Media Relations
Supersedes:
Effective: 02-19-98

PURPOSE
Sharing accurate and appropriate information with members of the media regarding the activities of Boston Emergency Medical Services is an important part of the Department’s public information function. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the number of individuals who disseminate such information is limited so as to provide accurate information that also maintains our Department’s legal responsibility to protect our patients’ right to privacy, and to draw clear lines of responsibility within Boston EMS in the area of public information.

POLICY
Except for the exceptions listed below, only the following individuals are authorized to speak to the media regarding matters involving Boston EMS:

- Chief of Department
- Medical Director
- Superintendent in Chief
- Superintendent
- On-Duty Shift Commander
- Public Information Officer

Exceptions
A. If the on-duty Dispatch Operations Supervisor is contacted by the media regarding specific Boston EMS incident, they may provide the following information:
   - The address of the incident
   - That an ambulance was dispatched

Dispatch Operations Supervisors shall not provide, nor confirm, information related to a specific patient, including name, age, sex, medical condition, or circumstances surrounding the decision of a citizen to call for assistance. They also shall not provide information relating to the actions of Boston EMS with respect to a specific incident, including response information, names of EMS personnel, or unit designations that responded. If more information is requested, the call should be directed to the Public Affairs Officer or on-duty Shift Commander.

B. If requested by an authorized member, Boston EMS employees may speak to the media in conjunction with a Department public information matter.

MAJOR INCIDENTS
The on-duty Shift Commander, or by designation, the Public Affairs Officer, shall be the primary contact for media information regarding incidents which involve substantial Boston EMS resources.
In order to maintain the lines of responsibility in this area, no other members of Boston EMS are authorized to speak to the media regarding Department-related issues except for the personnel listed above.