



Policy 618: Critical Ambulance Demand Mitigation

Revision 5/22/18
Effective 8/1/18

- I. Purpose
 - A. The following plan is intended to address unanticipated requests for 911 ambulance services by providing a progression of mitigating steps to ensure that capacity to respond is maximized and scarce ambulance resources are allocated to the best possible use.
 - B. Each phase represents a step-wise approach triggered by worsening levels of system status. Generally, it would be inappropriate to implement Phase II steps before all Phase I steps have been attempted, for example.
 - C. This document is intended for resource management, not for specific incident management such as an MCI.
 - D. Implementation of this plan does not require pre-authorization by the Santa Cruz County EMS Agency and real time notification of the EMS Administrator and EMS Medical Director is required.
 - E. This plan is not intended for mitigation of anticipated events such as specials events, severe weather, sick leave or strikes which shall be addressed proactively by the 911 ambulance agency.
- II. Phase I – Pending of one or more Code 3 calls due to contract transport units unavailable. (Activated by M100)
 - A. Mutual Aid request
 - B. Dispatch M3566
 - C. Consider call back of off duty personnel to staff additional ambulances
- III. Phase II – Continued pending of one or more Code 3 calls after implementation of Phase I strategies and system levels are anticipated to continue to degrade. (Activated by M100)
 - A. Activate an additional Medical Zone coordinator (ambulance supervisor) and Fire Zone coordinator (Chief Officer)
 - 1. The additional Zone Coordinator may post at NetCom to modify dispatch procedures
 - B. Notify as listed below
 - C. All Code 2 calls are pended. All responses are Code 3.
 - 1. Netcom to advise Reporting Party that delays are possible for non-life threatening requests for service.
 - D. Request all available private ambulances be placed in service in the EMS System to run any call type.



- E. Request all available “BLS Transport Surge Task Force” ambulances be placed in service in the EMS system.
 - 1. Leave at least one (1) Fire Transport Vehicle in the San Lorenzo Valley
- F. Hospital Diversion Suspended. All Hospitals are Ordered Open (Green).
 - 1. All ambulances shall transport to the closest appropriate Emergency Department in Santa Cruz County.
 - 2. Patient preference suspended.
 - 3. Helicopters, when available, should be used to transport out of county specialty centers.
- G. First Responders encourage patient transport by POV where able.
- H. All ambulance transports are handled “Code 3”.
- I. All ambulances return to deployment staging post “Code 3”
- IV. Phase III – Continued pending of one or more Code 3 calls after implementation of Phase II strategies and system levels are anticipated to continue to degrade. (Activated by Medical and Fire Zone Coordinator)
 - A. Consider activating ambulance strike team through MHOAC
 - B. Ground transports to out of county specialty care centers may be suspended.
 - C. Medical and Fire Zone coordinators may consider suspended ambulance dispatch to lower priority calls.
 - D. Verbal report at patient handoff at hospital. Delay TOC and/or PCRs
 - 1. PCRs can be completed within 48 hours
 - E. Request all available Fire Service Transport ambulances be placed in service in the EMS system to handle all request types.
 - F. Other EMS System Response may be additionally modified as determined by the Medical and Fire Zone Coordinators.
- V. Phase IV – Anticipated or Declared Countywide Disaster
 - A. Refer to Countywide Disaster Plan.
- VI. Execution of Phase II and above Actions requires immediate notification to the following:
 - A. EMS Administrator or his/her designee, Public Health Officer, MHOAC – if not already involved
 - B. EMS Medical Director
 - C. Director of Operations of AMR
 - D. General Manager of NetCom
 - E. Fire Zone Coordinators
 - F. Notification via All-Chiefs page (NetCom)
 - G. Notification to all field responders (NetCom)
 - H. Notification of Dominican and Watsonville Hospital ED’s (NetCom)



Santa Cruz County EMS Agency Operational Policies

Section 600

- I. Notification to all Police Watch Commanders (NetCom)
 - 1. All code 2 requests will be pended
- VII. Suspension of the above Actions and return to Day to Day requires immediate notification to the above.
- VIII. Any phase activation will require a post incident analysis