

Maine EMS – Regional Transportation Decision Guidance

Togus VA Medical Center

Key Guidance: Please call Togus VA OLMC *before departure* to establish if Togus VA is the most appropriate destination for your patient.

Telephone: **207-623-5754**

Radio Frequency: (Kennebec Valley) 155.400MHz, Call Sign: Togus ED

Decision Points:

1. Patient Choice & Eligibility

The patient or caregiver must verbally confirm that the patient is a veteran and eligible for VA care, and that the patient desires to be cared for at the Togus VA Medical Center.

2. Transport Proximity and Resource Evaluation

Clinicians may consider transporting eligible patients to Togus VA:

- i. When Togus VA is the closest hospital capable of caring for the eligible veteran patient's illness or injury, **OR**
- ii. Bypassing another hospital with Togus VA OLMC consultation **AND** the ambulance service or crew has considered the availability of local resources, patient stability, and crew safety.

3. Togus VA Capability

Togus VA medical center has some limitations to the care it provides. A patient should not be transported to Togus VA in the event the patient has STEMI, trauma – all fractures, stroke, or if they are a dialysis-dependent patient, unless Togus VA is the closest facility and the patient requires immediate stabilization. OB/GYN emergencies should never be transported to Togus VA.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1. Can an EMS agency decide that they are too far away from Togus VA to offer transport?
 - a. Yes. EMS agency leadership has the right to decide whether it is reasonable to offer this option, based on the availability of other resources to cover their primary 911 coverage area for other potential emergencies. Additionally, for agencies that determined they are resourced to accommodate these transport requests, EMS clinicians must consider the individual patient's acuity and risk of deterioration during prolonged transport.
2. What if the patient demands to be transported to Togus VA despite having a complaint that is inappropriate for Togus VA?
 - a. See above.
 - b. Discuss this dilemma with Togus VA OLMC. You can suggest that OLMC discuss directly with the patient. If the patient still demands to be transported to Togus VA, transport there if the distance is reasonable.
3. Can a Veteran's spouse or family members receive care at Togus VA?
 - a. No. (FAQs 4 and 7 may be exceptions)
4. What is Togus VA's role as an emergency department in the event of an MCI?
 - a. Togus VA is available like any other ER in the setting of an MCI.
5. What if during the transport to Togus VA, the patient decompensates and becomes unstable?
 - a. Divert to the closest emergency department for more immediate stabilization.
6. What if the EMS clinician cannot contact Togus VA by phone or radio due to a communication breakdown?
 - a. If there is doubt that the patient's complaint is appropriate for Togus VA, and the patient agrees, please transport them to the most appropriate alternative emergency department. Otherwise, if the distance is appropriate, transport them to Togus VA.

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7. Should a crew bypass the Togus VA campus with a patient who is not a Veteran but requires immediate stabilization?
 - a. No. Even with limited resources, Togus VA can provide immediate, life-saving interventions to stabilize a patient who cannot be safely transported to a more distant facility, including pediatric patients. Please provide as much notice as possible to Togus VA in these situations and clearly explain the situation so they can prepare for the critical patient.

