

# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Manisha Juthani, MD  
Commissioner



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Governor  
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Lt. Governor

### OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES OEMS COMMUNICATIONS STATEMENT 23--03

Date: September 22, 2023

To: EMS Organizations  
EMS Medical Directors  
EMS Coordinators

From: Raffaella Calciano, RN, MEd, Paramedic   
Director, Office of Emergency Medical Services

Subject: Pediatric Patient Transports to Urgent Crisis Centers

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In response to Public Act 23-97, the Office of Emergency Medical Services is in the process of developing protocols for emergency medical services (EMS) organizations to transport pediatric patients with mental or behavioral health needs by ambulance to an urgent crisis center as defined in [Connecticut General Statutes \(C.G.S.\)19a-179f \(c\)](#).

As we work towards creating a protocol that will be included in the Statewide EMS protocols, we remind EMS services that under current law they can consult with their Sponsor Hospital staff (Medical Director) to facilitate the transportation of patients to urgent crisis centers licensed by the Department of Children and Families (DCF). C.G.S.19a-179f states that a licensed or certified emergency medical services organization or provider may transport a patient by ambulance to an alternate destination, **in consultation with the medical director of a sponsor hospital**.

**Sec. 19a-179f.** Transport of patient to an alternate destination. (a) A licensed or certified emergency medical services organization or provider may transport a patient by ambulance to an alternate destination, in consultation with the medical director of a sponsor hospital.



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(b) On or before January 1, 2024, the Office of Emergency Medical Services shall develop protocols for a licensed or certified emergency medical services organization or provider to transport a pediatric patient with mental or behavioral health needs by ambulance to an urgent crisis center. As used in this subsection, “urgent crisis center” means a center licensed by the Department of Children and Families that is dedicated to treating children's urgent mental or behavioral health needs.

(c) Any ambulance used for transport to an alternate destination under subsection (a) or (b) of this section shall meet the requirements for a basic level ambulance, as prescribed in regulations adopted pursuant to section 19a-179, including requirements concerning medically necessary supplies and services.

Licensed by DCF, the pediatric urgent crisis centers function as walk-in clinics, providing youths and their families with immediate access to resources while they are experiencing a behavioral health crisis, such as thoughts of suicide or self-injury; feelings of depression, anxiety, or hopelessness; out-of-control behaviors; substance misuse; and other mental health concerns. They are designed to divert youths and their families from visits to hospital emergency rooms to address behavioral health crises.

The current capacity for the four established centers is 72 daily slots. They are strategically located across Connecticut and are operated by:

- **The Village for Families and Children**  
1680 Albany Avenue, Hartford - (860) 297-0520  
Mon – Fri 0700-2300
- **Yale New Haven Hospital**  
1 Park St, New Haven – (203) 688-4707  
7 days / 24 hours
- **The Child and Family Agency of Southeastern Connecticut in New London**  
255 Hempstead Street, New London, CT – (860) 437-4550
- **Wellmore Behavioral Health in Waterbury**  
141 East Main St, Waterbury --(203) 580-4298  
Mon – Fri 0600-2200

For additional information regarding the pediatric urgent crisis centers, please see the link below.

[Urgent Crisis Centers for Children \(ct.gov\)](https://www.ct.gov/childrenandfamilies/urgent-crisis-centers)