

Triage Tag Update

The Office of EMS has completed the review process of the triage tag requirements that are included as part of the vehicle permitting process. The following was approved by the Virginia EMS Advisory Board on February 2, 2024:

Licensed EMS agencies must utilize either electronic or printed systems to track patients in mass casualties and other large events such as evacuation, sheltering, etc. Agencies must have redundancy built into their chosen process, in case of system failure. Agencies must also ensure the chosen system allows for appropriate patient transfer documentation at the receiving facility.

It is also *recommended* that the chosen system provides for the collection of the following data, at a minimum:

Demographics Section:

- Date
- Name
- Gender
- Patient # and Barcode or QR code (must begin with VA prefix per NASEMSO recommendations)
- Address
- Phone Number
- Age
- Weight

Triage Section:

- Time (Initial, Secondary, Hospital)
- Chief Complaint
- Comments Section
- Transport Agency/Unit
- Destination
- Arrival Time at Destination
- Tear off Transport Record
- At least START triage colors and wording to help visually identify or provide description for those who may be colorblind: Green with “Minor” written in the box, Yellow with “Delayed” written in the box, Red with “Immediate” written in the box. If using 5-color system from SALT, Gray with “Expectant” written in the box.

Vital Signs Section:

- Time
- Pulse
- B/P
- Respirations
- Level of Consciousness

- Medical History
- Medications
- Allergies

Treatment Record Section:

- A treatment record section must be present that includes time and initials of provider.
- Primary/Gross Hazmat Decontamination
- Comment section to document type of contamination: CBRNE letters to be circled with lines for further documentation of what the contaminant is/thought to be
- Secondary/Final Hazmat Decontamination

Additional items

- Body Image to document location of injuries or illness
- Barcode or QR code stickers that can be removed and placed on hospital records, and patient tracking on scene.
- Tear off section (if paper based) or scene tracking section
- Wrist band feature to attach to patient

What Does This Mean for EMS Agencies?

There is no longer a requirement for agencies to purchase a specific, Office of EMS-approved tag to meet permitting requirements. If an agency chooses to utilize printed triage tags, they may purchase any commercially available tag that meets their needs or may purchase tags of their own design. *However, they still must have 25 tags on each permitted vehicle.*

Agencies are still required to have triage ribbon (for initial triage) on each permitted vehicle, regardless of whether they use an electronic or printed triage tag.

Questions?

If you have questions, please contact Dr. Karen Owens (Karen.Owens@vdh.virginia.gov), Division Director, Emergency Operations.