**Section 515.410 EMS System Communications**

a) The System's communications plan shall be submitted for approval to the Department, and shall include the following:

1) A listing of access numbers of Emergency Medical Services, including a description of plans to use or to implement a "911" Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP);

2) A description of plans to handle hospital-to-hospital communications, including redundancy;

3) A description of communication methods for EMS personnel to communicate with Resource and Associate Hospitals including communication redundancy; and

4) Copies of Federal Communications Commission (FCC) licenses or applications.

b) EMS telecommunications equipment shall be configured to allow the EMS Medical Director, or designee, to monitor all vehicle to hospital transmissions and hospital-to-vehicle transmissions within the System.

c) Resource and Associate Hospitals shall have an operational control point for a Medical Emergency Communications of Illinois (MERCI) VHF/UHF base station, telemetry receiving and monitoring and any Associate to Resource Hospital communications.

d) Physician direction shall be provided from the operational control point of an approved Resource or Associate Hospital. All medical orders/direction given shall be recorded.

e) Policy that all on-line medical direction calls are to be recorded for retrospective review for a minimum of 365 days. Recording retention shall comply with the Resource and Associate Hospital’s corporate record retention policy if it exceeds the Department’s minimum requirements.

f) Telecommunications equipment necessary to fulfill the requirements of this Part shall be staffed and maintained 24 hours every day, including radio base stations, telephone and computer and their required equipment.

g) EMS System personnel shall be capable of properly operating their respective communications equipment.

h) All telecommunications equipment shall be maintained to minimize service interruptions. Procedures shall be established to provide immediate action to be taken by operating personnel to utilize secondary forms of communication and ensure rapid restoration in case breakdowns do occur.

i) Written protocols shall describe communications procedures for operation of the System, all base station control points, and field units. Mobile base control points and mobile units shall have an easily accessible copy of the protocols pertaining to their stations.

j) Written protocols shall include a requirement that before terminating communications with medical direction, pre-hospital personnel must notify medical direction of a method by which the ambulance can be re-contacted, and must set its communications equipment so as to be able to receive a call from medical direction.

k) The Department shall ensure radio coverage in approved program service areas without causing interference in existing Systems.

l) The Department shall monitor and require modifications in channel assignments to correct documented radio interference.

(Source: Amended at 48 Ill. Reg. 16159, effective November 1, 2024)