



Administrative Policy		3102
Effective April 1, 2018	Expires March 31, 2019	
Policy: Use of Alternative Ambulance	Approval: Medical Director Reza Vaezazizi, MD	Signed
Applies To: EMS System	Approval: REMSA Director Bruce Barton	Signed

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define those occasions when a BLS ambulance may be used to transport a critical patient due to delayed arrival of the primary ambulance provider.

AUTHORITY

[California Health and Safety Code - Division 2.5: Emergency Medical Services \[1797. - 1799.207.\]](#)
[California Code of Regulations, Title 22. Social Security, Division 9. Prehospital Emergency Medical Services](#)

Use of Alternative Ambulance

1. Use of a BLS ambulance will be exercised only when expeditious transport is deemed critical for the survival of the patient and only when both the patient status and time criteria defined below are met.
 - a. The on-scene ALS crew will provide ALS personnel and equipment to care for patient transports in BLS ambulance.

2. The initial responding ALS provider will perform a patient assessment and begin initial treatment(s). Expeditious transport of the patient is deemed critical if the initial assessment determines the patient to meet any of the following criteria:
 - a. Persons suffering from a fragile or unmanageable airway / airway compromise. (e.g. foreign body airway obstruction (FBAO), bag-valve-mask (BVM)-assisted respirations, continuous suctioning)
 - b. Persons experiencing an acute myocardial infarction (AMI) as confirmed by diagnostic changes on a 12-lead EKG.
 - c. Persons showing rapidly deteriorating vital sign and/or deteriorating mental status.
 - d. Persons meeting critical trauma patient (CTP) criteria AND who show signs of respiratory, circulatory, or neurological compromise as defined in 2.c. above.

3. If the patient meets one of the above criteria, AND the ALS transport unit has yet to arrive on scene, the on-scene ALS provider will query for an ETA of the responding ALS transport unit.
 - a. If the response time given for a responding ALS transport unit falls outside the response time frame established by contract (time varies by location) the ALS transport dispatch center will query the availability and ETA of the closest approved BLS ambulances.
 - b. If the initial responding ALS transport unit has an ETA greater than 10 minutes longer than the ETA of the BLS ambulance, the BLS ambulance will be dispatched by the ALS Transport Unit’s dispatch center, and will respond Code 3.
 - c. The ALS transporting unit will continue its response. Both transporting units will respond to the incident. Upon arrival of the first unit, the Incident Commander should consider canceling the ambulance still in route.

4. Acceptable BLS backup response ambulances are those of permitted providers who meet the requirements established by Riverside County Ordinance 756 and who have an EMS Agency approved subcontract with the approved ALS provider in the coverage area.

5. The EMS Agency will conduct a quality assurance review on all incidents utilizing this protocol. The review will include patient care concerns, scene management, and transport times. Additional QA/QI reviews will be conducted:
 - a. By the EMS Provider agency that initiated the protocol.
 - b. By the ALS Transport Agency that dispatched the BLS Transport unit.
 - c. Through the County-wide CQI process.