
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE 2.3.19

Original Date: 11/10/25	Approved by: Fire Chief
Purpose: To establish clear procedures for the assessment, treatment, and transport of unaccompanied minors encountered by Pembroke Pines Fire Rescue personnel, ensuring patient safety, compliance with state law, and adherence to medical and ethical standards.	
Intent: Provide clear and consistent guidance for personnel when treating minors who are unaccompanied by a parent or legal guardian.	
Forms Required: N/A	

I. RESPONSIBILITY:

All personnel shall be familiar with and comply with this SOP.

II. DEFINITION:

- A. Unaccompanied Minor: A person under the age of 18 who is not accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or adult authorized to consent to medical treatment on their behalf. This includes:
1. Children found alone at school, or in public areas.
 2. Minors injured during activities where a guardian is not present.
 3. Patients separated from guardians due to incidents such as MVCs, medical emergencies, or disasters.

III. POLICY:

- A. **Primary Consideration:** The safety, welfare, and medical needs of the minor take precedence over issues of consent in emergency situations.
- B. **Implied Consent:** Emergency medical care shall not be delayed when immediate treatment is necessary to prevent serious harm, pain, or death. Under Florida Statute §743.064, emergency treatment of a minor may proceed under implied consent when a guardian is unavailable.
- C. **Attempts to Contact Guardian:** Personnel must make reasonable efforts to identify and contact a parent, legal guardian, or responsible adult as soon as possible. Communication attempts should be documented, including the time, method, and person contacted (if reached).

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- D. **Law Enforcement Notification:** If a parent or guardian cannot be located or the child is found in unsafe circumstances, notify Pembroke Pines Police Department to ensure the child's safety and appropriate custody arrangements.
- E. **Transport:** Unaccompanied minors requiring medical evaluation or treatment shall be transported to the nearest appropriate facility according to department protocol. Pediatric patients shall be restrained according to the Pediatric Safe Transport Policy using the Ambulance Child Restraint (ACR) device, standard car seat, or built-in child restraint seat as appropriate for size and age. If law enforcement is on scene, they may accompany the child during transport if available and appropriate.
- F. **Documentation:** The EMS report must include: the child's apparent age, condition, and circumstances found; efforts made to locate a guardian; name and badge number of law enforcement officers involved; and description of all treatments rendered under implied consent.
- G. **Non-Emergent Situations:** If a minor's condition is stable and does not require emergency care, efforts must be made to contact a guardian for consent prior to treatment or transport. If consent cannot be obtained and no emergency exists, contact Medical Control for directions.
- H. **Special Circumstances:** When a child is at school and no guardian is present, the school administrator or nurse may act under in *loco parentis* authority to provide temporary consent for emergency treatment. In disaster or MCI incidents, follow the Family Reunification Plan for coordination and documentation of separated minors.