

## **ONLY CALL 999 IF IT'S LIFE THREATENING DURING INDUSTRIAL ACTION**

Only call 999 for the ambulance service if it's a genuine life-threatening emergency. An unnecessary call during this week's industrial action could put the lives of those in greatest need at risk.

West Midlands Ambulance Service is expecting a significant number of its staff to go on strike on Monday morning as part of a national dispute over pay.

It means that the ambulance service will only be responding to the most serious and life-threatening cases. For less serious cases including many road accidents, cuts, injuries and minor fractures there may be a delay in an ambulance arriving, or there may not be one at all.

As a result of the walk-out, between 7am and 11am on Monday 13th October, there is expected to be a significant reduction in the level of ambulance provision, and the service is calling on the public, more than ever, to only call 999 for life-threatening emergencies.

A ballot of Unison, Unite and GMB members voted to take industrial action as a result of the government's decision to not apply a 1% pay award in full to all NHS staff in accordance with the national public sector pay review body's recommendations.

West Midlands Ambulance Service staff who are members of any of those three unions have the right to take part in industrial action, including strike action. Industrial action, short of strike action, will continue for the rest of the week.

Assistant Chief Ambulance Officer Mark Gough said: "We won't know until Monday morning exactly how many staff will decide to take industrial action but we do now expect it to be a significant number. "The public has an important part to play in this and we ask you not to call 999 unless it is a real, genuine, life-threatening emergency.

"We are doing all we can to get as many ambulances and rapid response vehicles on the road. In order to preserve a service to those most in need, we are working on contingency plans which includes clinical managers responding to 999 calls. Staff who are not union members will be at work as normal."