



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES PROGRAM

Policy No. 1030
Reviewed 01/07

Emergency Medical Services Program

Approved

Medical Director

Subject: FIRST RESPONDER BLS AMBULANCE INTERCEPT POLICY

I. POLICY

- A. First responder basic life support (BLS) units, which are transport capable and approved and licensed by the County, may transport patients in accordance with approved EMS procedures. The units must be in a contractual relationship with the ALS provider for such services.
- B. First responder BLS unit transportation is allowed under specific activation criteria: Specifically, situations when an ALS ambulance provider may have an extended response time to the scene and where it would benefit the patient to commence transportation in a BLS unit. (See II A and II B for Activation Criteria.)
- C. The first responder BLS unit shall rendezvous with the responding ALS ambulance at a pre-designated location, at which time the patient will be safely transferred to ALS care and transportation will be continued.
- D. Transport capable first responder BLS units may also be utilized for patient transport during multi-casualty incidents in conjunction with ALS ambulances and helicopters.

II. ACTIVATION CRITERIA

- A. A first responder BLS unit may commence transportation of the patient if all of the following apply at the time the patient is packaged and ready for transportation:
 1. Patient with an altered level of consciousness and/or showing “fight or flight” symptoms indicative of a worsening condition, and/or two or more hits on the MAP triage tool;
AND,
 2. Patient is in need of ALS intervention; AND,
 3. The responding ALS ambulance is outside of a pre-designated, County approved geographic boundary, as shown on provider specific maps, indicating that the ambulance response time will be delayed.

- B. If, in the opinion of the highest medical authority on the scene with the patient, the patient would benefit from transportation in the first responder BLS unit and all of the criteria above do not apply, the BLS unit may commence transportation after conferring with the responding ALS ambulance.

III. PROCEDURE

- A. Assess patient and commence BLS treatment according to County protocol.
- B. Determine whether activation criteria have been met.
- C. If activation criteria are met at the time the patient is packaged and ready for transport, the first responder BLS unit shall commence transportation of the patient.
- D. The first responder BLS unit shall immediately inform the dispatch center that transportation has commenced and shall contact the responding ALS ambulance by radio to coordinate the rendezvous location to be used.
- E. If an ALS ambulance is unavailable to rendezvous with the first responder BLS unit, the unit shall continue transportation to the closest hospital or landing zone.
In case of radio failure that precludes communication between the ALS and BLS units, the BLS unit should continue transport until communications can be established.