

POLICY: 413.00  
TITLE: Patient Destination

EFFECTIVE: 6-21-2024  
REVIEW: 6-2027  
SUPERCEDES:

APPROVAL SIGNATURES ON FILE IN EMS OFFICE

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**PATIENT DESTINATION**

- I. AUTHORITY  
Division 2.5, California Health and Safety Code, Sections 1797.220, 1798 and: Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 4, Section 100168(b)(3).
- II. PURPOSE  
Provide guidance for determining appropriate destination decision to prehospital care personnel.
- III. DEFINITIONS
- A. Most Accessible Facility: Nearest receiving hospital while considering traffic and weather conditions, or other factors impacting transport time.
  - B. Most Appropriate Facility: nearest receiving facility having specialized services likely to be required by patient conditions. These conditions include STEMI, Stroke, or Trauma Centers, or other specialty service(s) defined in Mountain Counties EMS Agency (MCEMSA) policy.
  - C. Receiving Hospital: Acute Care hospital licensed under Chapter 2 of Division 2, with a permit for Basic Emergency services, as determined by the Local EMS Agency (LEMSA).
  - D. Unstable Patient:
    - 1. Patients with uncontrolled airway (defined as unable to maintain a BLS Airway)  
Example: IF patient can be ventilated via BVM without an advanced airway, SGA, or OPA, this is **NOT** an unstable airway.
    - 2. Uncontrolled hemorrhage,
    - 3. CPR in progress,
    - 4. Deteriorating vital signs to the degree that it is reasonable to assume death or preventable disability is imminent.
- IV. POLICY:  
Patients should be transported to the facility of their choice whenever possible. The patient's ability to pay or socioeconomic status shall not be considered when determining destination.
- A. Unstable Patients shall be transported to the Most Accessible Facility.
  - B. Patients that meet MCEMSA-defined specialty care triage criteria shall be transported to the Most Appropriate Facility. If transport time exceeds one hour to the requested facility or additional travel time may be detrimental to the patient, Base Hospital Physician shall be contacted for destination determination.

- C. Stable and alert patients should be transported to the receiving facility of their, or legal guardian's, choice. If transport time exceeds one hour to the requested facility or additional travel time may be detrimental to the patient, Base Hospital Physician shall be contacted for destination determination.
  
- D. Stable patients that cannot communicate their choice of facility:  
  
Destination determination should be made by:
  - 1. Family/Caretaker/Guardian's request
  - 2. Private Physician's request
  - 3. Facility where the patient has traditionally received medical care
  - 4. Most accessible facility
  
- E. Stable patients in the custody of Law Enforcement agency should be transported to the facility of the custodial officer's choice.