



Henrietta Volunteer Ambulance
280 Calkins Road • Rochester, New York • 14623 • (585) 334-4190
<http://www.HenriettaAmbulance.org>

Information Packet for New Members



Our new base at 280 Calkins Road

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Henrietta Volunteer Ambulance Service

Henrietta Volunteer Ambulance Service, known by its members as "HVA," is the primary emergency medical service (EMS) provider for the Town of Henrietta. We have come a long way in the past 43 years of our existence and we have seen many changes and improvements in the delivery of emergency medical services. For example, today we provide two levels, or types, of emergency medical care. They are called "Basic Life Support Service" and "Advanced Life Support Service."

Basic Life Support (BLS) Service

HVA provides four New York State (NYS) "certified" ambulances for the treatment and transport of patients to area hospitals. A "certified" ambulance is one that has been inspected by officials of NYS and carries all the equipment that is specified by the NYS Requirement, Part 800. HVA exceeds those specifications set forth by the NYS Department of Health. In addition, the Medic, who is responsible for patient care, is certified as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or higher.



6159, our newest ambulance attached to the Plymovent System

The **Medic** evaluates and treats the patient at the scene and enroute to the hospital. Prior to arriving at the hospital, the Medic may call in, by radio, to report on the patient's problem and current condition. On arriving at the hospital, the Medic reports directly to the triage nurse or doctor. Afterwards, the Medic completes the patient care report (PCR) that becomes part of the patient's medical records. In addition to being trained as EMT's, all of our Medics are certified to use semi-automatic Cardiac

Defibrillators. These units are used on patients who are in cardiac arrest to "shock" their hearts into a normal rhythm. Our medics are also all trained in the use of Epi-Pens and Albuterol, which can help save a patient's life if they are experiencing a severe anaphylactic reaction or asthma attack, respectively.

The **Driver** must also be trained as an EMT, in order to provide the best patient care. The Driver's primary responsibility is to drive the ambulance to and from the emergency scene. Our Drivers are trained to operate the ambulance under "lights and siren" conditions. Our drivers are required to take the Emergency Vehicle Operations Course (EVOC) to better enable them to handle the ambulance under these conditions. The Driver also assists the Medic in caring for the patient at the emergency scene and is fully qualified to care for a patient, if necessary.

Dispatching at HVA:

HVA receives calls for service through the Monroe County Office of Emergency Communications (a.k.a. "911" system). The actual dispatching of our ambulances is then handled by a HVA Dispatcher. The HVA Dispatcher remains at our Base facility during the emergency call. They monitor the radio transmissions of the ambulance crew and summon additional aid, if required, through use of our radio paging system. Our radio system is powerful enough to reach anywhere within a 30 mile radius.

Additionally, the Dispatcher completes paperwork, answers the phones, and handles loans of crutches or wheelchairs to the public. The Dispatcher is trained in CPR, in addition to knowing how to operate our radio system.

The reason why we require the Dispatcher to receive CPR training is because sometimes sick or injured people come directly to the HVA Base facility for help. If the BLS and ALS crews are out on a call, the Dispatcher may be there alone. Though you can summon help through use of the radio paging system, the patient will expect you to provide treatment. In our experience, we have found that most people assume that all members of an ambulance service know something about medical treatment. They will expect you to do something for them. Consequently, we must ask our Dispatchers to be ready for that rare occurrence.



Our dispatch center

Emergency responses for 2005:

4,606

HVA responds to an average of one call every 2 hours.

Advanced Life Support (ALS) Service

The ALS program at HVA is a state-of-the-art operation that began service in 1975. We have both **Critical Care Technicians** and **Paramedics**. Obviously, this service requires the greatest amount of medical training. Both Critical Care Technicians and Paramedics take extensive hospital-based training as well as field-based training. They are trained to start IV's, administer drugs, CPAP, and perform intubations. Several Paramedics at HVA have also completed the Rapid Sequence Induction (RSI) Program, a new program in Monroe County that enables a specially trained paramedic to sedate, paralyze, and perform intubations on patients that are in severe need of assisted breathing through the use of an Endotracheal (ET) Tube.

