



Inland Counties Emergency Medical Agency

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Serving San Bernardino, Inyo, and Mono Counties
Tom Lynch, EMS Administrator
Reza Vaezazizi, MD, Medical Director

DATE: September 23, 2019

TO: EMS Providers - ALS, LALS, BLS, EMS Aircraft
Hospital CEOs, ED Directors, Nurse Managers and PLNs
EMS Training Institutions and Continuing Education Providers
Inyo, Mono and San Bernardino County EMCC Members
Medical Advisory Committee (MAC) Members
Systems Advisory Committee (SAC) Members

FROM: Tom Lynch
EMS Administrator

Reza Vaezazizi, MD
Medical Director

SUBJECT: 30-DAY NOTIFICATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment for the policy listed below will occur at the next Medical Advisory Committee meeting on October 24, 2019, 1:00 pm, at the ICEMA office. Please review and bring suggestions for modification to the meeting.

ICEMA Reference Number and Name

8170 EMS Aircraft Utilization

TL/RV/LG/jlm

Enclosure

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**30-DAY NOTIFICATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT
SEPTEMBER 23, 2019**

Reference #	Name	Changes
DELETIONS		
None		
NEW		
8170	EMS Aircraft Utilization	New policy for EMS aircraft utilization.
1000 ACCREDITATION AND CERTIFICATION		
None		
2000 DATA COLLECTION		
None		
3000 EDUCATION		
None		
4000 QUALITY IMPROVEMENT		
None		
5000 MISCELLANEOUS SYSTEM POLICIES		
None		
6000 SPECIALTY PROGRAM/ PROVIDER POLICIES		
None		
7000 STANDARD DRUG & EQUIPMENT LISTS		
None		
8000 TRANSPORT/TRANSFERS AND DESTINATION POLICIES		
None		
9000 GENERAL PATIENT CARE POLICIES		
None		
10000 SKILLS		
None		
11000 ADULT EMERGENCIES		
None		
12000 END OF LIFE CARE		
None		
13000 ENVIRONMENTAL EMERGENCIES		
None		
14000 PEDIATRIC EMERGENCIES		
None		

**30-DAY NOTIFICATION FOR PUBLIC COMMENT
SEPTEMBER 23, 2019**

Reference #	Name	Changes
15000 TRAUMA		
None		



EMS AIRCRAFT UTILIZATION

(San Bernardino County Only)

I. PURPOSE

To establish EMS aircraft utilization criteria for San Bernardino County.

II. POLICY

- All EMS aircraft requests from the field in San Bernardino County will be managed by the ICEMA designated EMS Aircraft Dispatch Center (ADC).
- EMS aircraft shall only be requested when a patient's condition is of a time sensitive nature where long transport times may result in loss of life or limb. EMS aircraft transportation must be significantly faster than ground transport.
- EMS aircraft shall only respond to a prehospital emergency scene upon direction of the ADC and shall not be contacted directly for an emergency (9-1-1) transport by any other EMS provider.
- If an air transport request is considered prior to patient contact, a search and rescue aircraft will be dispatched in this order:
 - Sheriff Air Rescue
 - California Highway Patrol (CHP)
 - Fort Irwin

A rescue aircraft is an aircraft whose usual function is not prehospital emergency patient transport but which may be utilized, in compliance with the local EMS agency's (ICEMA) policy, for prehospital emergency patient transport when use of an air or ground ambulance is inappropriate or unavailable. Rescue aircraft includes ALS rescue aircraft, BLS rescue aircraft and auxiliary rescue aircraft.

- Simultaneous medical aircraft and ground responses may be requested only when there has been a confirmed, identified time sensitive critical patient, and the incident is located in a remote location (greater than 45 min to closest hospital).
 - If the EMS aircraft responds to a scene prior to ground transport contact with the patient, the aircraft may be cancelled if the Incident Commander, in consultation with the most medically-qualified first responder, determines it is not needed.

- Ground transport may also cancel a dispatched airship if they are first on scene, and it is determined by the most medically-qualified staff that air transport is not needed.
- All airships launched prior to patient contact will undergo extensive quality improvement (QI) review.
- At the time of dispatch, the ADC shall utilize the closest available EMS aircraft proximate to the scene of the incident using Automatic Flight Following (AFF) as the determining factor.
 - The ADC has a responsibility to have knowledge of the appropriate level of licensure of medical crew, categorization of aircraft, brand, and company/agency affiliation, in order to dispatch the appropriate EMS aircraft.
- If, two (2) or more EMS aircraft are co-located and/or within close distance (less than a mile), the ADC shall institute a rotation system of all EMS aircraft. An individual air provider must not be chosen based upon unspecified or non-ICEMA approved processes.
- The ADC shall determine and inform the EMS providers what aircraft will be utilized and will include an accurate Estimated Time of Arrival (ETA). ETA will be determined by time of dispatch until aircraft is over scene, and includes the total amount of time for crew preparation, flight planning, aircraft pre-flight, take-off, and flight time to over scene.
 - The destination decision will be made in accordance with established ICEMA policies, procedures, and protocols, and may be changed by the flight crew in conjunction with the pilot based only on patient or flight safety concerns.
 - Approved hospital diversion and/or pilot determination of flight safety, including weather conditions, may alter the destination of EMS aircraft per ICEMA Reference #8060 - Requests for Ambulance Redirection and Hospital Diversion (San Bernardino County Only).

III. EMS AIRCRAFT INDICATIONS

The determination to utilize an aircraft must be made with the use of a thorough and appropriate physical assessment by ALS EMS field personnel on scene. Utilizing EMS aircraft shall be specifically for the benefit of an expedited transport, which cannot be accomplished by other means.

- The following criteria must be met and followed in the order presented below:

Patient Criteria

- Are there any contraindications to flying?

If **yes** to this question, then **STOP** here and transport by ground to the most appropriate hospital.

Injury Criteria

- Is the patient in danger of losing life or limb, and of a time sensitive nature?

If **no** to this question, then **STOP** and transport by ground to the closest most appropriate hospital.

Time Criteria

- Subtract ground time total (transport time plus 5 minutes for patient offload) and air transport time total (air transport time plus 30 minutes).

Total time difference:

If air transport does not save more than 15 minutes, then transport by ground to most appropriate hospital.

IV. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- Transport stable snake bite patients from the field by ground to the closest hospital.
- Mechanism of injury alone is not criteria for transport by air.
- Rapid sequence intubation (RSI) is not criteria for air transport, patients with unmanageable airways shall be transported to the closest hospital for airway stabilization.
- If a request is denied by the initial dispatched aircraft, the second aircraft shall be notified of the denial.
- If the patient is combative due to suspected traumatic injury, communication with flight personnel is essential.

- Patients with exposure to hazardous materials should be decontaminated on scene before consideration of utilization of aircraft.
- Medical transport by EMS aircraft may not be suitable in the following situations:
 - Cardiac arrest when the patient is not responding to prehospital therapy.
 - Patients who are violent or have behavioral emergencies.

V. REFERENCE

<u>Number</u>	<u>Name</u>
8060	Requests for Ambulance Redirection and Hospital Diversion (San Bernardino County Only)