



Emergency Medical Services Vessel Boarding Standard Operating Guidelines

Background:

The following information was developed upon request of the Nueces County Fire Chief's Association to assist in the coordinated and safe response to vessels operating in Port Corpus Christi. Compliance is voluntary however represents best practice and adheres to customary and expected emergency response guidelines for operating in the maritime domain. The content was developed in cooperation with the EMS Subcommittee, Port of Corpus Christi Authority (PCCA), US Coast Guard (USCG), US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and local maritime industry professionals.

Guidelines:

Upon dispatch to a dock anywhere in the Port area, EMS should confirm the PCCA Security Command Center (SCC) has been notified at 361-882-1182.

The SCC will dispatch Port Police to ensure access to the vessel. Additionally, the SCC will inform the PCCA Harbor Master's Office (HMO), USCG Command Center and CBP.

If responding to a private dock not owned by PCCA, additional security access measures may be required. Port Police should still be contacted and can assist.

For all non-emergency situations, the ships' Agent will arrange for private transport to a medical facility. Only if serious illness or injury will 9-1-1 be initiated.

If EMS is requested, there should be no delay in responding and the ship should be considered generally safe for responding EMS providers utilizing universal precautions.

- All crew members are medically cleared for potential infectious disease prior to vessel arrival.
- All vessels have received appropriate security clearances while at dock. If additional security measures are required, this will be apparent upon arrival to the dock.
- Caution should always be used when boarding a vessel due to the inherent hazards associated with working from heights and over water, narrow access paths, overhead hazards and onboard hazardous materials. Additional PPE should be considered including life preservers and head protection.

For general boarding purposes, EMS is authorized to board the vessel if requested and authorized by the vessel Captain. Emergency response to a ship shall never be delayed and does not require preapprovals by the USCG or CBP.

EMS should always be escorted by a crew member who can often assist with patient packaging.

For US flagged ships, the vessel's Captain often serves as the ship's Agent however for foreign flagged vessels, the Agent will be a local representative familiar with the available services.

For follow up information about the patient including billing information, contact the ships' Agent. EMS and/or hospital staff may obtain this information from the HMO if unable to obtain while on-scene at 361-882-1773.

There should be no delay in transport or transfer of care at hospitals due to concerns regarding citizenship. The Agent has the responsibility to coordinate directly with CBP and hospital staff accordingly.

After transport, no further action is required of EMS. However, the USCG may contact the EMS provider if an incident investigation is warranted.

Important Numbers:

PCCA Security Command Center (SCC)	361-882-1182
PCCA Harbor Master's Office (HMO)	361-882-1773
USCG Command Center (USCG)	361-939-0450
US Customs & Border Protection (CBP)	361-879-4400

PCCA Area of Responsibility (AOR)

The geographic boundaries of the PCCA are co-extensive with Nueces and San Patricio Counties and includes portions of Aransas County. For the purposes of this document, the Port Authority exercises jurisdiction over the waterways and public port facilities and all vessels using the waterways. The Authority's waterways mean collectively, the Corpus Christi Ship Channel, Inner Harbor, the La Quinta Channel, the Jewel Fulton Canal, Rincon Canal and the Intracoastal Waterway. The AOR is operationally divided at the Harbor Bridge, separating the Inner and Outer Harbor areas.

Additional clarification may be directed to the PCCA Manager of Emergency Management, Danielle Hale.

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