



# Jefferson County Fire and EMS

## Patient Handling

### Page 1 of 2

OG: 18-04

Date: 10/2018

Revised:

**Purpose:** To ensure patient and provider safety while moving, transferring, and caring for patients, the guidelines below, organized by device and/or patient population, should be followed;

#### Stretcher

- Patients should never be placed or transported in a prone position on the stretcher, unless this is the patient's preferred position of comfort.
- All safety belts on the stretcher should be used including the leg, waist, and shoulder/chest.
- The stretcher should be moved at waist height, not at the loading height.
- The stretcher should not be used on stairs. A single step or change in level, such as a curb, is acceptable in some situations but the stretcher should never be used to cross more than one change in level.

#### Stair Chair

- The stair chair should not be used for any patient who is unconscious or cannot control extremities.
- A minimum of two responders are required to operate the stair chair and, if available, someone should guide the responder who is backing down the stairs.
- Stair treads should be used when moving a patient up or down stairs.

#### Pediatric Patients

- A child safety seat should be used to transport any patient under 8 years of age unless the patient is at least four feet nine inches tall (WV §17C-15-46.) Child safety seats should be properly secured in the patient compartment using installed safety belts.
- Whenever possible a parent should be transported in the patient compartment with the patient, however the patient should not be held in the parent's arms during transport. In certain situations it is not possible or practical for the parent to accompany the child in the patient compartment during transport; i.e., cardiac arrest, violence, etc.

#### Bariatric Patients

- Crews should ensure enough resources are on scene to safely move a bariatric patient. If additional resources are needed, request additional manpower through the ECC. It is documented that responders often over-estimate the ability of themselves and their crews. Crews should carefully consider their abilities and ensure that enough resources are available to safely move the patient without injury to the patient or crew.
- When moving a bariatric patient, crews should use the "four corners" method, which places one responder at each corner of the device, or other methods to distribute the weight of the patient among more responders (i.e., three or four responders on each side, etc.)

#### Additional Patient Handling Guidelines

- Wheelchairs should never be used on steps.
- Household chairs should never be used as a carrying device.
- Equipment weight restrictions should not be exceeded.



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Page 2 of 2**

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Medical Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Chairman of Chief's Committee: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_