

Policy: EMS Aircraft Medical Control

#444.00

Medical Director:



Creation Date: 4-30-98

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EMS Coordinator:



Review Date: 05-2023

I. AUTHORITY

Division 2.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, Section 1797.220 and 1798. et seq.; Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 8; Pre-hospital EMS Aircraft Regulations, Title 21, Public Works Chapter 2.5 Division of Aeronautics (Department of Transportation), Public Utilities Code Section 21662.1 and 21662.5; and Federal Aviation Regulations

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Agency means the Tuolumne County Emergency Medical Services Agency.
- B. EMS Aircraft means any aircraft utilized for the purpose of pre-hospital emergency patient response and transport. EMS aircraft includes air ambulances and all categories of rescue aircraft.
- C. Medical Flight Crew means the individual(s), excluding the pilot, specifically assigned to care for the patient during aircraft transport.

III. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to specify the procedures for on-line medical control from the time the EMS aircraft arrives on scene until the patient has arrived at an acute care facility.

IV. POLICY

A. On-line Medical Control:

- 1. On-line medical control for the scene of a medical emergency shall be vested in a Tuolumne County base hospital.
- 2. On-line medical control for a patient being transported by EMS Aircraft shall transfer to the EMS Aircraft's base hospital at the time the EMS Aircraft crew assumes care of the patient.

B. Off-line Medical Control:

- 1. The off-line medical control and treatment of patients by EMS Aircraft personnel shall be conducted and governed by Tuolumne County EMS Agency policies and procedures.
- 2. Flight nurses may perform skills and administer medications beyond the scope of practice of Tuolumne County Accredited paramedics, when those skills and medications have been approved by the Medical Director of the Air Ambulance Service and the Medical Director of the Tuolumne County EMS Agency.

C. Patient Destination:

1. Patients being evacuated by Air Ambulance or ALS Rescue Aircraft shall be transported to a Trauma Center, Pediatric Trauma Center, other specialty care center or helicopter receiving hospital in accordance with Tuolumne County EMS triage and destination policies.
2. In the event that contact with a Tuolumne County Base Hospital cannot be established the patient destination will be determined by the ground ambulance crew in consultation with the medical flight crew. Patients being evacuated by BLS Rescue Aircraft or Auxiliary Rescue Aircraft that are staffed by a Tuolumne County Accredited Paramedic, AEMY EMT, or First Responder/Emergency Medical Responder (FR/EMR) certified by Tuolumne County that has successfully completed Tuolumne County Trauma Triage Criteria training, with annual updates, the crew member shall:
 - a. Perform trauma triage on all trauma patients
 - b. If patient is determined to be a *Major trauma patient*, the aircraft will rendezvous with an authorized Air Ambulance, ALS Rescue Aircraft or ALS Ground Ambulance.
 - c. If patient is determined to not be a *Major trauma patient* and the air transport time to a hospital is ten (10) minutes greater than a rendezvous with an authorized Air Ambulance, ALS Rescue Aircraft or ALS Ground Ambulance, the crew member may contact a Physician at a Tuolumne County Base Hospital and request to transport patient directly to a hospital. BLS Rescue Aircraft or Auxiliary Rescue Aircraft shall not transport patients directly to a hospital without the express permission of an on-duty base hospital physician. If base hospital contact cannot be established the aircraft will rendezvous with an authorized Air Ambulance, ALS Rescue Aircraft or ALS Ground Ambulance.
 - d. All medical patients shall be transferred to the aircraft will rendezvous with an authorized Air Ambulance, ALS Rescue Aircraft or ALS Ground Ambulance.
3. All patients being evacuated by BLS Rescue Aircraft or Auxiliary Rescue Aircraft that are not staffed by Tuolumne County Accredited Paramedic, AEMT, EMT, or FR/EMR certified by Tuolumne County that has successfully completed Tuolumne County Trauma Triage Criteria training shall be transported to the nearest and most appropriate EMS landing site for rendezvous with Air Ambulance, ALS Rescue Aircraft or ALS Ground Ambulance.

D. Utilization Review and Quality Improvement

1. Medical need is the basis for determination of the appropriateness of using EMS Aircraft. All patients transported by EMS Aircraft services must have either a serious illness or injury; or, can be best managed by air transport considering the availability of ground transport.

2. Unresolved issues related to EMS Aircraft utilization shall be documented and referred to the Tuolumne County EMS Agency.

E. Patient Documentation:

1. EMS Aircraft service providers shall complete a Pre-hospital Care Record Form for each patient. The appropriate copies are to be submitted to the hospital receiving the patient for placement in patient's medical record, kept by the provider. Pre-hospital Care Record shall be submitted to the Tuolumne County EMS Agency upon request.