These individuals respond on "life threatening" emergencies, as well as other serious emergencies. They support the ambulance Medics by providing their specialized skills to assist in caring for the "seriously" injured or ill patients. HVA fields two fully equipped ALS "fly cars," which are designed to respond with an ambulance. These vehicles contain portable cardiac defibrillators, drug boxes, intubation equipment, and other specialized equipment. These vehicles do not transport patients to the hospital -- they only transport the ALS personnel and their equipment. If required, the ALS personnel and their equipment are then transferred to the ambulance.



Medic 52, our newest Fly-Car

All of our ambulances are also equipped with ALS gear. This allows the ALS Technician to also respond to calls on the ambulance with a driver, rather than always taking a separate vehicle. Any emergency call that involves a life-threatening situation will have an ALS Technician respond to it, whether

they are on the fly-car or on the ambulance. Besides providing ALS service to the Town of Henrietta, HVA also responds to calls for advanced care services in the towns of Scottsville, Rush, Honeoye Falls, Brighton, as well as Livingston County. We respond to approximately 2,500 ALS Calls per year, accounting for more than half of our call volume.

Volunteering at HVA

You volunteer at HVA by working "shifts." These are pre-set time spans that range in length from 5 hours to 19 hours long. For every shift, we try to staff a dispatcher and at least 2 Ambulances. During the day we staff three of our four ambulances. As a volunteer, you may sign up for any number of shifts that you wish – provided that you are fully trained and qualified in the respective position (i.e. Dispatcher, Medic, Driver, or ALS Technician).

We have a minimum duty requirement that asks that all members volunteer twelve (12) hours of service each month. This requirement exists so every member maintains their skills. If you do not practice what you learned you will become less proficient or "rusty."

To "work a shift" at HVA, you simply sign up on the schedule for the time and date that corresponds with the position you wish to volunteer for. The schedule is usually posted a month ahead of time, giving you plenty of time to sign up in advance.

Staffing

HVA is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, regardless of whether it is a holiday or just horrible weather. However, due to our large call volume, we may have all of our equipment committed to other emergency calls. To meet the staffing needs of HVA, there are both full time career staff, as well as per-diem employees to staff the ambulances.

In the event, HVA cannot respond to a call for emergency medical service, for any reason, another ambulance service will respond. The other ambulance service may be a volunteer service from Rush, Scottsville, Pittsford, Brighton or RIT. We have what is called "mutual aid" agreements with them. This mutual aid agreement simply states that they will help us and we will help them.

Sometimes another volunteer service is not available, for the same reasons that we might not be. In that case, a commercial ambulance service (Rural/Metro or Monroe Ambulance) will be called from the closest location to respond to your emergency.

In all cases, if HVA cannot respond to a call for help, another ambulance service will respond. Someone will always answer a call for help!

Additional Resources Available

HVA is not part of the Henrietta Fire District (HFD). However, we do have a close working relationship with our brothers and sisters at HFD. In the event of a serious medical emergency or traumatic event, HFD will automatically respond to the call to assist the ambulance. HFD will also respond if requested by HVA to assist with patient care.



Mercy Flight preparing to land for a drill

Another resource that is available is "Mercy Flight Central." This is an ALS-staffed helicopter that is available around the clock. It can respond quickly to situations where a patient's life is threatened and a short hospital transport time is critical. The calls on which HVA would be most likely to request help from "Mercy Flight

Central" are those involving serious traffic accidents on the Thruway or calls well outside of the Town of Henrietta. But, that does not preclude the possibility of the helicopter being called, by us, into Henrietta.

Other Services Provided

- **Blood Pressure Screening**
HVA provides free blood pressure readings. This is provided, any day, between the hours of 8 AM and 11 PM, seven days a week.
- **Non-emergency Transports**
HVA provides free non-emergency transportation to non-ambulatory patients. This service must begin or end in the Town of Henrietta and must be arranged at least 48 hours in advance of when it is needed. This service is subject to the availability of personnel and, therefore, cannot be guaranteed.
- **Loan Cupboard**
HVA provides loans of crutches, walkers, canes, and wheelchairs to residents of the Town of Henrietta at no charge.

Training at HVA

All training is provided at no cost to our volunteers. Training consists of both formal training for state certifications and subsequent "on-the-job" training. Formal training is provided at HVA, at other ambulance bases, or at other training facilities or hospitals around Monroe County. HVA tries to conduct all training at our facility, but, in some cases, classes will need to be taken at other locations.

