



Supporting Vulnerable People Policy

Purpose:

To provide members with guidance when working with vulnerable people.

Statement of Principle:

The EPS is committed to ensuring the health and wellbeing of vulnerable people. Any person (or group) who is considered vulnerable, or in a vulnerable situation, should be treated with dignity and respect.

Definitions:

Definitions listed in this section apply to this document only with no implied or intended organization-wide or EPS Policy and Procedure Manual wide use.

City of Edmonton (COE) Extreme Weather Protocol – A systematic response to extreme weather conditions triggered by the COE, in order to safeguard the health and safety of Edmontonians most vulnerable.

Vulnerable People – Persons who are vulnerable to serious, critical, or potentially fatal health impacts resulting from their current circumstances.

Policy Statement:

A. General Considerations:

When a member is working with a person whom they suspect is vulnerable, the member should assess the individual to determine the appropriate action to ensure their safety and wellbeing. The following criteria is intended to assist members in determining if the person may be vulnerable, and the member may offer a ride or share information on supports available. The list is not exhaustive and includes:

1. The person does not have (or appears to not have) appropriate housing or lodging.
2. The person is incapable of caring for their own safety or essential needs.
3. For other identified safety reasons, it may be appropriate to offer this person a ride, given the circumstances (i.e., enactment of the COE Extreme Weather Protocol).



B. Consensual Transports by EPS:

1. Following the initial assessment, a member may offer transportation to the vulnerable person. For the member to provide safe transportation, the following criteria must be used when assessing if offering a ride is appropriate:
 - a. The person receiving the transportation must meet the following criteria:
 - i. Is not violent, threatening violence, belligerent, or abusive.
 - ii. Their safety and wellbeing may be compromised if left in their current surroundings (e.g., if it is cold outside, and the individual does not have proper clothing, housing, etc.).
 - iii. Has not requested medical attention and does not appear to require it.
 - iv. The person provides verbal consent, to be transported by EPS vehicle to a residence, community agency or other safe and appropriate location within COE limits.
 - v. All transports must be within the COE.
 - b. Following the assessment and verbal consent, the member must follow the appropriate steps to ensure the safe transport of the person.
 - i. The member must feel that their safety will not be compromised when transporting the individual. The member must ask the vulnerable person to consent to a pat down search prior to providing a ride. If the vulnerable person refuses the search, other options can be considered, such as contacting friends or family members to transfer care, or other outreach services (i.e., Hope Mission Van).

For specifics on consensual transports by a community agency, refer to 2(D)(e) of **IN1-25PR – Investigation of Breach of Peace, Nuisance and General Disorder Procedure**.

- ii. The member must have supervisory approval prior to transport in an EPS vehicle in circumstances where the vulnerable person will be released to a residence, community agency, responsible person, or other location as requested by the person.
- iii. Supervisor approval is also required in the assessment of whether the drop-off location, other than a residence or community agency, is safe and appropriate.



The assessment of whether a drop-off location is safe and appropriate should consider such factors as the person's gender, age, harsh weather conditions, suitability of clothing, access to phone or transportation, time of day, or any other apparent vulnerabilities of the individual (i.e., mental health, homelessness, etc.).

iv. Members shall note in their EPS issue notebook or Occurrence Report, or in the comments field for MWS-concluded calls the following:

- 1) Name of the person transported,
- 2) Time and location of pick-up and drop off,
- 3) Reason for termination (if applicable),
- 4) Name of the approving supervisor, and
- 5) When applicable, the name of the person or agency with whom the vulnerable person was left with.

c. An EPS initiated termination of a consensual police vehicle transport shall only occur in the event of an emergency or other exigent circumstance requiring the services of the respective members and only with supervisory approval.

When transporting a person, the member must ensure they are obeying all traffic laws and driving safely, even in the event of an emergency or other exigent circumstance.

- d. In circumstances where the person terminates consensual police vehicle transport, the member must drop the person off in a safe and appropriate location, within the COE only.
- e. In circumstances where the person seems intoxicated and may require transportation, members are to refer to **Section D. of IN1-25PR – Investigation of Breach of Peace, Nuisance, and General Disorder Procedure.**

C. Enactment of the COE Extreme Weather Protocol:

1. EPS supports the COE's Extreme Weather Protocol by sharing information and resources regarding expanded services for vulnerable people during an extreme weather event. When there is an extreme weather event, EPS is notified by the COE and the following will occur, to ensure the health and wellbeing of the City's vulnerable population:



- a. The Duty Officer is notified by the City that the extreme weather protocol has been enacted.
 - b. The Duty Officer forwards the information to the Operations and Intelligence Command Centre (OICC).
 - c. The OICC will send out an e-mail notification to all members regarding the activation of the extreme weather protocol, with details outlining EPS Duty of Care and information regarding expanded services for vulnerable people.
2. Following the formal notice of the COE Extreme Weather Protocol, the EPS is expected to support the protocol by implementing and understanding the following:

- a. EPS Duty of Care:

Where practicable, EPS members who are interacting with vulnerable community members should offer access to resources to ensure the safety of the individual. This is commonly referred to as a “Warm Hand Off” which connects those experiencing homelessness to the services they need.

- b. Options for the Vulnerable Population:

The e-mail from the OICC will provide information and details for members regarding expanded COE and non-profit services, on behalf of the Duty Officer. An overview of the expanded services includes the operation of dedicated ETS bus routes to transport people to shelters and the temporary expansion of emergency shelter space.