9-1-1 AMBULANCE SERVICE PROVIDER DISPATCH REQUIREMENTS

PURPOSE

To establish the minimum requirements for emergency ambulance dispatch in the YEMSA region. It is the intention of this policy to provide individuals in need of emergency prehospital medical assistance with qualified prehospital care in the most expeditious manner possible.

AUTHORITY

California Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797 et seq.

California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9

California Supreme Court Decision. County of San Bernardino v. City of San Bernardino (1997) 15 Cal 4th 909
California Health and Safety Code sections 1443 and 1444; Welfare and Institutions Code section 17000

State of California – Health and Human Services Agency, Emergency Medical Services Authority, Dispatch Program Guidelines, March 2003, EMSA #132

Office of the Attorney General, State of California, Bill Lockyer, Attorney General, Opinion of Bill Lockyer – Attorney General. Thomas Lazar – Deputy Attorney General, No. 03-316, September 5, 2003

DEFINITIONS

Exclusive Operating Area (EOA): an EMS area or sub area defined by the emergency medical services plan for which the YEMSA restricts operations to one provider of emergency ground ambulance services.

Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP): The designated primary public safety agency at which the 9-1-1 call is first received.

Secondary Public Safety Answering Point (Secondary PSAP): A dispatch center that the PSAP transfers/relays the emergency calls to for the purpose of dispatching emergency resources, including ambulances.

Ambulance Provider Dispatch Center: A YEMSA approved 9-1-1 ambulance provider dispatch center that the PSAP or Secondary PSAP transfers/relays the emergency calls to for the purpose of dispatching ambulance resources.

Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD): A series of components approved by the YEMSA that allows the dispatcher to provide pre-arrival instructions and, if utilized, dispatch an appropriate level of response as determined by the approved EMD protocols (Priority Dispatch).

Ambulance Response Modes: Two accepted modes of responding to requests for emergency medical assistance which are defined as follows:

Code Two (2) responses: A response mode without the use of emergency warning lights and/or sirens.

Code Three (3) responses: An emergency response using red lights and sirens (CVC section 21055 & CCR 1105 &1107.7)

YEMSA 9-1-1 Ambulance Provider: An ALS ambulance service provider who has a current 9-1-1 Exclusive Operating Agreement (EOA) with the YEMSA or a provider currently authorized by the YEMSA to provided 9-1-1 ambulance services in a non EOA area.

POLICY

A. Any YEMSA provider dispatch center (including approved, non 9-1-1 ambulance providers), PSAP and/or Secondary PSAP receiving a request for emergency medical assistance, either through the 9-1-1 system or via a seven digit number, from any member of the public shall promptly notify the appropriate communications center for the First Responder and/or the appropriately 9-1-1 ambulance provider of the call.

B. All YEMSA approved 9-1-1 ambulance providers shall operate their own dispatch center, contract with an existing dispatch center, or join with other providers to operate a dispatch system. If a 9-1-1 ambulance provider utilizes dispatch services provided by another organization, it must have a written contract for that service.

C. All YEMSA approved 9-1-1 ambulance providers shall provide dispatch services necessary to receive and respond to requests for emergency ALS ambulance services and monitor system status. The 9-1-1 ALS ambulance provider's dispatch center shall:

    1. Receive and process calls for emergency medical assistance from primary and secondary 9-1-1 PSAPs and seven digit telephone lines.

    2. Identify and dispatch the closest available YEMSA authorized 9-1-1 ambulance to the scene of the emergency in accordance with the EOA requirements listed below in section D.

    3. Only dispatch the number of ambulances appropriate for the type of incident or as requested by the IC.

    4. Notify responding personnel and agencies of pertinent information.

    5. Monitor and track responding resources (Automatic Vehicle Locators are recommended).

    6. Coordinate with law enforcement, first responders and other EMS providers as needed.

    7. Provide required data and reports to the YEMSA.

D. To maintain the integrity within the YEMSA, the exclusive provider for the service area where the call is located shall be dispatched to all emergency calls within that service area unless a closer provider is requested through mutual aid or through a previously agreed upon automatic aid MOU.

E. It is the goal of the YEMSA that all callers requesting emergency medical assistance from any area or jurisdiction within the YEMSA have direct access to qualified emergency medical dispatch (EMD) personnel for the provision of emergency dispatch services, pre-arrival instructions and post dispatch instructions. National certification of the dispatch center's program is encouraged, but not required.

F. If the dispatch agency utilizes a YEMSA approved priority dispatch system, the dispatcher shall follow the protocols associated with that system.

G. Provider ambulances shall not at any time proceed at a level of response other than as directed by the Primary PSAP, Secondary PSAP or ambulance provider dispatcher.

H. 9-1-1 ambulance providers shall have a written policy and shall make all reasonable efforts to immediately notify the jurisdictional PSAP of the location from where the ambulance is responding from.

I. The dispatch center shall be staffed with sufficient properly trained personnel to accomplish all dispatch and EMD functions (if provided).

J. A computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system shall be utilized to record dispatch information for all ambulance requests. CAD system shall include the date, hours, minutes and seconds.

K. The dispatch center shall have capabilities for 24-hour, “real time” recordings of all emergency telephone lines and radio frequencies. All radio and telephone communications shall be recorded on tape or other digital recording medium and kept for a minimum of 90 days.

L. Ambulance providers shall have a plan to provide emergency ALS ambulance dispatch during any period of primary dispatch failure. The plan shall ensure that an equivalent dispatch center or dispatch system, approved by the YEMSA, is able to serve as a backup dispatch center within five (5) minutes of failure of the primary dispatch center.

CROSS REFERENCES

Prehospital Care Policy Manual

Emergency Medical Dispatch Program Approval