

	<b>COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO</b> EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY	Document #	5204.01
	<b>PROGRAM DOCUMENT:</b> <b>Mental Health Facility Designation</b>	Initial Date:	4/01/2025
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EMS Medical Director

EMS Administrator

**Purpose:**

- A. To establish minimum standards for the designation of an Authorized Mental Health Facility.

**Authority:**

- A. California Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797.220, 1798, 1843, 1206 (b), 1317 (b)..
- B. Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Section 100170 (a)(5).

**Definitions:**

- A. **Behavioral/Psychiatric Crisis:** A provider impression for patients who are having a mental health crisis or mental health emergency. This is not for anxiety or agitation secondary to medical etiology.
- B. **Emergency Medical Condition:** A condition or situation in which an individual immediately needs medical attention. The presence of abnormal vital signs (heart rate and rhythm, respiratory rate, blood pressure – except isolated asymptomatic hypertension, and oxygen saturation) are also indications of an emergency medical condition. Patients who meet any criteria for Base Contact or Receiving Hospital notification are also considered to have an emergency medical condition.
- C. **Authorized Mental Health (MH) Facility:** A facility that is licensed or certified as a mental health treatment facility or a hospital, as defined in subsection (a) or (b) of Section 1250 of the Health and Safety Code, by the State Department of Public Health, and may include, but is not limited to, a licensed psychiatric hospital, or licensed health facility, or certified crisis stabilization unit. An authorized mental health facility may also be a psychiatric health facility licensed by the State Department of Health Care Services. The facility shall be staffed at all times with at least one registered nurse.
- D. **Psychiatric Urgent Care Center (PUCC):** A mental health facility authorized by the Department of Mental Health and approved by SCEMSA by meeting the requirements in the Psychiatric Urgency Care Center standards.

**Policy:**

**General Requirements**

**An Authorized Mental Health Facility shall:**

- A. Be a licensed or certified as a mental health treatment facility or a hospital, as defined in subsection (a) or (b) of Section 1250 of the California Health and Safety Code, and may include, but is not limited to:
  - 1. A licensed psychiatric hospital.
  - 2. A licensed health facility.
  - 3. A certified crisis stabilization unit.
  - 4. A psychiatric health facility licensed by the State Department of Health Care Services.

- B. Accommodate private, commercially insured, Medi-Cal, Medicare, and uninsured patients.
- C. The MH facility is required to notify SCEMSA of changes in the status of the facility within twenty-four (24) hours.

**The Authorized Mental Health Facility should:**

- A. Provide and maintain adequate parking for ambulance vehicles to ensure access to the facility.
- B. Appoint an EMS Liaison Officer to act as a liaison between Sacramento County Emergency Medical Services Agency (SCEMSA) designated Triage to Alternate Destination (TAD) EMS providers and law enforcement agencies.
- C. Accept all patients triaged by paramedics regardless of the patient's ability to pay.
- D. Maintain General Liability Insurance as follows:
  - 1. General aggregate: Two (2) Million Dollars.
  - 2. Products/completed operations aggregate: One (1) Million Dollars.
  - 3. Personal and advertising injury: One (1) Million Dollars.
  - 4. Each occurrence: One (1) Million Dollars.
  - 5. Sexual Misconduct: Two (2) Million Dollars.
  - 6. Worker's Compensation and Employers Liability: One (1) Million Dollars per accident.

**Authorized Mental Health Facility Leadership and Staffing:**

**EMS Liaison Officer:**

- A. Responsibilities:
  - 1. Implement and ensure compliance with the facility standards.
  - 2. Maintain direct involvement in developing, implementing, and reviewing facility policies and procedures related to receiving patients triaged by paramedics through the Triage to Alternate Destination (TAD) program.
  - 3. Serve as the key personnel responsible for addressing variances in the care and sentinel events related to patients triaged by paramedics to the facility.
  - 4. Liaison with designated TAD EMS Provider Agencies and law enforcement agencies.
  - 5. Serve as the contact person for SCEMSA and be available upon request to respond to County business.
- B. A registered nurse licensed in the State of California shall always be on site.
- C. Staffing may be augmented by licensed psychiatric nurse practitioners, licensed vocational nurses, social workers, and other mental health professionals.
- D. All medical and nursing staff shall have current Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certification through the American Heart Association or American Red Cross.

**Policies and Procedures:**

**Develop, maintain, and implement policies and procedures that address the following:**

- A. Receipt, immediate evaluation, short-term management, and monitoring of patients who meet PUCC triage inclusion criteria.
- B. Timely transfer of patients who require a higher level of care to an acute care hospital utilizing a non-911 ambulance provider if possible.
- C. Immediate transfer of patients with emergency medical conditions to the most accessible Advanced Life Support (ALS) receiving facility/emergency department.
- D. Record keeping of EMS Report Forms.
- E. Data reporting requirements established by SCEMSA, including but not limited to the following data:
  - 1. Total number of patients evaluated who were transported by EMS.

2. Total number of patients that were treated and released.
  3. Total number of patients transferred to an acute care emergency department.
  4. Total number of these patients admitted to another care facility.
  5. Total number of patients who experienced an adverse event resulting from services provided under this program.
- F. Procedure for notifying SCEMSA of patient transfers from facility requiring 911 transport for an emergency medical condition.

**Equipment and Supplies:**

- A. Dedicated telephone line to facilitate direct communication with EMS personnel.
- B. EMResource capability to communicate the facility's real-time capacity status.
- C. Public Access Device/Layperson Automated External Defibrillator on site with staff trained on its proper use.
- D. An up-to-date community referral list of services and facilities available to patients.

**Procedure for Approval to be a designated alternate destination MH facility for a TAD program:**

- A. Submit a written request to the Director of the TAD program to include:
  1. The rationale for the request to be a TAD facility.
  2. A document verifying that the facility has been approved as an authorized mental health facility as defined in subsection (a) or (b) of Section 1250 of the Health and Safety Code by the State Department of Public Health.
  3. The facility's proposed date will open to accept patients triaged by paramedics.
  4. Copies of the policies and procedures required in this document under Policy and Procedures.
  5. Proposed staffing.
  6. Hours of operation.

**Site Visit:**

- A. Once all general requirements are met, the TAD program will coordinate a site visit to verify compliance with all the requirements.
- B. The TAD program Sacramento County EMS Agency staff reserves the right to perform scheduled site visits or request additional data from the SC at any time.
- C. Administrative and field personnel from local EMS provider agencies will be invited to exchange contact information and familiarize themselves with the facility's physical layout.

**Other Requirements:**

- A. The agreement with the MH facility is required to operate in accordance with Section 1317 of the Health and Safety Code, which states In no event shall the provision of emergency services and care be based upon, or affected by, the person's ethnicity, citizenship, age, preexisting medical condition, insurance status economic status, ability to pay for medical services, or any other characteristic.
- B. The agreement shall provide that failure to operate in accordance with Section 1317 of the Health and Safety Code shall result in the immediate termination of the facility's use as part of the TAD destination program.
- C. SCEMSA will approve, annually review, and facilitate any necessary agreements with the MH facility within SCEMSA jurisdiction.

**Cross References:** PD# 4003 – EMS Liaison Officer  
PD# 5200 – Triage to Alternate Destination Program Requirements  
PD# 5205 – Transport Guidelines-Mental Health Facility  
PD# 7600 – Quality Improvement Program