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## REVIEW OF POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS

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### I. PURPOSE

To establish procedures for the review of EMS system policies and patient care protocols.

The ICEMA Medical Director and EMS Administrator are responsible for the development and approval of policies and protocols that establish operating procedures and medical control according to State regulations. ICEMA recognizes that stakeholder collaboration is an essential component of policy and protocol development and accepts input from the Medical Advisory Committee (MAC), System Advisory Committee (SAC), standing ICEMA subcommittees and/or other interested parties through a review process as established below. EMS stakeholder input is advisory to ICEMA for the formulation of these policies, protocols and procedures and the final authority rests with the ICEMA Medical Director and EMS Administrator.

### II. DEFINITIONS

**Medical Advisory Committee (MAC):** Primary committee that advises the ICEMA Medical Director on the clinical or medical aspects of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) within the ICEMA region.

**Patient Care Protocols:** Medical standards that provide the framework for the medical treatment and care routinely provided to patients within the ICEMA region.

**EMS System Policies:** EMS system organization, principal functions and mode of operations for providers and healthcare facilities within the ICEMA region that guide EMS system operations.

**System Advisory Committee (SAC):** Primary committee that advises the ICEMA EMS Administrator on the operational aspects of EMS within the ICEMA region.

### III. POLICY

- ICEMA will review all EMS system policies and patient care protocols, as necessary, to ensure time critical and appropriate changes.
- ICEMA will solicit input from appropriate external agencies, organizations and established advisory committees such as those listed below, as necessary:
  - Medical Advisory Committee (MAC)

- System Advisory Committee (SAC)
  - ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction QI Committee (STEMI QI)
  - Neurovascular Stroke QI Committee (Stroke QI)
  - Trauma Advisory Committee (TAC)  
(Joint San Bernardino County and Riverside County Quality Improvement Committee).
- ICEMA will review EMS system policies and patient care protocols as required. Changes that may occur without specific input from committees include, but are not limited to:
    - Changes in wording necessary to clarify the objective.
    - Changes in the listed order or numbering necessary for clarity or flow.
    - Changes to assure policy or protocol continuity and consistency.
    - Changes required to comply with State and local laws and/or regulations to maintain public health and safety.
    - Correction of typographical, grammar, spelling or formatting errors.
    - Changes required for medical control or to maintain system integrity.
  - ICEMA will prepare a detailed grid of proposed policy and protocol changes for input from MAC and SAC.
  - ICEMA will consider all relevant input presented to it before accepting, amending or deleting any EMS system policy or treatment protocol, but the authority for final determination remains with the Medical Director and EMS Administrator.
  - ICEMA will submit changes in EMS system policies and patient care protocols to public comment as noted below under Section VI - Notification and Public Comment Period.
  - EMS system policies and patient care protocols, approved by the Medical Director and EMS Administrator, shall become effective no later than thirty (30) days after the date of approval except as noted under Section V - Emergency Policies and Protocols.

#### **IV. REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF EMS SYSTEM POLICIES/PATIENT CARE PROTOCOLS**

- Any interested party may request the review of EMS system policies or patient care protocols as provided in this section. Such requests shall be in writing and clearly and concisely state:
  - The substance or nature of the requested review.
  - The reason for the request.
  - Any supporting documentation and/or research that would support the request.
- Upon receipt of a written request for the review of a policy or protocol, ICEMA will notify the petitioner or group in writing of the receipt of the request and then shall, within thirty (30) business days, either deny the request, in writing, indicating why the agency has reached such a decision or schedule the policy or protocol for review, in the appropriate committee(s), in accordance with this policy.
- ICEMA may grant or deny such a request or take such other action as it may determine to be warranted and will notify the petitioner in writing of such action.

#### **V. EMERGENCY POLICIES AND PROTOCOLS**

- If ICEMA determines that an emergency policy or protocol is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health and safety or general welfare, a policy or protocol may be changed as an emergency action.
- Any finding of an emergency will include a written statement describing the specific facts showing the need for immediate action. The statement and the policy or protocol shall be immediately forwarded to MAC and/or SAC and EMS providers (as appropriate). The emergency policy or protocol will become effective no sooner than five (5) days following dissemination to the committee, unless there is an immediate need determined by ICEMA.
- Policies or protocols adopted under the emergency provision shall remain in effect until reviewed by the appropriate committee.

#### **VI. NOTIFICATION AND PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

Consistent with a policy of encouraging the widest possible notification and distribution to interested persons, ICEMA will:

- Post proposed changes to policies or protocols on the ICEMA website at ICEMA.net at least thirty (30) days prior to the MAC and/or SAC meetings. The notice of change will include a statement of the time and place of proceedings for public comment.
- E-mail notification of proposed changes to members of the Emergency Medical Care Committee (EMCC), MAC and SAC.
- E-mail notification of proposed changes to each EMS provider.
- E-mail notification of proposed changes to any person who has filed a request for notification with ICEMA.
- Conduct official public comment during the MAC and/or SAC meeting.

The provisions of this section shall not be construed in any manner to invalidate a protocol or policy due to perceived inadequacy of the notice.

When necessary to fulfill its responsibilities, ICEMA will revise and/or initiate policies or protocols without following this process. Any oversight in notification described above shall not invalidate any action taken by ICEMA pursuant to this policy.