

Scope of Practice: EMT-Basic Without Medical Command in Emergencies

ORC Ann. 4765.37

An EMT-Basic can perform certain medical services without the authorization of a physician medical director when communications fail and the EMT-Basic believes the life of the patient is in immediate danger.

Performance of services by EMT-basic

(A) An emergency medical technician-basic shall perform the emergency medical services described in this section in accordance with this chapter and any rules adopted under it by the state board of emergency medical, fire, and transportation services.

(B) An emergency medical technician-basic may operate, or be responsible for operation of, an ambulance and may provide emergency medical services to patients. In an emergency, an EMT-basic may determine the nature and extent of illness or injury and establish priority for required emergency medical services. An EMT-basic may render emergency medical services such as opening and maintaining an airway, giving positive pressure ventilation, cardiac resuscitation, electrical interventions with automated defibrillators to support or correct the cardiac function and other methods determined by the board, controlling of hemorrhage, treatment of shock, immobilization of fractures, bandaging, assisting in childbirth, management of mentally disturbed patients, initial care of poison and burn patients, and determining triage of adult and pediatric trauma victims. Where patients must in an emergency be extricated from entrapment, an EMT-basic may assess the extent of injury and render all possible emergency medical services and protection to the entrapped patient; provide light rescue services if an ambulance has not been accompanied by a specialized unit; and after extrication, provide additional care in sorting of the injured in accordance with standard emergency procedures.

(C) An EMT-basic may perform any other emergency medical services approved pursuant to rules adopted under section 4765.11 of the Revised Code. The board shall determine whether the nature of any such service requires that an EMT-basic receive authorization prior to performing the service.

(D)

(1) Except as provided in division (D)(2) of this section, if the board determines under division (C) of this section that a service requires prior authorization, the service shall be performed only pursuant to the written or verbal authorization of a physician or of the cooperating physician advisory board, or pursuant to an authorization transmitted through a direct communication device by a physician, physician assistant designated by a physician, or registered nurse designated by a physician.

(2) If communications fail during an emergency situation or the required response time prohibits communication, an EMT-basic may perform services subject to this division, if, in the judgment of the EMT-basic, the life of the patient is in immediate danger. Services performed under these circumstances shall be performed in accordance with the protocols for triage of adult and pediatric trauma victims established in rules adopted under sections 4765.11 and 4765.40 of the Revised Code and any applicable protocols adopted by the emergency medical service organization with which the EMT-basic is affiliated.