

# Transportation Plan

## San Benito County EMS Agency



**EMS Policy #1180**

**Revised May 1, 2010**

Developed by: James Clark FY 2008-2009

Inquires: Marcie Morrow, EMS Coordinator  
San Benito County EMS Agency  
1111 San Felipe Road, Suite 102  
Hollister, CA 95023  
(831) 636-4066 – Office  
[\(831\) 636-4037 – Fax](tel:8316364037)

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

San Benito County EMS Agency recognizes the vital importance of a coordinated response to health emergencies. To encourage a systems approach to a coordinated EMS response, we take pride in the sound relationships we have garnered with all of our system's stakeholders. We are also committed to comply with the requirements set forth in the State's [EMS System Standards and Guidelines and the EMS System Planning Guidelines](#). To that end, this Transportation Plan is intended to address the county's EMS **System**, and not just the activities of the local EMS **Agency**.

The San Benito County EMS Transportation Plan outlines the structure and operations for its prehospital care services. It:

- Determines the number of and boundaries for Emergency Ambulance Zones;
- Establishes a process for granting exclusive operating permits to a limited number of Emergency Ambulance Service Providers which serve San Benito County;
- Identifies the role of basic life support (BLS) and advanced life support (ALS) first responders;
- Establishes a process for oversight and regulation of EMS providers by the San Benito County EMS Agency as provided by the San Benito County Ambulance Ordinance #637.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **INTENT**

The California EMS Authority has designated [San Benito County's Emergency Ambulance Zone as an Exclusive Operating Area effective July 10, 2006](#) and the San Benito County EMS Agency includes ground ALS transportation exclusivity in its EMS Plan.

The following EMS Transportation Plan has been developed to comply with the State EMS Authority's [Minimum Standards and Recommended Guidelines 4.01 through 4.22](#).

### **AUTHORITY**

The San Benito County EMS Transportation Plan was developed by direction of the San Benito County Emergency Medical Care Commission and County Board of Supervisors. It is compliant with:

- [Division 2.5, California Health & Safety Code, Sections 1797 et seq., Emergency Medical Services System and the Prehospital Emergency Medical Care Personnel Act](#)
- [California Code of Regulations, Title 13, Motor Vehicles](#)
- [California Code of Regulations, Title 22 Social Security, Division 9, Prehospital Emergency Medical Services](#)
- California Welfare and Institutions Code [Section 17000](#)
- California Vehicle Code [Section 165](#)

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE SYSTEM**

### **LOCAL EMS AGENCY AND COUNTY NAME**

- [San Benito County EMS Agency; County of San Benito](#)

### **NAME OF CURRENT EMERGENCY AMBULANCE SERVICE PROVIDER**

- [American Medical Response](#)  
West Region Headquarters  
7575 Southfront Road  
Livermore, CA 94550  
(925)454-6000

### **FIRST RESPONDERS**

San Benito County is served by 5 fire departments comprised of a combination of full-time paid and volunteer Firefighters:

- [Hollister City Fire Department](#)
- [San Juan Bautista Volunteer Fire Department](#)
- [San Benito County Fire Department – CAL FIRE](#)
- [Aromas Tri-County Fire Protection District](#)
- [California Department of Forestry and Fire protection – CAL FIRE](#)

### **AIR AMBULANCE SERVICES**

[CALSTAR Air Ambulance Service](#) is the only air ambulance service provider based within San Benito County. When CALSTAR is unavailable to fly local missions, the County is further served by air ambulances based outside of the county. In order to serve the County, these services are required to have a county-issued permit and to comply with County operating procedures.

Air ambulance services currently permitted to fly EMS missions in San Benito County are as follows:

### **AIR AMBULANCE SERVICE PROVIDERS**

<b>Provider</b>	<b>Helicopter Base Location</b>
<a href="#">CALSTAR</a>	Hollister, Gilroy and Salinas, CA
<a href="#">Air Methods - Mediflight</a>	Merced and Modesto, CA
<a href="#">PHI - Air Med Team</a>	Modesto, CA
<a href="#">Stanford Life Flight</a>	Palo Alto, CA
<a href="#">Reach Air Ambulance</a>	Concord and Lodi, CA

The decision to use air ambulances involves both medical and scene management decisions. Field dispatch may be authorized only by designated personnel who include: firefighters, law enforcement, State and Federal Park Peace Officers, paramedics, registered nurses, and physicians. San Benito County 9-1-1 Communications Center is the agency responsible to forward the air ambulance flight request to the closest most appropriate helicopter service. In all cases, San Benito County BLS First Responders and an ALS ground transport unit will also be dispatched to respond in tandem with responding air ambulances.

