

Sierra – Sacramento Valley EMS Agency Program Policy

Alternate Transport Vehicles

	Effective: 04/01/2026	Next Review: 01/2029	416
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PURPOSE:

To establish requirements for the utilization of alternate transport vehicles in the S-SV EMS region.

AUTHORITY:

- A. HSC, Division 2.5, § 1797.
- B. CCR, Title 13, § 1100.2 and 1108.
- C. CCR, Title 22, Div. 9, Ch. 3.1, Ch. 3.2, Ch. 3.3.

DEFINITIONS:

- A. **Alternate Transport Vehicle** – An S-SV EMS approved vehicle utilized by a non-transport EMS ground provider that has been specially constructed, modified or equipped for transporting sick, injured, or otherwise incapacitated persons.
- B. **Authorized Transport Provider** – An S-SV EMS authorized helicopter EMS (HEMS) aircraft or ground ambulance transport provider.
- C. **Landing Zone** – A location where a HEMS aircraft can land to allow for expeditious and safe transfer of a patient from EMS ground to HEMS aircraft personnel.
- D. **Rendezvous Point** – A location, mutually agreed to by on-scene EMS personnel and responding authorized transport provider personnel, which will allow for expeditious and safe transfer of a patient from alternate transport vehicle to authorized ground transport provider personnel.

POLICY:

On limited occasions, alternate transport vehicles may be utilized to transport patients to rendezvous with an authorized HEMS aircraft or ground transport provider at a landing zone or rendezvous point, rather than waiting for the authorized transport provider to arrive on scene.

PROCEDURE:

- A. A risk/benefit assessment, including consideration of the following items, shall be completed prior to transporting a patient utilizing an alternate transport vehicle:
 - 1. Is the transport in the best interest of the patient?
 - 2. What is the alternate transport vehicle's ETA to the landing zone or rendezvous point?
 - 3. What is the ETA of the responding authorized transport provider to the scene, landing zone and/or rendezvous point?
 - 4. If transporting to a landing zone, would the alternate transport vehicle be waiting at the landing zone for HEMS aircraft to arrive or would it be more appropriate to remain on scene for an approved ground transport provider without significantly delaying transfer of patient care to HEMS aircraft personnel?
- B. The following criteria shall be met prior to transporting a patient utilizing an alternate transport vehicle:
 - 1. Utilization of the alternate transport vehicle is expected to result in a shorter total transport time from the scene to the most appropriate acute care hospital.
 - 2. The alternate transport vehicle can provide for safe patient transportation in accordance with S-SV EMS policies.
- C. If the alternate transport vehicle can provide a higher level of care than the closest authorized transport provider, and the patient requires this higher level of care, the alternate transport vehicle may rendezvous directly with the closest authorized transport provider able to provide a similar or higher level of care.
- D. An alternate transport vehicle shall not transport a patient directly to the hospital unless specifically approved by an S-SV EMS authorized base/modified base hospital.
- E. An S-SV EMS approved patient care report (PCR) shall be completed for any patient transported in an alternate transport vehicle.