**2.5 Vehicle Safety Policy**

**Purpose:** To provide guidelines for vehicle safety operations

**Policy:** Each company vehicle shall be maintained in a safe operating condition. The vehicle and all required equipment shall be functional and operable when the non-emergency transportation vehicle is "in-service." The responsibility for the safe operation of each vehicle shall rest with the crewmembers staffing that vehicle. The company strongly prohibits the operation of any vehicle without due regard for the safety of the general public or without adhering to all applicable laws, rules and/or regulations. The company will also avoid the operation of any vehicle that is patently unsafe to drive, presents a hazard to personnel and/or bystanders, has not passed the state Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) inspection or does not display a valid MVC inspection sticker. It is the policy of the company that no person shall staff or operate, or be allowed to staff or operate a non-emergency transportation vehicle:

1. After consuming or while under the influence of alcohol, narcotics or any substance that substantially compromises a person's decision-making abilities;

2. In a reckless manner;

3. At an excessive rate of speed; or

4. While engaging in any illegal conduct.

(e) The interior of the vehicle shall be designed for the safety of patients and crewmembers and the patient compartment shall have the following safety features:

1. There shall be no protruding edges

2. Exterior corners (corners that point-out) shall be rounded or covered with a padded material;

3. The ceiling shall be finished with a padded material or with a flat, even and unbroken surface;

4. The floor shall have a flat, even, unbroken and impervious surface and shall be covered with a slip resistant material;

5. Any seats with under seat storage shall have a positive latching mechanism that holds the seat closed;

6. All cabinet doors, except a sliding door, shall have a positive latching mechanism that shall hold the door securely closed and shall prevent the contents of the cabinet from pushing the door open from the inside; and

7. All equipment and supplies carried on the vehicle shall be stored in a crashworthy manner (that is, they shall remain firmly in place and shall not present a hazard to any vehicle occupant in the event of an accident or sudden change in vehicle speed or direction). There shall be sufficient cabinets and other storage spaces within the vehicle so as to meet this requirement. Crashworthy retention systems shall not incorporate rubber straps, "shock cords" or Velcro [FN®]-type closures.

8. The bench seats in all vehicles manufactured after July 1, 2002 shall have a passive barrier at the forward end of the bench.

(f) Automotive safety belts shall be provided for each vehicle occupant (patient, passenger or crewmember) over eight years of age or under eight years of age but weighing more than 80 pounds and shall meet all State standards. Each vehicle occupant shall be properly restrained either in an automotive safety belt, or, if a passenger is a patient and it is medically appropriate, in a wheelchair or on a stretcher. All children under eight years of age weighing 80 pounds or less shall be properly restrained in a Federally-approved child restraint system. or, if such a child passenger is a patient and it is medically appropriate in a wheelchair or on a stretcher.

(g) Signs shall appear in both the patient and driver's compartments that clearly indicate that smoking is prohibited anywhere in the vehicle.

(h) Each vehicle shall be equipped with the following minimum safety equipment:

1. One flashlight, two D-cell size or larger;

2. One fire extinguisher, U.L. rated at least 2A 10BC or 3A 40BC. The extinguisher shall have a valid inspection tag indicating that it is fully charged. The fire extinguisher shall be securely mounted in a bracket on the wall, floor or ceiling; and

3. Three portable red emergency reflective safety triangles or three battery-operated flashers. Due to their flammable nature, ground and/or safety flares of any type shall not be carried on any vehicle.

**Related Policy**

1. Alcohol and Drug Policy