## **EMS DISPATCH AND RESPONSE**

### **DISPATCH SERVICES**

San Benito County has one primary public safety answering point (PSAP) and one secondary PSAP. The primary PSAP is responsible to field all 9-1-1 emergency calls for service and to dispatch the appropriate agency to respond. The secondary PSAP is responsible to receive emergency call information from the primary PSAP and dispatch appropriate fire agencies.

### **RESPONSE METHODOLOGY**

The San Benito County EMS system is a single tier, Advanced Life Support (ALS/Paramedic) dual response system. Dispatched through a non-EMD Dispatch Center, 100% of all 9-1-1 Code 3 calls for service, except for calls originating within [Hollister Hills State Vehicular Recreation Area](#), receive a fire-based BLS First Responder/EMT-1 unit and a private ALS transport ambulance staffed by one EMT-Paramedic and one EMT-1.

The feasibility of implementing an “Emergency Medical Dispatching System” (EMD) is being discussed. This system, if implemented, would classify medical priorities, provide pre-arrival medical instructions, and send the most appropriate EMS vehicles at the most appropriate response code.

### **MULTIPLE CASUALTY INCIDENT PLAN (MCI)**

See Attachment 1 - San Benito County MCI Plan; [EMS Policy #4200](#).

## **REGULATORY PROCESS**

### **SAN BENITO COUNTY AMBULANCE ORDINANCE #637**

San Benito County [Ambulance Ordinance #637](#) was enacted on April 13, 1993 in order to provide policies and regulations which are necessary for the public health and safety regarding Ambulance Service Providers in this county. The ordinance establishes policies and regulations for issuing permits and regulating

air and ground ambulances to ensure competent, efficient and adequate care is provided and to allow for adequate ambulance services and rates in all areas of the county. The Ordinance also allows for the orderly and lawful operation of the county Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system and ensures its oversight by the San Benito County EMS Agency.

### **MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR GROUND AMBULANCE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

Minimum standards for ground ambulance and transportation services are determined by the local EMS Agency. A written agreement between the county and AMR which determines minimum EMS System response standards was executed on July 1, 2004 and is termed to expire June 30, 2009.

San Benito County ensures that responses are conducted in coordinated fashion by one consolidated fire, law and EMS dispatch center. The level of all emergency ambulance and transportation services provided within the region is Advanced Life Support (ALS, Paramedic). Each of the county's emergency ambulances is staffed with one EMT-1 and one EMT-P.

San Benito, Santa Cruz and Monterey County's respective EMS Agencies are currently working to draft and adopt a Tri-County Mutual and Automatic Aid Agreement. Until this Agreement is finalized, the Tri-County areas work on verbal and past practices to ensure smooth day-to-day responses across the contiguous county borders. [San Benito County's southwestern-most regions](#), through Automatic Aid, are serviced by Monterey County ambulances stationed in King City.

## **HOSPITAL ACCESSIBILITY**

### **BASE HOSPITAL**

San Benito County has one acute care hospital located within its jurisdiction, [Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital \(HHH\)](#). Under written contract with the county, HHH serves as the county's only Paramedic Base Station. The on-duty Emergency Department physician provides online medical control for the ALS transport provider and the BLS first responders. As a county-approved EMS Continuing Education Provider, HHH also provides monthly training/educational opportunities which are open to any interested persons and agencies.

