

**AMBULANCE RULES AND REGULATIONS  
PREHOSPITAL AIR AMBULANCE AND AIR RESCUE SERVICE ACTIVATION PROCEDURE****I. AUTHORITY:**

*California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 8. California Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797.204, 1797.200, & 1798. County of Orange Ambulance Ordinance.*

**II. APPLICATION:**

This procedure defines the activation process for air ambulance or air rescue response to prehospital emergency medical incidents within Orange County.

**III. ACTIVATION PROCESS:****A. Authorized service requesters:**

A request for an air ambulance or air rescue may only be made by the following OCEMS authorized service requesters:

1. Fire services personnel
2. Law enforcement agency personnel
3. Lifeguards
4. Forestry personnel
5. Park rangers

**B. Guidelines for activation:**

The public safety incident commander shall determine the need for an air ambulance or air rescue based upon the following considerations:

1. Safe operating conditions at the scene.
2. Ground versus air ambulance or air rescue response and transport time factors as they relate to:
  - a. Patient(s) status
  - b. Location of incident
  - c. Location of appropriate receiving center
  - d. Availability of ground transport
  - e. Availability of air transport
  - f. Air ambulance; air rescue needs
  - g. Need to transfer patient to landing zone (LZ)

**C. Process for activation:**

The public safety incident commander shall report directly to the COORDINATING AGENCY, or the appropriate public safety dispatch agency, the:

1. Type and location of incident
2. Number of victims
3. Type of aircraft requested;
  - a. Air ambulance or if unavailable or inappropriate
  - b. Air rescue
4. Location of helicopter landing zone including geographical landmarks and potential hazards
5. Local weather conditions: visibility, fog, winds, etc.
6. Emergency Receiving Center destination, once assigned



## **AMBULANCE RULES AND REGULATIONS PREHOSPITAL AIR AMBULANCE AND AIR RESCUE SERVICE ACTIVATION PROCEDURE**

- D.** The public safety dispatch agency or the COORDINATING AGENCY shall notify the following facilities/agencies when an air ambulance or air rescue is activated:

1. The requester
2. Requester's dispatch center
3. Law enforcement for the scene's jurisdiction
4. Law enforcement, if applicable, for the Emergency Receiving Center's jurisdiction
5. Base hospital assigned to the incident
6. Assigned Emergency Receiving Center

**E. Priority assignment:**

The air ambulance or air rescue service COORDINATING AGENCY shall utilize the following priority assignment guidelines:

1. An air ambulance shall have priority assignment for medical incidents. Air rescue may be called if the air ambulance is unavailable ("unavailable" means an estimated time of arrival or ETA is more than 30 minutes) or for air search and rescue service.
2. A request for ACTIVATION shall supersede a STAND-BY request. (The air ambulance or air rescue service COORDINATING AGENCY shall immediately notify the requester placing the air ambulance or air rescue on STAND-BY of ACTIVATION to another scene.)
3. For multiple requests: With the concurrence, of the originating requester, the air ambulance or air rescue may be directed to another scene. (The air ambulance or air rescue service COORDINATOR AGENCY must advise the first requesting public safety dispatch agency or coordinating agency of other subsequent calls and/or requests.)

**F. Guidelines for transport:**

1. Determination on the method of transportation shall be made as needed with the concurrence of the BH physician (for medical reasons) and with the concurrence of the incident commander (for scene management consideration.)
2. If BH contact cannot be established or maintained, the decision for the method of transportation shall be made with the concurrence of the highest medical authority on scene.

**G. Guidelines for cancellations:**

1. The decision to cancel the air ambulance or air rescue may be made by:
  - a. The pilot in command of the aircraft.
  - b. The public safety incident commander based upon scene management considerations, or upon instruction of the assigned BH physician for medical reasons.
2. The requester must notify the public safety dispatch agency or Coordinating Agency when the air ambulance or air rescue is canceled.
3. The public safety dispatch agency or COORDINATING AGENCY shall notify all agencies involved in the activation process, of the cancellation of the air ambulance or air rescue request.



**AMBULANCE RULES AND REGULATIONS  
PREHOSPITAL AIR AMBULANCE AND AIR RESCUE SERVICE ACTIVATION PROCEDURE**

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Nathani".

OCEMS Medical Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "M. L. C.".

OCEMS Administrator

Effective Date: 04/01/2014  
Reviewed Date(s): 04/01/2014  
Original Date: 03/01/1985