

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Colleton County Fire-Rescue to add Life-Saving Blood to its Ambulance Inventory**

**COLLETON COUNTY, S.C.**— On Thursday, December 12, 2019, Colleton County Fire-Rescue was approved by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control’s Bureau of EMS and Trauma to begin carrying whole blood on its ambulances as part of a pilot project. Colleton County Fire-Rescue will be the first county, non-hospital-based ground ambulance service in South Carolina and one of only five services in the United States to implement this life-saving measure.

Colleton County Fire-Rescue Chief Barry McRoy said, “This project and the higher level of care it brings to our citizens would not be possible without the work of many individuals and groups. I would especially like to thank Colleton County Council; Colleton County’s Administrator and his staff; Dr. Adam Mandel, our Medical Control Physician; DHEC’s Trauma Advisory Council, Medical Control Committee, Advisory Board, and the Bureau of EMS and Trauma Chief, Mr. Rob Wronski and his staff; as well as all of Colleton County Fire-Rescue’s Career and Volunteer personnel; and I offer a special thanks to Battalion Chief Joey Campbell for his hard work on this project. Without Chief Campbell, this life-saving initiative would not be possible.”

Colleton County Fire-Rescue is the sole 9-1-1 emergency ambulance service in Colleton County, including the six municipalities. Colleton County Fire-Rescue operates nine advanced life support ambulances staffed with Firefighter/Paramedics and Firefighter/EMT’s 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Battalion Chief Joey Campbell said, “Fire-Rescue responds to many patients that are victims of traumatic injuries, such as motor vehicle collisions, falls from significant heights, penetrating injuries, and blunt force trauma. Our goal is to rapidly deliver these patients to a trauma center while minimizing blood loss through the use of bleeding control techniques and fluid resuscitation. Unfortunately, our fluids currently consist of volume expanders such as normal saline and lactated ringers, which lack clotting factors and do not carry oxygen. Today, we are left with no alternatives to these fluids, but tomorrow will be different. Tomorrow will be better. This pilot project will enable our ambulances to carry life-saving blood that can be administered to patients with traumatic injuries in the field and during transportation to a trauma center. Blood administration will also be available for patients with certain types of medical emergencies.”

Fire-Rescue already has the proper equipment to store blood on its ambulances and hopes to have the logistical plans and training completed by mid-February 2020 for a March 2020 deployment.

Chief McRoy also stated, “We want to thank the Citizens of Colleton County. We consider it an honor to serve each and every one of you and we are excited to bring this higher level of care to you in the event you experience a traumatic injury.”

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