

Subject: Patient Care – Trauma System
Trauma Triage Determination and Transport Destination Policy

I. Authority and Reference:

- A. Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 7
- B. Division 2.5, Health, and Safety Code
- C. North Coast EMS Policies
- D. Coastal Valley’s EMS Policies

II. Purpose:

- A. To rapidly triage trauma patients and transport them to optimal care.

III. Policy:

- A. The goal of trauma triage determination in the North Coast EMS region is to rapidly identify the trauma patient based on physiologic changes, mechanism/anatomic injury, and concurrent/special conditions, using the American College of Surgeons (ACS) 2021 National Guideline for the Field Triage of Injured Patients.
- B. After rapid trauma triage has occurred, the goal is to transport the trauma patient to the closest appropriate trauma center. This is further defined for Del Norte, Humboldt, and Lake Counties separately below.
- C. Trauma Alert: Field personnel will communicate that field trauma triage criteria have been met in the field by notifying the base or receiving hospital with, “This is a Trauma Alert”, reporting the specific criteria that have been met and providing an expected time of arrival. The time that the hospital was notified of the trauma alert will be documented in the PCR.
- D. Patient Destination Exceptions for All Counties:
 - 1. An unstable trauma patient may go to the closest facility when the patient has an immediate, life-threatening condition. This would include conditions such as obstructed airway, uncontrollable hemorrhage, cardiopulmonary arrest, etc., which cannot be relieved or stabilized in the field.
 - 2. In the case of a Multi Casualty Incident (MCI), patients are triaged according to the North Coast EMS MCI Policy #6020, “Multi-Casualty Incidents - Operational Guidelines”.
 - 3. Patients who have trauma with burns may, at the option of the Base Hospital Medical Control, be transported directly to a trauma center with burn specialization capabilities.

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Del Norte County

There is one, Level IV, designated trauma center in Del Norte County: Sutter Coast Hospital in Crescent City, CA.

I. Trauma Patient Destination Criteria:

- A. All trauma patients should be taken directly to the Level IV trauma center at Sutter Coast Hospital.
- B. Aero Medical: Aero Medical: Trauma patients meeting the ACS 2021 National Guideline for the Field Triage of Injured Patients who are transported by an aero medical resource from the scene will be transported to the closest appropriate trauma center. Additionally, see North Coast EMS Policy #2206.3, “EMS Aircraft Services – Patient Care and Destination” for additional considerations.

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Humboldt County

There is one, Level III, designated trauma center in Humboldt County: Providence St. Joseph Hospital (SJE) in Eureka, CA.

I. Trauma Patient Destination Criteria:

- A. Humboldt County and outlying areas: City Ambulance of Eureka (CAE), Arcata Mad River Ambulance (AMRA), and Hoopa Ambulance trauma catchment areas will include all areas of Humboldt County and any other areas outside of Humboldt County as determined by NCEMS or another LEMSAs. All trauma patients in the CAE, AMRA, and the Hoopa catchment areas meeting the red box criteria or the yellow box criteria “Mechanism of Injury” of the *ACS 2021 National Guideline for the Field Triage of Injured Patients* shall be transported directly from the field to SJE, except patients who are in extremis as identified in section III.D.1, will be transported to the closest facility for stabilization and re-triage to SJE or a higher-level trauma center. EMS providers may use their judgement, in conjunction with Base Hospital consultation as needed, regarding the yellow box “EMS Judgement” criteria.

- B. Aero Medical: Trauma patients meeting the *ACS 2021 National Guideline for the Field Triage of Injured Patients* who are transported by an aero medical resource from the scene will be transported to the closest appropriate trauma center. Additionally, see North Coast EMS Policy #2206.3, “EMS Aircraft Services – Patient Care and Destination” for additional considerations.

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Lake County

Both hospitals within Lake County are designated as Level IV trauma centers: Sutter Lakeside Hospital in Lakeport, CA and Adventist Hospital Clear Lake in Clearlake, CA

I. Trauma Patient Destination Criteria:

- A. All trauma (injured) patients located within Lake County will be assigned to the closest trauma center.
 - i. Lake County Catchment Area: (See attached map)
 - 1. Highway 20 at Paradise Valley Blvd
 - 2. Soda Bay Rd at Westlake Drive
 - 3. Highway 29 at Hwy 175
 - 4. Highway 175 at Cobb
- B. Aero Medical: Aero Medical: Trauma patients meeting the ACS 2021 National Guideline for the Field Triage of Injured Patients who are transported by an aero medical resource from the scene will be transported to the closest appropriate trauma center. Additionally, see North Coast EMS Policy #2206.3, “EMS Aircraft Services – Patient Care and Destination” for additional considerations.

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National Guideline for the Field Triage of Injured Patients

RED CRITERIA

High Risk for Serious Injury

Injury Patterns	Mental Status & Vital Signs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Penetrating injuries to head, neck, torso, and proximal extremities▪ Skull deformity, suspected skull fracture▪ Suspected spinal injury with new motor or sensory loss▪ Chest wall instability, deformity, or suspected flail chest▪ Suspected pelvic fracture▪ Suspected fracture of two or more proximal long bones▪ Crushed, degloved, mangled, or pulseless extremity▪ Amputation proximal to wrist or ankle▪ Active bleeding requiring a tourniquet or wound packing with continuous pressure	<p>All Patients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Unable to follow commands (motor GCS < 6)▪ RR < 10 or > 29 breaths/min▪ Respiratory distress or need for respiratory support▪ Room-air pulse oximetry < 90% <p>Age 0-9 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ SBP < 70mm Hg + (2 x age in years) <p>Age 10-64 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ SBP < 90 mmHg or▪ HR > SBP <p>Age ≥ 65 years</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ SBP < 110 mmHg or▪ HR > SBP

Patients meeting any one of the above RED criteria should be transported to the highest-level trauma center available within the geographic constraints of the regional trauma system

YELLOW CRITERIA

Moderate Risk for Serious Injury

Mechanism of Injury	EMS Judgment
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ High-Risk Auto Crash<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Partial or complete ejection- Significant intrusion (including roof)<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ >12 inches occupant site OR▪ >18 inches any site OR▪ Need for extrication for entrapped patient- Death in passenger compartment- Child (age 0-9 years) unrestrained or in unsecured child safety seat- Vehicle telemetry data consistent with severe injury▪ Rider separated from transport vehicle with significant impact (eg, motorcycle, ATV, horse, etc.)▪ Pedestrian/bicycle rider thrown, run over, or with significant impact▪ Fall from height > 10 feet (all ages)	<p>Consider risk factors, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Low-level falls in young children (age ≤ 5 years) or older adults (age ≥ 65 years) with significant head impact▪ Anticoagulant use▪ Suspicion of child abuse▪ Special, high-resource healthcare needs▪ Pregnancy > 20 weeks▪ Burns in conjunction with trauma▪ Children should be triaged preferentially to pediatric capable centers <p>If concerned, take to a trauma center</p>

Patients meeting any one of the YELLOW CRITERIA WHO DO NOT MEET RED CRITERIA should be preferentially transported to a trauma center, as available within the geographic constraints of the regional trauma system (need not be the highest-level trauma center)

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