### **RECEIVING HOSPITALS**

San Benito County bases its EMS transport decisions based upon the "Closest Most Appropriate Medical Facility" and "Patient Request" model. While using these criteria to establish hospital destination decisions, ground transportation ambulances typically transport patients to the closest most appropriate medical facility which is:

- [Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital](#)  
911 Sunset Drive  
Hollister, CA 95023  
(831) 637-5711

Patients from the northern boundaries of San Benito County may also be transported to the following medical facilities based on their being closest to the most appropriate medical facility or by patient request. Generally, San Benito County limits its EMS System ground ambulances to no more than a 30 minute transport time beyond the county boundary lines:

- [Saint Louise Regional Hospital](#)  
9400 No Name Uno  
Gilroy, CA 95020  
(408) 848-2000
- [Watsonville Community Hospital](#)  
75 Neilson Street  
Watsonville, CA 95076  
(831) 724-4741
- [Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital](#)  
450 E. Romie Lane  
Salinas, CA 93901  
(831) 757-4333
- [Natividad Medical Center](#)  
1441 Constitution Blvd.  
Salinas, CA 93906  
(831) 755-4111

## **POLICY & PROCEDURE**

### **POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL**

San Benito County EMS Agency maintains an [EMS Policy and Procedure Manual](#) which outlines:

- ALS / BLS Policies.
- Educational & Certification Requirements for ALS & BLS EMS Personnel.
- ALS Procedures.
- ALS / BLS Standards & Guidelines.
- Trauma.
- Documentation / Data.
- Adult Field Treatment Guidelines.
- Pediatric Field Treatment Guidelines.

- Pandemic Influenza response.

San Benito County's EMS Policies and Procedures are reviewed and updated every two years by the EMS Agency Medical Director, EMS Agency staff and the [San Benito County Prehospital Advisory Committee](#).

## **EXCLUSIVITY**

### **STATEMENT OF EXCLUSIVITY ([Calif H&S Code §1797.6](#))**

As stated in the County EMS Plan and defined in [Calif. H&S Code §1797.85](#) and as [approved by the California EMS Authority on July 10, 2006](#), San Benito County's Emergency Ambulance Zone ([EOA-1](#)) is an Exclusive Operating Area.

### **TYPE OF EXCLUSIVITY**

Emergency Advanced Life Support Ambulance Services; Performance Based franchise for ALS ground transportation.

### **METHOD TO ACHIEVE EXCLUSIVITY**

In the 2005 EMS Plan Update, the California EMS Authority designated the County as an Exclusive Operating Area without the use of a competitive bid process. This was done by using the grandfather provision of [Health & Safety Code §1797.224](#) and to acknowledge that San Benito has continued using, without interruption of services, existing Emergency Ambulance Service Providers since at least 1968.

On July 10, 2006, San Benito County was notified that it meets EOA grandfathering requirements of Health & Safety Code Section 1797.224.

See Attachment #2 ([EMSA EOA Approval Letter; July 10, 2006](#)).

### **AREA (ZONE) NAME OR TITLE**

San Benito County Exclusive Operating Area 1 ([EOA-1](#))

## EMERGENCY AMBULANCE ZONE GEOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION EOA-1



[EOA-1](#) includes the entire county's incorporated and non-incorporated areas.

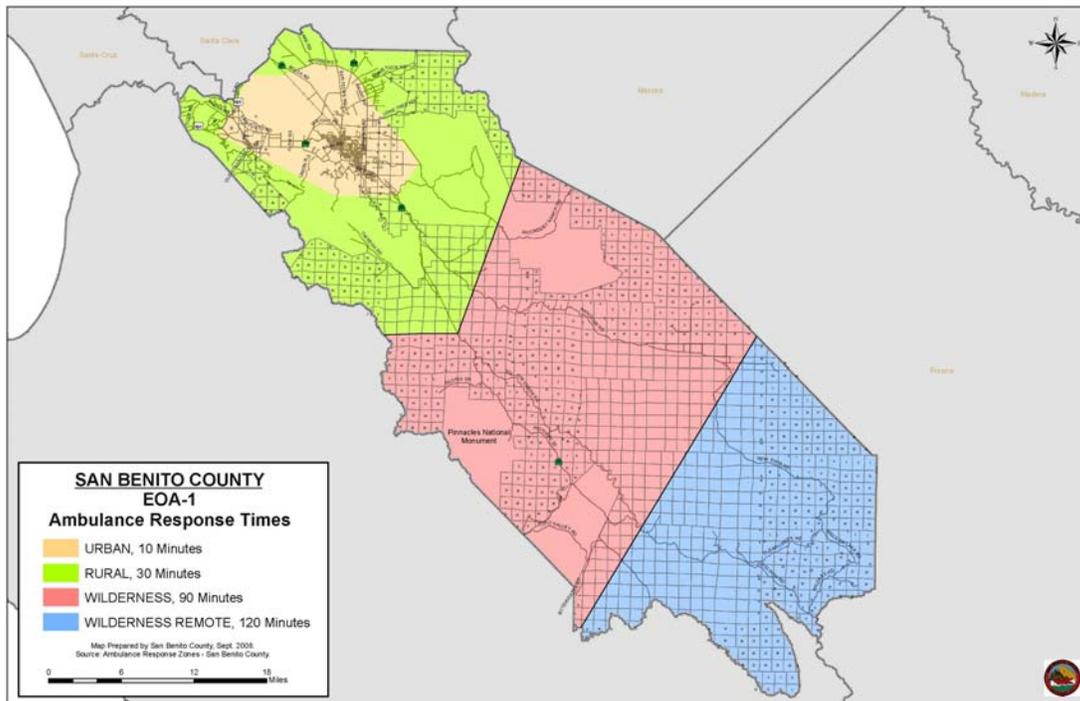
The legal geographic description of the County of San Benito's Exclusive Operating Area (EOA-1) is as follows:

