The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
Office of Emergency Medical Services
67 Forest Street, Marlborough MA 01752

CHARLES D. BAKER
Governor

KARYN E. POLITO
Lieutenant Governor

MARYLOU SUDDERS
Secretary

MONICA BHAREL, MD, MPH
Commissioner

Tel: 617-624-6000
www.mass.gov/dph

EMERGENCY WAIVER

To: All Licensed Ambulance Services
From: Scott Cluett, Acting OEMS Director
Re: Weather Related Waiver for Transport to Emergency Shelters and Cooling Centers
Date: July 18, 2019

Due to the severe heat that is forecasted to affect the Commonwealth July 19-21, 2019 and under the authority of the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, under M.G.L. c 111C §22, certain provisions of the EMS System Regulations, 105 CMR 170.000, have been suspended through this waiver.

The purpose of this waiver is to facilitate the transportation of individuals who have contacted the 911 system only to access transportation to an alternate destination, such as an American Red Cross (or similar) shelter or identified cooling center, in response to the current weather conditions and any potential for power outages.

Term of the Suspension:
This order shall be effective:

From: 08:00 Friday, July 19, 2019
To: 08:00 Monday, July 22, 2019

Effective Section: 105 CMR 170.020 Definitions:

"Appropriate Health Care Facility" shall mean:

An emergency department, either physically located within an acute care hospital license by the Department pursuant to 105 CMR 130.000 to provide emergency services, or in a satellite emergency facility approved by the Department pursuant to 130.821, ***or a shelter/cooling center, in accordance with the attached guidelines , that is closest geographically or conforms to a Department- approved point of entry plan***.

Guidelines for transporting individuals to Alternate Destinations

- Individuals must not have an acute chief complaint that could require emergency medical care.
- Individuals must have normal mental status (or baseline per knowledgeable observer).
- Normal (or baseline) vital signs.
- A patient care record must be completed for each individual transported to an alternate destination.
- On-line medical control, if available, shall be contacted.

- Transportation in an ambulance to a shelter will be permitted when no other means of transportation, such as “chair vans,” are available.
- The modification of the transport destination requirements is subject to the approval of the ambulance service’s affiliate hospital.
- Crews must ensure that patients bring any needed medications with them.

Contact Information:
In the event that you may need further information or an update on this waiver, you may contact Scott Cluett, at william.scott.cluett@state.ma.us.