The following is list of available positions at HVA and a breakdown of required formal training for each of them:

- **Dispatcher:**
Approximately 40 hours of training, including CPR
- **Driver/Medic:**
Approximately 120 hours of classroom and hospital-based training (EMT-B)
- **Paramedic:**
Over 1000 hours of classroom, hospital-based, and field training (EMT-P)



The training room at capacity for the dedication ceremony of the new base

Even though your formal classroom training may be completed, HVA does not permit you to immediately practice what you learned without a personal "instructor" being present. This provides a safety net for both you and our patients. You are not permitted to practice on your own until you can demonstrate your skills to several instructors. These instructors are

experienced HVA personnel who will work with you on each emergency call and help you throughout your training.

The process works like this: When you first start to actually "work shifts" at HVA, you will work several of them as an "observer." During this time, your instructor explains the duties of your position, shows you how to operate any HVA-specialized equipment, and answers your questions. They also let you experience what actually happens on an emergency call – without you being under any pressure do anything. This allows you to just watch and learn. Later, you will be expected to help out. At that time, the instructor will allow you to do any task that you are comfortable with doing and will evaluate your performance afterwards. As you gain experience, the instructors will allow you to handle more and more of the emergency call. At some point, you will notice that you are handling the entire emergency call without any assistance from the instructor.

Through the evaluation process, you will learn your strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, through the guidance of the instructors, you will learn additional skills that cannot be taught in a classroom. At the same time, you learn how YOU react to different situations and you have the opportunity to evaluate yourself.

You need to make sure that you are confident in yourself and your abilities. Our instructors may believe that you are ready, but ultimately you decide when you are ready. You are never compelled to do anything that you feel that you are not ready to do. Ultimately, YOU are your own final judge.

History and Organization



The "old" base – a ranch style hours from the 1960's

HVA was founded in 1962 by a group of concerned local residents who were dissatisfied with the long response times required by the commercial ambulance service that was based in Rochester. They believed that this vital community service must be located in Henrietta.

HVA is a private "not-for-profit" corporation. The membership elects a Board of Directors to handle its management and routine business affairs. The Board, in turn, selects the President and other corporate officers

on a yearly basis. Day to day operations are managed by the Chief of Operations, Chief of Career Staff, and the Chiefs of BLS and ALS.

HVA is under contract to the Henrietta Ambulance District to provide emergency medical services to our Town. The District was created in 1991 to provide municipal funds to help us pay some of the high equipment costs associated with our services. The amount of municipal funds that we receive is controlled by the Henrietta Town Board. These funds do not cover all corporate expenses. We are still dependent on an annual voluntary fund drive.

Benefits of Membership

There are certain benefits granted to all active members of HVA:

Pagers:

Free alpha-pagers are available to all cleared crew members. This allows us to contact any or all members on a moment's notice. These alpha-pagers receive call information directly from the "911" System and may also be used for personal messaging.

Uniform Allotment:

When a member becomes fully trained as a Dispatcher, Driver, Medic, or ALS Tech, they are issued a "duty uniform." Each uniform shall be supplied with an HVA emblem patch. Safety-type shoes (OSHA-approved) are provided to all rig-cleared personnel at \$50 off. Members may also elect to review seasonal items, such as polo shirts, navy "wek" shirts, or navy sweatshirts.

Tuition Reimbursement:

Active members are entitled to tuition reimbursement for approved EMS-related courses, such as EMT Classes (Basic, Intermediate, Critical Care, or Paramedic), whether it is an original course or a refresher. In addition, HVA wants to encourage you to be better educated in EMS-related subjects, such as Incident Command, PALS, PEPP, BTLIS, and many others. We therefore provide reimbursement for these courses, if so approved. To obtain approval, a member must first submit a request in writing to the Training Officer for BLS courses or the Chief of ALS for ALS courses. Training that costs over \$250, such as the Paramedic Class, needs to be approved by the Board of Directors first.

Other Benefits:

The following benefits are also available:

- Annual Installation of Officers Banquet – Dinner, dancing, and a small gift
- Picnic – Food and fun, free to the member and their family
- Children's Christmas Party – Free to the member and their family (with kids)
- Quartermaster – HVA maintains some food and snacks at the base for members while on duty. There is also a soda machine in the back of the base.