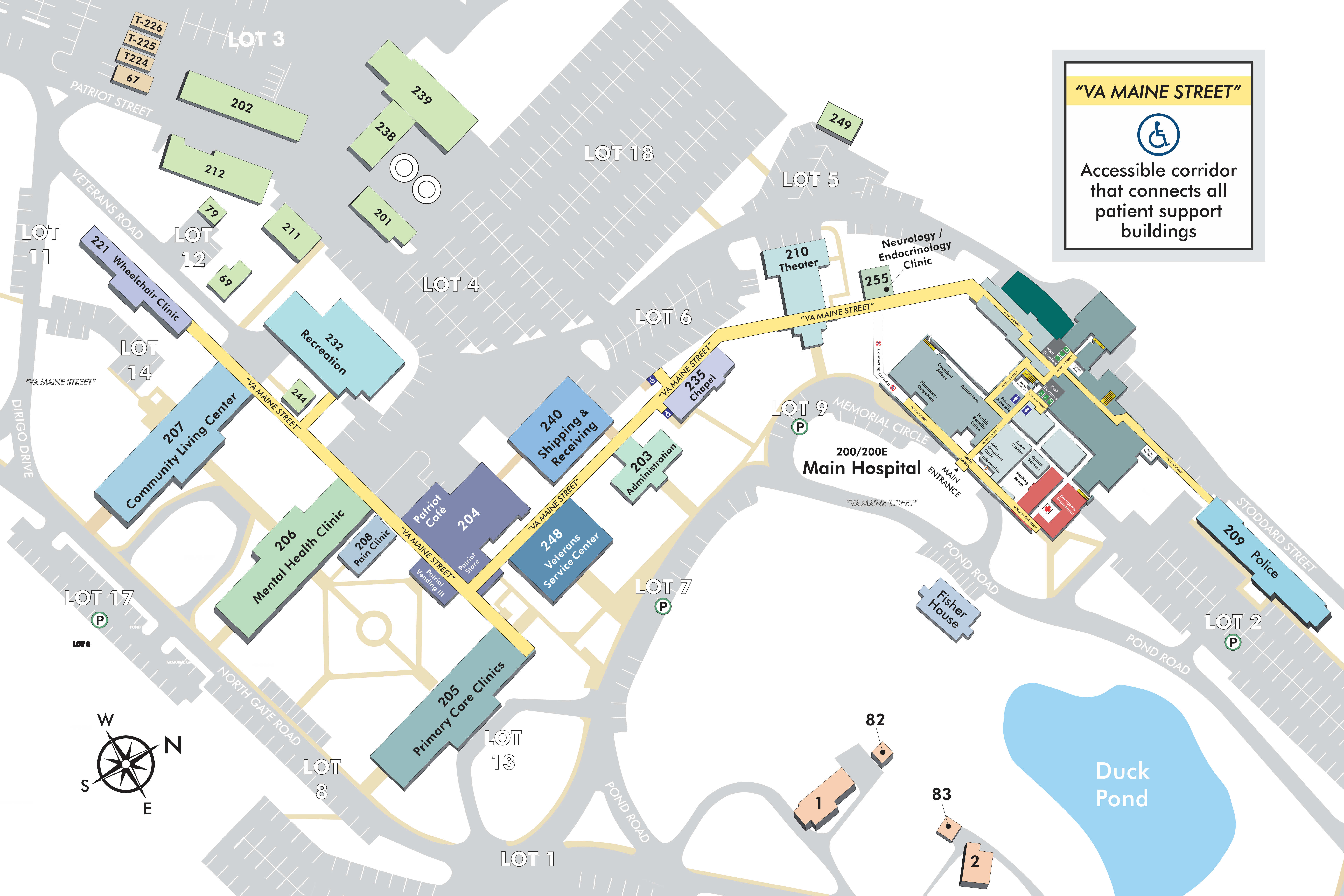
8. Is the Togus VA OLMC phone line and/or radio recorded?
 - a. No. However, if this is an important feature for you or your agency, you might consider consulting with your dispatch center ahead of time to understand if you can call them to be connected with Togus VA OLMC by phone on a recorded line and work through those logistics and training for all staff. This suggestion is not intended to mean that a dispatch center is obligated to provide this service.

9. Who are ideal Veteran patient candidates for transport to Togus VA?
 - Psychiatric/Mental/behavioral health conditions/Suicidal ideation
 - Substance use disorder (detox)
 - General Illness (nausea, vomiting, general weakness, chronic or acute non- or non-recent traumatic pain, wound infection, ear and toothache, STD)
 - Breathing problems related to chronic conditions
 - Eye problems or injury (non-penetrating)
 - GI or GU problems (non-hemorrhagic)