Commencing at a point in the center of the Pajaro River, said point being the northwest corner of the Rancho Las Arromitas y Agua Caliente, and being on the northern boundary line of Monterey, and running thence in a southerly direction along the southwest boundary of said Rancho to the southwest corner thereof; thence southerly in a direct line to the summit of said Gabilan Range of Mountains, and thence in a southeasterly along the summit of said Gabilan Mountains to the Chalone Peak; thence southeasterly in a direct line to the division line of the parts of San Lorenzo Sobrantes Rancho owned respectively by Breen and Dunn; thence along said dividing line of said Rancho to the

southern boundary thereof; thence due south to the San Lorenzo Creek; thence southeasterly up the center of said Lorenzo or Lewis Creek, and up the north fork thereof, to the summit of the divide between the waters of said Lewis Creek and San Benito Creek; thence following said divide southerly to the eastern boundary of Monterey and the summit of the Coast Range Mountains.

Thence northerly, following the summit of said mountains to where the range line between T. 18SI, or R. 12 and 13 E., M. D. B. & M., crosses the same; thence northerly along said range line to the northeast corner of T. 18 S., R. 12 E., ; thence northerly along said township line to the south line of T. 16 N., R. 13 E., M. D. B. & M., thence west to the southeast corner of T. 16 S., R. 12 E., M. D. B. & M.; thence northwest in a straight line to the northeast corner of T. 14 S., R. 9 E.; thence in a straight line northwesterly, running toward the northeast corner of T. 13 S., R. 7 E., to a point where said line intersects the county line between San Benito and Merced; thence along the boundary line between San Benito and Merced to the northeast corner of San Benito and southeast corner of Santa Clara; thence following the county line between Santa Clara and San Benito to the place of beginning.

**SAN BENITO COUNTY RESPONSE ZONE MAP [\(EOA-1\)](#) See Attachment #3:**



## **EMERGENCY AMBULANCE RESPONSE TIME STANDARDS**

The San Benito County EMS Agency has established response time standards (based on size of County and long transport distances) for the contracted ambulance provider in the County as defined below:

- Contractor will be deemed to be in compliance with response time standards if ninety percent (90%) or more of all Code 3 (9-1-1) events in which a transport ambulance arrives on scene, measured monthly, meet the specified response times:
  - San Benito Urban Area (**TAN**): Emergency calls within the San Benito County Urban Area must be responded to within ten (10) minutes or less.
  - San Benito County Rural Area (**GREEN**): Emergency calls within the San Benito County Rural Area must be responded to within thirty (30) minutes or less.
  - San Benito County Wilderness Area (**SALMON**): Emergency calls within the San Benito County Wilderness Area must be responded to within ninety (90) minutes or less.
  - San Benito County Wilderness (Remote) Area (**BLUE**): Emergency calls within the San Benito County Wilderness (Remote) Area must be responded to within one hundred twenty (120) minutes or less.

