



FIRE DEPARTMENT EMERGENCY AMBULANCE USE

Effective: September 15, 2022
Replaces: October 3, 2017

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish and identify field response utilization criteria for the use of fire department emergency ambulances in the Santa Clara County and the Palo Alto Exclusive Operating Areas (EOA).

Adherence to the detailed provisions required for authorization of fire department emergency ambulances is the responsibility of the County and fire department providing services, not the field providers. This policy is intended to provide only the operational information necessary for field providers working with fire department emergency ambulances.

II. Applicability

- A. Fire Department Emergency Ambulances authorized within the Palo Alto Exclusive Operating Area are not subject to the provisions of this Policy.
- B. Fire Department Emergency Ambulances authorized within the Santa Clara County EOA are not intended to provide routine transport services. They are intended to serve as an additional transport resource during times when the County's contracted ambulance provider is delayed as identified in this Policy.

III. Authorized Fire Department Emergency Ambulance Transports

When the following criteria are met, patients may be transported by fire department emergency ambulances:

- A. Fire departments may transport patients if their authorized emergency ambulance is on the scene and the patient presents with the need for immediate life-saving transportation (with red lights and sirens, RLS) for conditions such as:
 - 1. The patient needs RLS transport to the hospital and the County ambulance has not arrived on the scene within eighteen (18) minutes, or
 - 2. Cardiac or respiratory arrest, or
 - 3. Uncontrollable airway/inability to ventilate, or



4. Patient Meets STEMI Alert Criteria, or
 5. Patient Meets Stroke Alert Criteria, or
 6. Patient Meets Major Trauma Victim Criteria, or
 7. If the patient needs immediate transportation, after appropriate on-scene care and/or assessments due to a condition that will only benefit from immediate transport.
- B. The County may authorize fire department emergency ambulance transport in the following conditions:
1. When authorized by the EMS Duty Chief regardless of circumstance. The EMS Duty Chief may designate authority for authorization to the County EOA EMS Field Supervisor.
 2. When authorized by the County EOA EMS Supervisor during a multiple casualty incident plan (MCIP) Level 2 activation or greater, or when the EOA ambulance has mechanically failed on the scene or enroute to a call.
- C. Authorized fire departments shall respond to requests by the County in the following circumstances:
1. Standard Dispatch Order #10 is implemented.
 2. Standard Dispatch Order #11 is implemented.
 3. Standard Dispatch Order #12 is implemented.
 4. Standard Dispatch Order #3 is implemented.
 5. Standard Dispatch Order #13 is implemented.
- D. Authorized fire department emergency ambulances may respond to requests by the County in the following circumstances:
1. Requests for out-of-County Medical-Health Mutual Aid.
 2. Requests for specialized resource within the County.



IV. Operations Considerations

A. Communications

1. On-scene fire department personnel (which may include the fire departments dispatch center) shall be responsible for requesting the estimated time of arrival (ETA) of the County EOA ambulance prior to initiating patient transport.
2. Once the decision to transport has been made, fire department emergency ambulance personnel shall notify County Communications on the County designated radio channel. The ambulance shall assess hospital availability prior to transport and then continue to status with County Communications to include "transporting," "arrived at destination," and "available."
3. Fire department emergency ambulance personnel shall adhere to all applicable policies related to hospital communication and notification.

B. Scene Considerations

A patient meeting the criteria identified in Section III is secured to the ambulance gurney and the County EOA ambulance arrives on the scene, the fire department emergency ambulance shall transport.

V. Reporting

- A. On-scene fire department emergency ambulance personnel shall complete Santa Clara County Prehospital Care Policy # 614: Schedule A: Fire Department Emergency Ambulance Use, immediately following the transport.
- B. Santa Clara County Prehospital Care Policy # 614: Schedule A: Fire Department Emergency Ambulance Use will be reviewed by the Agency's assigned EMS Program Manager and then routed to the County Contract Manager within ten (10) business days of the transport.