



HOSPITAL DESIGNATION PROCESS

Effective: February 15, 2025
Replaces: New

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the process that Santa Clara County uses to designate, re-designate, or suspend a pre-hospital receiving center or specialty care receiving center in the EMS System.

II. Authority

Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 6.1 Articles 1-5, 6.2 Articles 1-5, 6.3 Articles 1-5

III. System Assessment

- A. The EMS Agency reserves the right to perform a needs assessment before designating any specialty care receiving center. This assessment may include, but is not limited to:
 1. The service catchment area and projected population growth.
 2. Projected patient volume.
 3. Impact on pre-hospital resources such as travel times and distances, current ambulance patient off-load times and emergency department bypass.
 4. Impact on other hospitals with specialty care designation.
 5. Other hospital services available for specialty care.
- B. The EMS Agency may determine there is a need for an additional specialty care centers through a system assessment and release a Request for Proposal (RFP).

IV. Initial Designation

- A. A hospital requesting designation as a specialty care center shall submit a letter of intent to be considered for designation. The letter shall detail the following:
 1. Describe the proposed service and the system detriment being addressed if the proposal is not in response to the EMS Agency needs assessment.



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2. Describe the commitment and backing for the designation by the hospital administration and physician staff.
 3. Identify the Program Medical Director and the Program Manager.
 4. List the proposed start date for the new service.
- B. The proposal(s) shall be presented to the appropriate committee (e.g. Trauma, STEMI, Stroke, EMS for Children, or EMCC).
1. A special meeting may be held outside of a regular meeting scheduled to meet necessary timelines for designation.
 2. The committee may submit an endorsement to the EMS Agency for consideration.
- C. If the EMS Agency accepts the proposal, the hospital will receive an application for their specialty care program.
1. Trauma designation must meet the requirements established in Policy #420, Trauma Center Standards and obtain verification from ACS-COT within 24 months of initial designation.
 2. Stroke designation must meet the standards established in Policy# 440, Stroke Center Standards and obtain certification from TJC or DNV prior to designation.
 3. STEMI designation must meet the requirements established in Policy #430, STEMI Center Standards.
 4. EMS for Children designation must meet the standards established in in Policy# 410, Pediatric Receiving Center Designation.

V. Designation Process

- A. The EMS Agency will review the completed application within ninety (90) days of submission.
- B. The EMS Agency will conduct a site review within 30 days from a satisfactory review of the completed application.
- C. The EMS Agency will grant specialty care designation based upon compliance with all aspects of this policy, State Statute and Regulations, and additional factors as outlined in the application packet.



- D. Hospitals shall not receive specialty care patients until designation has been granted by the EMS Agency.
- E. The EMS Agency has sole discretion to grant provisional designation to a hospital that has satisfied the requirements of the designation application.
- F. In the event a hospital fails to meet the criteria for designation or re-designation, the EMS Agency may elect to issue a provisional designation.
 - 1. A corrective action plan will be established, and an evaluation and/or site review will be conducted within six (6) months.
 - 2. Upon satisfactory completion of a second evaluation, the EMS Agency will authorize full designation.
 - 3. If the second evaluation is unsatisfactory, the EMS Agency may elect to continue provisional designation upon correction of the areas of deficiency or solicit an RFP from other hospitals.
- G. The hospital and the EMS Agency will enter into a contract for the specialty center designation.

VI. Re-Designation Process

- A. Specialty center redesignation shall expire every three (3) years, from the date of last designation/re-designation. To achieve redesignation, each specialty center shall:
 - 1. Meet all applicable State and local requirements.
 - 2. Pass audits performed during the last designation period.
 - 3. Maintain certification/verification by an EMS Agency approved accrediting organization related to the specialty program.
 - a. EMS Agency staff shall be invited to attend any re-accreditation visit(s).
 - b. A copy of the renewal certificate shall be provided to the EMS Agency no less than thirty (30) days prior to current expiration.
 - 4. Successfully pass a redesignation audit that may include a site visit by the EMS Agency.



VII. Non-Compliance

- A. The EMS Agency will provide written notice to the hospital detailing any areas of non-compliance and expected corrective actions.
- B. A written corrective action plan must be received by the EMS Agency within 10 days of receiving said written notice.
- C. The EMS Agency will meet with hospital administration to review written corrective action plan and determine next steps.

VIII. Suspension/Revocation Process

- A. The EMS Agency may suspend a specialty care designation upon written notice if it is determined that the specialty center has:
 1. Failed to successfully pass the redesignation process.
 2. Failed to comply with any audit findings, corrective action recommendations, or quality assurance procedures provided by the EMS Agency.
 3. Failed to remedy corrective actions within the specified time agreed to between both parties.
 4. Meet breach definitions as specified in the agreement with the EMS Agency.
 5. Failed to comply with current State regulations or EMS Agency policies related to the specialty designation.
 6. Had license/permit to operate as an Emergency Department with special permit revoked or suspended by the State.
- B. After receiving the written notification, the specialty center will have 10 days to appeal this decision and submit a corrective action plan to the EMS Agency for approval.
- C. The EMS Agency may assign a provision designation status, in which the specialty center designation may continue under monitoring of the corrective action plan.



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- D. Failure to remedy issues identified above within the time specified by the EMS Agency will result in revocation of the agreement for specialty care designation.