

The background of the slide is a dark, atmospheric image featuring a dense field of glowing orange and yellow sparks or embers. These particles are scattered across the frame, with a higher concentration and brighter intensity on the right side, suggesting a fire source. The overall effect is one of intense heat and danger.

Firefighter-paramedic stabbed by patient during involuntary commitment transport – Ohio

F2026-11 OH · September 2026

NIOSH FIRE FIGHTER FATALITY INVESTIGATION AND PREVENTION PROGRAM

KEY POINTS

- › On July 8, 2026, one career firefighter-paramedic was seriously injured after being stabbed by a patient.
- › Fire departments not only respond to incidents caused by violence but may encounter violence at seemingly routine service calls.
- › Although the rate of line-of-duty deaths from incidents of violence is not large, violence has been a growing concern because of the increasing seriousness and frequency of attacks on first responders.



Medic 6 in station. (Source: NIOSH)

SUMMARY

- The outpatient behavioral health clinic called 911 to request an involuntary commitment transport for a patient.
- Medic 6 was dispatched and arrived on scene first as police response was delayed.
- The case manager provided the Medic 6 crew with the involuntary commitment paperwork and identified the patient.



Medic 6 crew and patient standing near the main entrance doors in the lobby.
(Source: Fire department)

SUMMARY

- Unwilling to be transported to the hospital, the patient pulled out a pocketknife.
- As the Medic 6 officer attempted to deescalate the situation, the patient opened the 4-inch blade and charged the crew.
- Medic 6 paramedic was stabbed in the lower back.



Patient following Medic 6 paramedic with pocketknife. (Source: Fire department)

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS & PREVENTION ACTIONS

Contributing factor	Prevention action summary
1. Law enforcement response	Train fire officers and firefighters to request immediate law enforcement response when there is an active or imminent threat of violence with weapons.
2. Perception of risk	Establish and reinforce operational practices to support fire officers and firefighters in anticipating, recognizing, and responding to emerging threats.
3. Active or imminent threat of violence with weapon	Coordinate response procedures with fire departments to effectively and swiftly respond to active or imminent threats of violence on an incident scene.
4. Emergency dispatch protocols for involuntary commitment transports	Update emergency dispatch protocols to ensure the appropriate entity is dispatched for requests for involuntary commitment transports.
5. Response for behavioral health emergencies	Develop and implement a 24/7 mobile crisis team to provide community-based response to behavioral health emergencies and involuntary commitment transports of non-violent patients without medical conditions warranting fire and EMS involvement.
6. Available personnel/ adequate staffing	Use fire department and law enforcement data to ensure adequate staffing is available to respond to emergency incidents.
7. Patient notification of involuntary commitment	Inform patients of involuntary commitment in private and secure settings.

FIRE DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

Category	Information
Department type	Career
Bureaus	Operations and administration
Jurisdiction	26 square miles
Population	78,000 residents
Average response	19,500 calls for service, including 16,700 EMS annually
EMS	Advanced life support
Personnel	130
Shifts	Three (A, B, and C)
Shift type	24/48
Shift staffing	29 minimum
Leadership	One chief, two assistant chiefs, and three battalion chiefs

POST-INCIDENT FIRE DEPARTMENT PREVENTION ACTIONS

After this incident, the fire department implemented changes to its incident response and fireground operations. These changes were based on the department's critique of the incident.

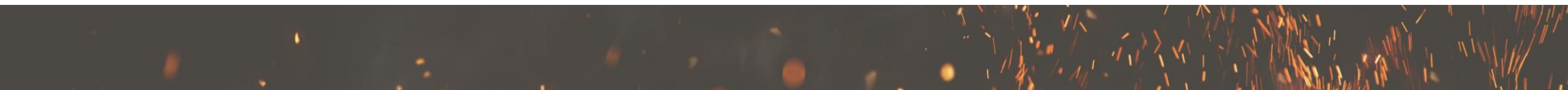
Revised response procedures with law enforcement:

The fire chief and police chief began addressing the existing transport SOP and the responsibilities associated with transporting individuals under involuntary commitment when no medical necessity for fire department involvement exists.

Revised PSAP emergency dispatch protocols:

The fire department will not be dispatched directly to these incidents unless law enforcement is already on scene and specifically requests fire department activation based on medical necessity.

Post-incident analysis: Per NFPA 1550 [2024], the fire department began a formal post-incident analysis to document observations, concerns, and recommendations related to this incident.



CONSIDER THIS

Resources and protocols to address occupational exposure to potentially traumatic events

There is variation among people regarding their threshold for developing symptoms, how adverse events are processed, the coping strategies they use, and their willingness to seek help when their capacity to cope is challenged. These have implications on the mental health symptoms they may experience following a single exposure or cumulative exposures over time.

NIOSH FIRE FIGHTER FATALITY INVESTIGATION AND PREVENTION PROGRAM

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