

# CHICAGO FIRE DEPARTMENT

## WE'RE THERE WHEN YOU NEED US!



### EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Heart attacks and trauma are major causes of death and disability in Chicago and across the United States. Death can be prevented and temporary or permanent disabilities can be significantly reduced with timely first-aid and emergency medical care.

The City of Chicago recognizes the need for effective emergency medical care for its residents. The Chicago Fire Department is always ready to respond in the event of an emergency. The goal of the Bureau of Operations is to provide Emergency Medical Care to the people living, visiting and working in Chicago.

The Fire Department operates nearly 59 ALS Ambulances, 27 ALS Engines, 12 BLS Ambulances and 100 + First Responder Vehicles strategically placed throughout the city. Their responsibility is to reduce suffering from illness and injury, with the ultimate goal of saving lives.

This pamphlet will help you to understand some of what our service offers. We hope you'll never need us, but if you do, we'll be glad to help.

### WHO ARE WE?

#### PARAMEDICS

Paramedics are men and women who live in the City of Chicago and have been licensed by the State of Illinois to provide Advanced Emergency Medical Care. Hundreds of hours go into the training of each paramedic. And once licensed, paramedics must continue their education in order to maintain that license.

#### EMT's

EMT's also must be residents of the City of Chicago and are certified by the State of Illinois. They staff our Basic Life Support Ambulances which

are dispatched to medical incidents that are non-life threatening in nature.

Our Emergency Service Personnel must be able to recognize all types of emergencies—from anxious parents with sick children to sudden heart attacks—and institute the appropriate medical treatment. They often carry out their responsibilities in contact with physicians at one of four area "Resource Hospitals." Patient evaluation and relevant information can be relayed to the physician who, in turn, directs the necessary medical treatment.

Medical treatment in the field ranges from immobilization of simple fractures to the advanced medical treatment of a cardiac patient. These medical procedures may span a time period from five minutes to over an hour. After stabilization, the patient will be transported to the nearest approved medical facility, or at the discretion of the Resource Hospital, to the nearest Trauma Center.

### WHEN TO CALL

*Emergency Medical Services should be called in cases of:*



- Sudden collapse
- Persistent chest pain
- Severe difficulty breathing
- Major accidents
- Drowning
- Emergency childbirth
- Burns
- Trauma

*or any case in which you feel you have a serious emergency.*

# ADULT FIRE SAFETY

## HOW TO CALL

### DIAL 9-1-1

Tell the dispatcher the exact nature of the emergency. The dispatcher will ask you various questions in order to provide important information to the Responding Unit(s). Try to stay calm when you talk to the dispatcher. When the call is complete, return to the side of the patient and try to help until the Responding Unit(s) arrive.

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU CALL

After dialing 9-1-1, the dispatcher sends an alarm to the nearest available ambulance relaying information provided in the original call. If the nearest ambulance is more than 16 blocks away from you, a unit of an appropriate level of emergency care will be sent to render assistance. The staff aboard our engines and trucks are all trained emergency medical services personnel and are able to initiate, as well as assist the paramedics with life saving techniques. All of this is done in order to provide you with the best possible care in the shortest period of time.

## BEFORE WE ARRIVE

After you have called 9-1-1, there are several things you can do before help arrives. These simple procedures will greatly aid the paramedics and the patient they will treat.

1. If you determine that the patient is pulseless and non-breathing, begin cardiopulmonary resuscitation (C.P.R.), but only if you have been trained in this lifesaving technique.
2. Stay calm; do not get excited. This will reassure the patient that help is on the way.
3. Make the patient as comfortable as possible.
4. Gather all medications that the patient may be taking. This will help the Emergency Responders better determine the medical history of the patient.



5. Move all furniture or obstacles out of the way so that the Responders have easy access to the patient. Make sure all pets are secured in another part of the house.
6. Remember time. This is very important. When was the last time you talked to the patient? How long has this medical condition existed? How long has the person been unconscious?
7. Send someone to the front of the building so that they may guide the paramedics to the patient.
8. The Emergency Responders can take full advantage of their training only if you let them. Their job—administering advanced medical life support—requires the cooperation of all citizens. Our personnel are disciplined in the job they perform, and only with your help can they execute their duties with skill, pride, and dedication.

## WHO PAYS

On August 1, 1985, the City Council approved an ordinance authorizing the Chicago Fire Department to initiate a policy of collecting fees for ambulance service. The fees are \$170.00 for basic life support and \$280.00 for advanced life support. There will be an additional charge of \$25.00 when oxygen is administered and \$5.00 per mile to hospital. The City of Chicago Department of Revenue will bill you for these services after transport, similar to the way hospitals bill. In most cases, these charges will be paid for by a third-party payer such as Medicare, Medicaid, or a private insurance company. However, **NO ONE WILL BE DENIED SERVICE BASED ON INABILITY TO PAY!!!**

Call (312) 747-3811 for information on ambulance billing.