

IEMSA

IOWA EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES ASSOCIATION



"To provide a voice and promote the highest quality and standards of care for Iowa's Emergency Medical Services."

Emergency Medical Services

- **The case for Inclusion in the IPERS Protection Class**

Ric Jones, PS, EMSI
IEMSA Public Policy Chair



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Today's Presenters

- **Bill Fish, Director, Carroll County Ambulance Service**
- **Cal Hultman, IEMSA Lobbyist**
- **Mike Triplett, IEMSA Lobbyist**
- **Jerry Johnston, IEMSA Past President, President-National Association of EMTs**



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LACK OF CLEAR IDENTITY

- **We are EMS: Emergency Medical Services**
 - **We MAY be part of a Fire Department**
 - **We also MAY NOT be affiliated in any way with a Fire Department**





LACK OF CLEAR IDENTITY

- EMS has only really been around since the late 1960's
 - 1966 National Academy of Sciences Paper:
"Accidental Death and Disability: the Neglected Diseases of Modern Society"
 - United States Congress passed the National Highway Safety Act of 1966 positioning the DOT to oversee EMS training and curriculum development
 - Iowa passed the Advanced Emergency Care Act in 1979 - Chapter 147A
 - Iowa certified her first Paramedics in 1980





LACK OF CLEAR IDENTITY

- **EMS is provided in Iowa by:**
 - Fire Departments
 - Hospitals
 - Private Operators
 - **Cities**
 - **Counties**
 - Law Enforcement Agencies
 - Funeral Homes
- **EMS Employees in IPERS have just recently been identified as "Occupation Class Code # 20"**





LACK OF CLEAR IDENTITY

- Public EMS Employees covered by IPERS do not enjoy the same benefit level as other Public Safety Employees
 - EMS Employees covered by IPERS deserve inclusion in the "Protection Class," that the legislature specifically created for public safety employees





LACK OF CLEAR IDENTITY

- When the IPERS Protection Class was created, EMS workers almost certainly would have been included had they existed.
- EMS is a newer entity than IPERS



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The Public Safety Triangle

- Law Enforcement
- Fire Service
- Emergency Medical Services





Why Protection Class???

- **Most EMS Professionals in Iowa are employed by Fire Departments and are covered by MFPRSI.**
- **While the employment circumstances of the employees may differ, the JOB is the same.**





Why Protection Class???

- **Emergency Responses**
 - The body goes from rest to stressed in seconds, repeatedly throughout a shift
- **Traumatic Stresses**
 - EMS Providers are repeatedly exposed to death, dying and other human tragedy





Why Protection Class???

- **Hazardous Substance Exposure**
 - **Fire and HazMat Scene work**
 - **Biological Hazards**
 - **Communicable Diseases**
 - Airborne and Bloodborne pathogens
 - Prion Infections
 - MSRA
 - Latex Sensitivity





Why Protection Class???

- **Violent Encounters**
 - Few EMS Providers have been spared being victims of assault by “patients” or bystanders in the course of performance of their duties
 - **Prisoner Transport**
 - EMS frequently transports persons who are in law enforcement custody





Why Protection Class???

- **Physical Demands**
 - Patients get themselves into places where EMS providers must get them out. Though good ergonomics are taught, many real-life situations require “impossible” lifts
 - Patients must be moved from wherever they are to the ambulance, wherever it is





Why Protection Class???

- **The EMS Diet**
 - Meal times are frequently compromised by emergency calls
 - The 3:00 AM drive-through windows take their toll
 - Caffeine often rules the day . . . And the night





Why Protection Class???

- **EMS Workers must maintain Iowa Department of Public Health Certification at one of these levels throughout their entire careers:**
 - **First Responder (FR)**
 - **Emergency Medical Technician – Basic (EMT-B)**
 - **Emergency Medical Technician – Intermediate (EMT-I)**
 - **Emergency Medical technician – Paramedic (EMT-P)**
 - **Paramedic Specialist (PS)**
- **Every level requires bi-annual recertification based on completion of required continuing education**



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Why Protection Class???

- All of this adds up to shorten EMS careers . . . and retirements.



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IPERS AGREES

- At their September 12, 2007 meeting, the IPERS Benefits Advisory Committee unanimously agreed that Emergency Medical Responders met all of their established criteria for inclusion in the protection class.





LACK OF CLEAR IDENTITY

- ***"We believe that job number one for every elected official is to keep Iowans safe and healthy in their homes, at work, at leisure and in transit. This includes fully funded, well-trained, and dedicated law enforcement, fire and EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES resources throughout the state."***



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**On behalf of the many
members of IEMSA,
We thank you for
inviting us here today!**

