TOLEDO FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT

C-84 Refusal Of Aid

Emergency Manual

Date Revised: 02/01/2018

Last Modified: 09/27/2024 10:00

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Policy/Procedure

1. EMS

In the event that a victim refuses aid, the following procedures shall be followed.

1. If a patient appears to be injured, ill, or otherwise in obvious need of assistance, Toledo Fire and Rescue Department personnel shall make every effort to convince them to accept help. Patients whose judgment appears to be impaired by drugs, alcohol, shock, or other medical condition are automatically entitled to emergency services which they might otherwise accept if they were unimpaired, and shall be deemed incompetent by Department personnel until proven otherwise.

2. Toledo Fire and Rescue Department personnel shall make all reasonable efforts to treat individuals who are deemed to be incapable of making an informed, competent decision to accept treatment and or transport, to the extent that those efforts do not subject Department personnel to physical injury. Patients who are believed to pose a physical threat to Department personnel may require the intervention of law enforcement. Rescuers should bear in mind the intent is to mitigate the incident in the patient's best interest.

3. Patients who are conscious and alert, oriented to person, place, and time, and who still refuse our services even after the medical consequences of this refusal are explained to them should not be forced to accept treatment. Imposition of treatment or transport upon an individual who is competent to make decisions regarding their care may be considered assault. A patient who has been deemed competent to make such decisions and who refuses aid should be asked to sign the "Refusal of Service" section of the incident report. This signature should be witnessed in writing, preferably by an individual with no Departmental interest.

2. FIRE

The Ohio Revised Code and Toledo Municipal Code define the Toledo Fire and Rescue Department's authority to protect citizens from the effects of fire and minimize damage to the community's property. Included are the following concepts:

1. Fire personnel have an obligation to protect life and property from fire and fire by-products.
2. It shall be the duty and right of fire personnel to enter any building that may be endangered by fire or fire by-products.
3. No person shall hamper Department operations.

3. In accordance with the law, if an individual refuses to allow fire personnel access to a structure that is or could be endangered by fire, the following procedures shall be used:

1. The Incident Commander or designated officer shall first request that a police crew respond to the scene.
2. The Incident Commander or designated officer shall explain to the individual refusing access that law enforcement officers are en route and that, by law, Toledo Fire and Rescue Department personnel cannot be prevented from entering.
3. If the individual continues to refuse access, the Incident Commander or designated officer shall protect all exposures and await the arrival of police.
4. The Incident Commander shall ask Dispatch for a "time check" at the time Department personnel are refused access. A second time check shall be requested upon gaining entry. The elapsed times shall be documented in the company journal and on the NFIR.

See Also:

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Last update: **09/27/2024 10:00**