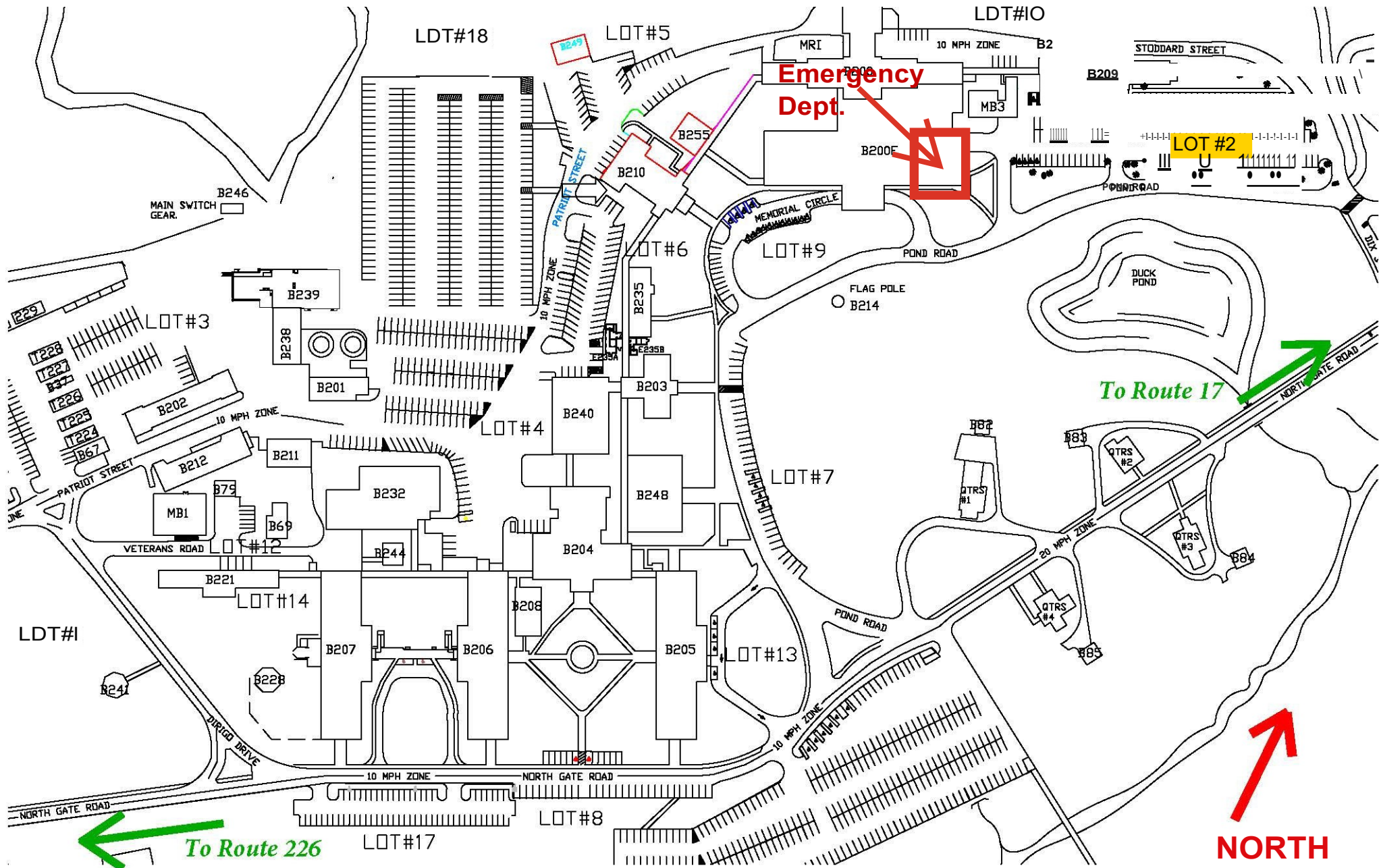
"VA MAINE STREET"



Accessible corridor
that connects all
patient support
buildings



VA Maine Medical Center



Directions

Northbound:

Take exit 109 (Augusta)

Bear right off the exit ramp following State Route 17 east

At first rotary, take 2nd right continuing on State Route 17 east

Proceed over Memorial Bridge

Bear right as you leave bridge, continue on State Route 17 east

At traffic light turn left and continue on State Route 17 for 4 miles

Togus entrance on the right

Southbound:

Take exit 113

Stay straight on State Route 3/State Route 9/U.S. Route 202 East for 3 miles

Turn right at the fourth traffic light, which is Church Hill Road

Continue straight about 3/4 mile and through a traffic light (State Route 105 intersection)

Stay straight on the same road which now becomes Cony Street Extension for 1/2 mile

Turn left at next traffic light onto State Route 17 east and continue straight for 2 miles

Togus VA Medical Center entrance is on the right