

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

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DATE: March 7, 2020
TO: Local EMS Administrators/Medical Directors
FROM: Dave Duncan MD
Director

SUBJECT: POLICY TO IMPLEMENT THE EMERGENCY PROCLAMATION OF THE GOVERNOR ON THE USE OF ALTERNATE DESTINATION

POLICY:

Pursuant to the Emergency Proclamation of the 4th day of March 2020 by Governor Gavin Newsom, the following procedure shall be followed to implement subsection 13 of the Order concerning the preparation and response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

“13. Notwithstanding Health and Safety Code sections 1797.52 and 1797.218, during the course of this emergency, any EMT-P licensees shall have the authority to transport patients to medical facilities other than acute care hospitals when approved by the California EMS Authority. In order to carry out this order, to the extent that the provisions of Health and Safety Code sections 1797.52 and 1797.218 may prohibit EMT-P licensees from transport patients to facilities other than acute care hospitals, those statutes are hereby suspended until the termination of this State of Emergency”.

A local EMS agency which desires to utilize paramedics (EMT-P) to transport patient(s) to a medical facility, other than a general acute care hospital, in preparing for and responding to the COVID-19 State of Emergency shall submit a written request to the EMS Authority in advance.

PROCEDURE:

A local EMS agency which desires to utilize paramedics (EMT-P) to transport patient(s) to a medical facility other than a general acute care hospital (non-permitted medical facility), in preparing for and responding to the COVID-19 State of Emergency shall submit a written request to the EMS Authority in advance.

(A) The written request may be made electronically to expedite the review process. No specific application form is required.

Please submit your request directly to Sean Trask, Chief of EMS Personnel Division, with a copy to Dr. Duncan, Director, and the Jennifer Lim, acting Chief Deputy Director. Mr. Trask will acknowledge your submissions and distribute them to his staff accordingly for review.

(B) The request shall contain the following minimum components, as informed by Health and Safety Code §1798.101(b):

(1) Identification of each non-permitted medical facility proposed to be used as an alternate destination.

(2) Policy and/or protocols approved by the medical director of the local EMS agency to ensure that the use of each facility is in the best interests of patient care. The policy and/or protocols addressing patient safety and the use of the non-permitted medical facility shall take into account, but not be limited to, the following:

- The level of medical staff, and the availability of the staff at various times to care for patients requiring services at the alternate destination.
- The ability of staff to care for the degree and severity of the patients' conditions.
- The availability of more comprehensive emergency medical services and the distance and travel time necessary to make the alternative emergency medical services available if the non-permitted medical facility is unable to care for the patient.
- The equipment and services that are available at the facility necessary to care for patients requiring COVID-19 services or emergency medical services and the severity of their condition.
- The hours of operation, and any limitations of the non-permitted medical facility, which may negatively impact the treatment of patients requiring COVID-19 services or other emergency medical services.
- Policy and/or protocols for determining the appropriate use of alternate destination(s).
- Training for EMS personnel on all protocols for determining transport to an alternate destination including PPE, COVID-19 signs and symptoms, alternate destination availability and capabilities, and data collection methods.
- Policies for data collection to include, but not limited to, transport to the alternate destinations, reasons for transport(s), any secondary transports of these patients, and outcome when available.

(C) The request shall have the concurrence of both the EMS Agency Medical Director and the County Health Officer.

(D) The California EMS Authority shall review and make a written determination within two (2) business days after receipt of a complete request to utilize a non-permitted medical facility.

(E) The duration of the approval shall continue until the termination of the State of Emergency.

If you have any questions, contact Sean Trask at (916) 431-3689 or sean.trask@emsa.ca.gov.