

HEMS
SYSTEM PROTOCOL
AMBULANCE TRANSPORT OF OPERATIONAL CANINES

Initial Date: 1/27/2025
Revised Date: 2/13/2025

Section 8-32

Ambulance Transport of Operational Canines

Purpose:

To provide guidance for providers who will transport an ill or injured operational canine in an ambulance, as permitted by Michigan MCL 333.20925.

Definition:

- A. "Operational Canine" aka "Police dog" refers to a dog used by a law enforcement agency of the state, a local unit of government or a federal unit of government that is trained for law enforcement or operational work and subject to the control of a handler. This includes canine police officers and other operational canines such as search and rescue, cadaver, "bomb sniffing" or "drug sniffing" dogs.
- B. This protocol does not apply to service animals, emotional support animals or pets.

Procedure:

- A. An operational canine may be transported from a scene in an ambulance only if ALL of the following apply:
 - 1. There are no human patients who require transport or emergency medical care who have not already received such care and transport
 - 2. The operational canine has been muzzled
 - 3. Whenever possible, the canine's handler or a secondary handler must accompany the dog during the transport.
- B. Any medical care rendered to the dog should be performed with use of appropriate restraint, by the handler or a trained EMS provider
- C. Medical interventions rendered to the operational canine should be limited to immediate life-threatening conditions, and with the consent of the handler/owner, and based on the training of the provider or handler
- D. Handlers/owners of the operational canine are permitted to provide first aid care to the canine
- E. Destination: Operational canines will be transported to the nearest appropriate and open emergency veterinarian facility. The transporting crew should attempt to contact the receiving facility by phone.

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- F. Canine transports are non-emergency transports
- G. A paper or electronic patient care report (PCR) should be completed on the encounter
- H. The ambulance should be decontaminated before return to service.
- I. All cases of canine transports will be submitted the MCA PSRO for review.

Protocol Source/References: MCL 333.20925 "Ambulance Transport of Police Dogs" and www.K9TECC.org

Protocol Source Reference: DEMCA; 8-32 Ambulance Transport of Operational Canines
(Initial Date 1/18/2019, MDHHS Approved 8/23/2019)

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