



POLICY STATEMENT

Number: 26-02
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Supersedes/Updates: New

High-Consequence Infectious Disease Transportation Operations

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish the authority of the New York State Department of Health (Department), its operational leadership role, and a statewide coordination framework for the transportation of patients with actual or suspected high-consequence infectious diseases (HCIDs) within New York State.

This policy is further intended to support, coordinate, and integrate the specialized operational capabilities of licensed emergency medical services agencies, hospitals, governmental entities, and other response partners into a unified statewide public health response framework for high-consequence infectious diseases transportation operations.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to entities participating in Department-directed transportation activities involving patients with actual or suspected high-consequence infectious diseases.

III. DEFINITIONS

High Consequence Infectious Disease (HCID) shall mean a communicable disease or suspected communicable disease capable of causing significant morbidity, mortality, public concern, operational disruption, or widespread public health impact, and requiring specialized infection control precautions, transportation considerations, public health coordination, or healthcare system capabilities.

Department-Directed HCID Transportation Operation shall mean any patient transportation activity involving an actual or suspected HCID conducted under the coordination, direction, or oversight of the New York State Department of Health, in support of communicable disease investigation and response activities.

State EMS Task Force shall mean the statewide emergency medical services coordination and response system established pursuant to Public Health Law §3032 and operated by the New York State Department of Health.

Specialized HCID Transportation Agency shall mean a licensed EMS agency or response organization possessing specialized operational capabilities, training, equipment, or experience related to HCID transportation, infectious disease operations, or complex, interfacility transport activities.

IV. POLICY

It shall be the policy of the Department to provide centralized statewide coordination and operational oversight for the transportation of patients with actual or suspected high-consequence infectious diseases when such incidents involve, or have the potential to involve, significant public health impact, multi-jurisdictional operations, interstate coordination, specialized infectious disease transportation capabilities, or other circumstances requiring statewide public health coordination.



The New York State Department of Health shall serve as the lead State entity for HCID transportation operations conducted in support of communicable disease investigation and response activities pursuant to 10 NYCRR §2.6(d).

The State EMS Task Force is designated as the Department's lead operational entity for the coordination, management, and support of HCID transportation activities conducted pursuant to Department-led communicable disease investigation and response operations. within New York State.

V. GUIDELINES

A. Activation

Pursuant to 10 NYCRR §2.6(d), and at the direction of the Commissioner of Health, the Department may elect to lead communicable disease investigation and response activities involving actual or suspected high-consequence infectious diseases where such incidents involve, or have the potential to involve, significant public health impact, multi-jurisdictional operations, interstate coordination, specialized infectious disease transportation capabilities, or other circumstances requiring centralized statewide public health coordination.

Through the State EMS Task Force, the Department may activate and coordinate HCID transportation operations using Department personnel and resources, contracted resources, licensed EMS agencies, local health authority resources, and other resources deemed appropriate by the Department based upon operational needs, public health considerations, resource availability, and incident complexity.

B. Coordination with Specialized HCID Transportation Agencies

The Department recognizes the critical operational role and specialized expertise of licensed EMS agencies and response organizations with established experience in HCID transportation, infectious disease operations, and complex interfacility transport missions. Implementation of this policy is intended to support, coordinate, and integrate specialized EMS transportation capabilities into a unified, statewide public health response framework and is not intended to replace or diminish the operational role of participating EMS agencies or local response organizations.

Licensed EMS agencies operating in support of Department-directed HCID transportation operations may function as operational components of the State EMS Task Force, pursuant to Public Health Law §3032, for the duration of such operations and in accordance with Department direction.

Participating EMS agencies shall continue to provide operational, clinical, and technical transportation expertise consistent with their capabilities, training, and operational role within the response.

C. Department-directed HCID Transportation Operations

1. HCID transportation operations may include, but are not limited to:
 - a) Coordination and deployment of EMS transportation resources;
 - b) Coordination of interfacility, interstate, and multi-jurisdictional patient movement activities;
 - c) Coordination with hospitals, health care facilities, local health authorities, emergency management agencies, federal agencies, and other governmental or non-governmental response partners;
 - d) Designation and coordination of appropriate receiving facilities consistent with Department operational objectives, communicable disease containment considerations, and public health protection needs;



- e) Coordination of specialized infection control, personal protective equipment, decontamination, communications, and operational support activities; and
 - f) Coordination of Department-operated resources and licensed EMS agencies.
2. The Department may establish operational procedures, transportation protocols, destination guidance, communication requirements, infection control standards, resource coordination mechanisms, and other operational directives necessary to support HCID transportation operations conducted pursuant to this policy.
 3. Operational direction issued by the Department or its designee, in support of HCID transportation activities may be communicated verbally, electronically, or in writing based upon operational necessity, incident conditions, and public health considerations.
 4. Participating agencies acting in good faith reliance upon Department-issued operational direction while engaged in Department-directed HCID transportation operations shall be considered to be operating in support of a Department-directed communicable disease response operation.
 5. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to alter the underlying licensure, governance, ownership, command structure, or ordinary operational responsibilities of participating EMS agencies outside the scope of Department-directed HCID transportation operations.

VI. REFERENCES / AUTHORITIES

1. New York State Public Health Law §206
2. New York State Public Health Law §2100
3. New York State Public Health Law §3032
4. New York State Public Health Law §3066
5. 10 NYCRR §2.6