

DESCRIPTION AND FUNCTION OF BASIC, ADVANCED LIFE SUPPORT, AND CRITICAL CARE TRANSPORT UNITS

PURPOSE

To define basic, advanced life support, and critical care transport units, their staffing and functions within the Marin County EMS system.

DEFINITIONS

- A. **Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)** refers to an individual currently certified to the EMT level in the state of California
- B. **Paramedic** - refers to an individual currently licensed as a paramedic in the state of California and accredited to practice in Marin County
- C. **ALS indicated** refers to patients for whom Advanced Life Support (ALS) treatment is appropriate due to complaint and/or symptoms present.

STAFFING AND DESIGNATION

- A. Basic Life Support (BLS) units will be staffed by two EMTs and will be referred to as an "Ambulance" or "A" unit followed by a number indicating the agency.
- B. ALS units will be staffed by a minimum of one EMT and one paramedic.
- C. Fire department owned units will be referred to as "Medic" or "M" units followed by a number indicating the agency.
- D. Privately owned units will be referred to as "Paramedic" or "P" units followed by a number indicating the agency.
- E. Critical Care Transport (CCT) units will be staffed by a minimum of two EMTs and an R.N. and will be referred to as a CCT unit followed by a number indicating the agency.
- F.

PROVISION OF SERVICES

- A. Pre-hospital ALS response
 - 1. Provided by units having a primary zone provider contract or subcontract according to the Marin County EMS Plan.
 - 2. If the above unit(s) is unavailable for dispatch, an alternate ALS unit will be dispatched by the usual dispatching agency when provided for by contract/agreement with the primary zone provider.
 - 3. If the primary zone provider and alternate provider are unavailable, the nearest ambulance will be dispatched by the usual dispatching agency and will function according to Marin County Policies and Procedures.
- B. If a unit not authorized to provide service in that ALS zone encounters a patient needing ALS intervention, that unit shall do the following:
 - 1. Immediately contact County Communications.
 - 2. Request EM/AO number and dispatch of primary zone provider.

3. If time to hospital is less than ETA of primary zone provider ALS unit, initiate treatment and transport.
 4. If time to hospital is greater than ETA of primary zone provider ALS unit, initiate treatment and wait for contract provider.
- C. If a unit is not staffed or equipped to provide the level of care needed by a patient, that unit shall do the following:
1. Immediately contact County Communications.
 2. Request EM/AO number and dispatch of primary zone provider.
 3. If time to hospital is less than ETA of primary zone provider ALS unit, initiate transport.
 4. If time to hospital is greater than ETA of primary zone provider ALS unit, treat and wait for zone provider.
- D. Transfers from one care facility to another are addressed in policy GPC 5, Inter-facility Transfer.
- E. Critical Care Transport units will be used to provide an enhanced level of care during transfers. They are not routinely utilized in the pre-hospital setting.