

Accessing 911 and Emergency Services

Timely access to medical care is crucial and staff understanding of when and how to access emergency services is essential.

The purpose of this advisory is to inform community programs about the expectations of obtaining emergency services. Agencies must have the following information in their policies and procedures and assure the information is available to staff.

Staff should feel supported to call 911 without first getting approval from a manager or supervisor and without the fear of being wrong.

Staff should be trained to call 911 or go to the emergency room if **they** believe it is an emergency. Err on the side of over usage and then if there is a concern regarding over usage of 911 address it after the fact through additional support and training.

WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY?

An emergency is a serious injury, sudden illness, including severe pain that *you believe* might result in death or serious injury if not treated.

In the event of an Emergency:

- Staff must call 911; or
- Take the individual to the nearest emergency room without being required to obtain other approval.

Health care protocols should address when to call 911 on known health care conditions. Staff should have appropriate training in supporting individuals' health care needs, following protocols and timely reporting of changing conditions that could prevent the need for emergent services.

Be sure to review your Agency's policies and procedures with staff upon hiring and regularly thereafter.

If you need assistance in reviewing your policies and procedures or staff training materials contact the Health Support Unit at 503 947-4229.