

# SIERRA-SACRAMENTO VALLEY EMS AGENCY PROGRAM POLICY

REFERENCE NO. 405

## SUBJECT: EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCH PROGRAM APPROVAL

### **PURPOSE:**

To establish standardized criteria for approval of Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Programs.

It is the goal of S-SV EMS Agency that all callers requesting emergency medical assistance from any area or jurisdiction within the S-SV EMS Region have direct access to qualified emergency medical dispatch personnel for the provision of emergency dispatch services, pre-arrival instructions and post dispatch instructions. National certification of the dispatch center's program is encouraged, but not required. It is the goal that simultaneous dispatch of first responders and ALS ambulance will occur on every call. Nothing in this policy shall require any primary PSAPs to provide Emergency Medical Dispatch. This policy shall not be construed to affect the California Highway Patrol at this time.

### **AUTHORITY:**

California Health & Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797 et seq.

California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9.

California Supreme Court Decision, County of San Bernardino v. City of San Bernardino (1997) 15 Cal 4<sup>th</sup> 909 California Health and Safety Code sections 1443 and 1444; Welfare and Institutions Code section 17000.

State of California – Health and Human Services Agency, Emergency Medical Services Authority, Dispatch Program Guidelines, March 2003, EMSA #132.

Office of the Attorney General, State of California, Bill Lockyer, Attorney General, Opinion of Bill Lockyer – Attorney General, Thomas Lazar – Deputy Attorney General, No. 03-316, September 5, 2003.

### **MEDICAL CONTROL**

Subject to any State EMS Authority minimum guidelines and in accordance with this policy, the S-SV EMS Agency Medical Director is authorized to exercise medical control of all EMS dispatch programs operating within the S-SV EMS Region,

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**Effective Date: 01/01/08**

**Date last Reviewed / Revised: 9/07**

**Next Review Date: 9/10**

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**Approved:**

*William J. Koenig, MD*  
S-SV EMS Medical Director

*Victoria Pinette*  
S-SV EMS Regional Executive Director

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including the overall EMD program, EMD providers, training policies, procedures and protocols.

**UTILIZATION OF EMD:**

It is recognized that EMD may be applied utilizing pre-arrival instructions only or may, through the use of key medical questions, determine whether the call is emergent or non emergent, and what resources will be utilized. A primary PSAP electing to provide EMD may determine the extent to which the PSAP wishes to utilize EMD.

**POLICY:**

1. Each PSAP will develop a plan as to how EMD will be provided. The plan will demonstrate how EMD will be provided to callers requiring medical assistance. Plans may explain why the PSAP can not provide EMD, however each plan shall consider all possible alternatives. This plan will be submitted to S-SV EMS for approval within 6 months of the implementation date of this policy. PSAPs can provide EMD directly or transfer EMS calls immediately to a PSAP that provides EMD, or utilize the services of another EMD dispatch center. A PSAP that transfers EMS calls to another PSAP or utilizes the services of another EMD dispatch center shall be responsible for securing an agreement with any such provider for the provision of those services.
2. All EMD providers must have a continuous quality improvement (CQI) program approved by the EMS Agency that includes, at a minimum, all of the following:
  - a. EMD Center and personnel performance will be evaluated through case/tape review of dispatch records and applicable provider field records. All written CQI records shall be maintained for a period of 2 years. EMD programs shall maintain telecommunication records for a minimum of 100 days, and are hereby authorized to destroy EMD center tapes after 100 days, unless required for evidence or pending litigation. EMD Centers will provide reasonable prior notice to S-SV if they are retaining records longer than 100 days.
  - b. Each EMD PSAP will have an EMD CQI coordinator who is:
    - A currently licensed or certified physician, registered nurse, physician assistant, paramedic, EMT-II, or EMT-I, who has at least two years of practical experience within the last five years in prehospital emergency medical services with a basic knowledge of emergency medical dispatch, and who has received specialized training in the CQI/case review process, or

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- An emergency medical dispatcher with at least two years of practical experience within the last five years, and who has received specialized training in the CQI/ case review process.
- c. The EMD CQI coordinator will work collaboratively with S-SV EMS in providing data used for region wide EMS system analysis.
3. All S-SV EMS EMD providers shall meet the minimum requirements, as stated in the California EMS Authority Guidelines EMD Program and S-SV EMS Agency policies.
  4. All dispatch program materials are subject to periodic review and copying by S-SV EMS Agency as deemed necessary by the S-SV EMS Agency.
  5. All EMD provider programs are subject to on-site audit and evaluation by the S-SV EMS Agency.
  6. EMD providers requesting approval of their EMD program must submit a request to the Agency, which shall include:
    - a. A plan for how EMD will be provided. For those PSAP's that choose to utilize another PSAP or EMD dispatch center, a copy of that agreement;
    - b. The name of the recognized and established EMD program to be utilized;
    - c. CQI program;
    - d. The name and qualifications of the program administrator; and
    - e. The name(s) and qualifications of the CQI coordinator.