

WAC 246-976-290 Ground ambulance vehicle standards. (1) All

ground ambulance vehicles that are used to transport patients must meet the minimum standards in this chapter. Ambulance vehicles that meet a national ground ambulance standard recognized by the department are deemed to have met the minimum standards in this section.

(2) Equipment required for the safety and comfort of all occupants must be in good working order.

(3) The body of ambulance vehicles must meet the following standards:

(a) The length of the patient compartment must be at least 112 inches in length, measured from the partition to the inside edge of the rear loading doors;

(b) The width of the patient compartment after cabinet and gurney installation must provide at least nine inches of clear walkway;

(c) The height of the patient compartment must be at least 53 inches at the center of the patient area, measured from floor to ceiling, exclusive of cabinets or equipment;

(d) There must be secondary egress from the vehicle; and

(e) Back doors must open in a manner to increase the width for loading and unloading patients without blocking existing working lights of the vehicle.

(4) The interior of ambulance vehicles must meet the following standards:

(a) A current state ambulance vehicle credential must be prominently displayed in a clear plastic cover positioned high on the partition behind the driver's seat;

(b) The floor at the lowest level permitted by clearances must provide flat and unencumbered access to the work area, with no voids or pockets in the floor to side wall areas where water or moisture can become trapped to cause rusting or unsanitary conditions;

(c) Floor covering applied to the top side of the floor surface must withstand washing with soap and water or disinfectant without damage to the surface. All joints in the floor covering must have minimal void between matching edges, cemented with a suitable waterproof cement to eliminate the possibility of joints loosening or lifting;

(d) The finish of the entire patient compartment must be impervious to soap and water and disinfectants to permit washing and sanitizing;

(e) Interior lighting in the driver compartment must be designed and located so that no glare is reflected from surrounding areas to the driver's eyes or line of vision from the instrument panel, switch panel, or other areas which may require illumination while the vehicle is in motion;

(f) Interior lighting in the patient compartment must be provided adequately throughout the compartment, and provide an intensity of 215 lumen at the level of the patient;

(g) Ambulance vehicles must have one ABC two and one-half pound fire extinguisher. The extinguisher must be accessible, be in good physical condition, and in compliance with servicing requirements; and

(h) Interior equipment must be kept in a secure manner to provide for the safety of all occupants in the vehicle.

(5) Ambulance vehicles must be equipped with manufacturer recommended restraint systems which include:

(a) Seat belts must comply with Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards 207, 208, 209, and 210;

(b) Gurney restraints that comply with manufacturer recommendations must be used on patients during transport;

(c) Ambulance vehicles must have manufacturer recommended hardware installed that is in good working order to secure a gurney in the vehicle for transport;

(d) Restraints must be provided in all seat positions in the vehicle, including attendant stations;

(e) Restraints must be provided for patients when equipment such as a backboard or scoop stretcher is used to move a patient from surface to surface. A means to secure this equipment to the gurney or a bench seat must be provided for transport;

(f) Seat belts and related restraints must permit quick attachment and detachment for quick transfer of a patient; and

(g) Appropriate restraints for pediatric patients must be provided and used in a manner and location consistent with all applicable manufacturer recommendations.

(6) The exterior of ambulance vehicles must meet the following standards:

(a) The ambulance vehicle must be clearly identified as an emergency medical services vehicle;

(b) The ambulance vehicle must display the agency or service identification by reflective emblems and markings on the front, sides, and rear of the vehicle;

(c) The ambulance vehicle must have retro-reflective paint or tape, stripes or markings, or a combination of stripes and markings that are a minimum of six inches in width affixed to the full length of both sides and the rear of the vehicle;

(d) A minimum of 50 percent of the rear of the vehicle surface must be equipped with a retro-reflective pattern on ambulance vehicles built in the year 2020 and thereafter;

(e) Emergency warning lights and audible warning signals must be provided in accordance with national ambulance standards recognized by the department;

(f) Windshield wipers and washers must be dual, multispeed, and functional at all times;

(g) Ambulance vehicles must have exterior mirrors on the left and right side of the vehicle and mounted to provide maximum rear vision from the driver's seated position;

(h) Exterior lights must be fully operational, and include body-mounted floodlights over the patient loading doors to provide loading visibility;

(i) Exterior surfaces must be smooth, with projections kept to a minimum; and

(j) Equipment stored in exterior compartments must be secured in a manner to provide for the safety of all occupants in the vehicle.

(7) Mechanical and electrical components of ambulance vehicles must meet the following standards:

(a) The electrical power generating system must be capable of sustaining all systems and must be appropriately ventilated and sealed according to manufacturer recommendations;

(b) If the electrical system uses fuses instead of circuit breakers, extra fuses must be readily available;

(c) Within the engine compartment of the ambulance vehicle, hoses, belts, and wiring must not have any obvious defects; and

(d) Vehicle brakes, regular and special electrical equipment, heating and cooling units, safety belts, and window glass must be always functional.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 18.71.205, 18.73.081, 43.70.040, 70.168.050, 2017 c 70, 2017 c 295, 2020 c 76, 2021 c 276, 2019 c 314, 2021 c 69, and 2022 c 136. WSR 24-15-104, § 246-976-290, filed 7/22/24, effective 9/30/24. Statutory Authority: Chapters 18.71, 18.73, and 70.168 RCW. WSR 11-07-078, § 246-976-290, filed 3/22/11, effective 5/15/11; WSR 00-08-102, § 246-976-290, filed 4/5/00, effective 5/6/00. Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.040 and chapters 18.71, 18.73 and 70.168 RCW. WSR 93-01-148 (Order 323), § 246-976-290, filed 12/23/92, effective 1/23/93.]