

SIERRA-SACRAMENTO VALLEY EMS AGENCY PROGRAM POLICY

REFERENCE NO. 510

SUBJECT: EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT DOWNGRADE AND/OR CESSATION

PURPOSE:

To establish procedures for the evaluation of the potential impact on the Emergency Medical Services system due to the downgrade or closure of emergency medical services in hospitals.

AUTHORITY:

California Health and Safety Code, Division 2, Chapter 2, Sections 1255 and 1300

POLICY:

1. Any hospital proposing a reduction or elimination of emergency medical services in their facility shall notify the State Department of Health Services, the County Department of Public Health, the Sierra-Sacramento Valley EMS Agency and all health service plans under contract with the hospital, no later than 90 days prior to any such change.
2. The hospital implementing a change shall provide for public notification of the proposed changes no less than 90 days prior to implementing any changes. The notification shall be of such magnitude as to inform a significant number of residents within the hospital's service area and be in terms likely to be understood by a layperson.
3. Upon notification, the Sierra-Sacramento Valley EMS Agency shall proceed with an Impact Evaluation in collaboration with the California Health care Association and the local Public Health Department. The report shall include, but is not limited to, the following areas:
 - **Geography:** Service area population density, travel time and distance to the next nearest facility, number and type of other available emergency services, availability of prehospital resources;

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Approved:

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

Vickie Pinette
S-SV EMS Regional Executive Director

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- **Base hospital designation:** Number of calls; impact on patients, prehospital personnel, and other base hospitals;
 - **Level of Care:** Assessment of level of emergency services provided, i.e., basic, standby, and next nearest availability;
 - **Trauma care:** Number of trauma patients; impact on other hospitals, trauma centers, and trauma patients;
 - **Specialty Services provided:** Neurosurgery, obstetrics, burn center, pediatric critical care etc., and the next nearest availability;
 - **Patient Volume:** Number of patients annually, both 9-1-1 transports and walk-ins;
 - **Notification of the public:** Process to be used: public hearing, advertising, etc.; ensure that all appropriate health care providers are consulted with;
 - **Availability of Prehospital Care:** Availability of ALS level prehospital care and air ambulance resources;
 - **Public and Emergency Provider Comments:** Obtained through local EMS committees and public hearing;
 - **Recommendations:** Shall include a determination of whether the request for reduction or elimination of emergency services should be approved or denied.
4. Within 45 days of notification, the Sierra-Sacramento Valley EMS Agency shall:
- a. Ensure planning or zoning authorities have been notified
 - b. Conduct, in conjunction with the local Department of Public Health, at least one public hearing on the proposed changes
 - c. Distribute a draft of the report to the local county Department of Public Health, the Medical Control Committee, the affected county's Emergency Medical Control Committee, the Joint Powers Agency Governing Board, and any other emergency care providers affected by the changes.
5. The EMS Agency shall submit the impact evaluation report (no more than 60 days after notification) to the State Department of Health Services, the State EMS Authority, and the area's Emergency Medical Care Committee, the Joint Powers Agency Governing Board, and the Medical Control Committee.