFD's desires to provide a higher level of service for the citizens

and visitors to our area. In addition, the rural nature of our area and the current financial situation of BCFD will soon support a full time paramedic service. We have no doubts full time paramedic service could be achieved within the next 12-24 months. But to require that service right away would cause an undue burden on the residents of the City and its surrounding communities. The plan as proposed would allow for a single paramedic service when a paramedic was available, if no paramedic were available we would continue to provide the highest level of advanced care allowed.