

LEON COUNTY E.M.S.

Standard Operating Guideline

Title: Lateral Transfer and Relocation of Patients

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I. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this guideline is to delineate certain situations where the “lateral” transfers of bedridden patients may be indicated and the variance of destination may be a facility other than a hospital. This consideration is intended to move a patient to a substantially safer environment than he/she is currently in during a severe weather event.

II. BACKGROUND:

At times, during periods of mandated emergency evacuation of special needs patients, it may be necessary for EMS to assist in relocating a bedridden patient to a special needs shelter for the expected duration of a weather event or named storm that impacts this region. In this situation, where no other viable means of horizontal patient movement exist, Leon County EMS may be tasked with missions of this type. Each mission will be evaluated on a case by case basis in order to determine what is in the best interest of the patient.

III. GUIDELINE:

1. This variance may only occur during times when the county Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is fully activated and a liaison from EMS is present in the EOC.
2. This variance may only apply when prevalent conditions are suitable enough that safe transport of the patient can take place.
3. The variance may only apply when the patient’s medical condition is stable and the patient is a candidate for the special needs shelter environment.
4. It is understood that a transport may be aborted due to dangerous weather conditions that may place the patient or transport crew in jeopardy.
5. An EMS Patient Care Report is still required for any transport under this variance.
6. Patients that are unable to remain in their own dwelling due to evacuation orders and whose healthcare needs exceed the capability of the special needs shelter will be transported to the closest hospital that can meet their need.