**ATTACHMENT**  
**#1**  
**MCI PLAN**



# SAN BENITO COUNTY

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

ELIZABETH FALADE, M.D., M.P.H.  
HEALTH OFFICER

KATHRYN FLORES  
DIRECTOR

**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES**  
*Healthy People in Healthy Communities*

## SAN BENITO COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY

### MULTI-CASUALTY INCIDENT (MCI) PLAN

**Policy No.:** 4200

**Effective Date:** May 1, 2010

**Reviewed:** May 1, 2010

**Approved By:**   
EMS Agency Medical Director

#### I. SCOPE

This plan is limited in scope to Multi-Casualty Incidents within San Benito County.

#### II. DEFINITIONS

Three levels of incidents can be identified in emergency medical services operations:

- A. *Day-to-Day*: can be handled appropriately with the resources normally available to a community.
- B. *Multi-Casualty Incident (MCI)*: produces more casualties than can be managed by normally available resources. The exact number of casualties meeting this description will vary.
- C. *Medical Disaster*: a situation where the number of casualties overwhelms all available resources in San Benito County. Response to this type of incident will require coordination with the county's Office of Emergency Services, Emergency Medical Services Agency and will require activation of the San Benito County Emergency Operations Plan.

**PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES**  
439 Fourth Street  
Hollister, CA 95023  
831-637-5367

**MEDICAL THERAPY UNIT**  
761 Line Street  
Hollister, CA 95023  
831-637-1989

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**  
1111 San Felipe Road, Ste 102  
Hollister, CA 95023  
831-636-4035

**HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMS**  
439 Fourth Street  
Hollister, CA 95023  
831-637-5367

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**  
1111 San Felipe Road, Ste 102  
Hollister, CA 95023  
831-636-4066

A MCI differs from a medical disaster in the following ways:

- All involved patients originate from the same scene (as opposed to a widespread incident such as an earthquake or flood).
- Medical resources have not been damaged or otherwise decommissioned by the incident (except in the case of a hospital fire or explosion).
- All direction, control and coordination is maintained at the scene of the incident.

### **III. OBJECTIVES**

To ensure adequate and coordinated efforts to minimize loss of life, disabling injuries and human suffering by providing effective emergency medical assistance through efficient utilization of medical and other resources in the event of an incident which results in a significant number of injured persons.

### **IV. MULTI-CASUALTY INCIDENT PLAN ACTIVATION**

#### **A. Declaration of a “Possible MCI”**

A “Possible MCI” may be called by County Communications, Law, Fire or Medical based upon information received from the San Benito County Communications Center that a multi-casualty incident may have occurred or a condition exists which may overwhelm the medical resources of the county.

The San Benito County Communications Center will notify all responding agencies, ambulance dispatch and California Highway Patrol dispatch by broadcasting a “Possible MCI” declaration and notify Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital of the declaration. Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital will monitor the MEDNET radio for updates.

#### **B. Cancellation of a “Possible MCI”**

When the San Benito County Communications Center has broadcast a MCI plan declaration of “Possible MCI,” the first arriving unit on-scene should immediately determine the need for declaring a “MCI” or cancelling the “Possible MCI.” The Communications Center will then broadcast the declared “MCI” or cancel the “Possible MCI” and notify those other dispatch centers.

#### **C. Declaration of “Activate MCI”**

Whenever a situation occurs that Emergency Personnel, on-scene or enroute, believe multiple patients will overwhelm the initial responding resources, the MCI Plan shall be initiated by declaring “Activate MCI” to the San Benito County Communications Center. The following information is to be provided to San Benito County Communications Center by the Incident Commander for MCI Plan Declaration:

- Type of incident.
- Location, best access routes and exposure areas.
- Need for specific types and numbers of additional resources.
- Types of injuries.
- Designation of the Incident, Incident Commander and incident name.

The San Benito County Communications Center will notify all responding agencies, ambulance dispatch and California Highway Patrol dispatch by broadcasting a “MCI” declaration and notify Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital of the declaration. Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital will monitor the MEDNET radio for updates.

All ALS personnel in the county will function under automatic orders for all patients. Paramedic units involved in other ALS calls will make brief radio contact on an available radio frequency that will not interfere with MCI radio traffic.

Hazel Hawkins Hospital in conjunction with the Transportation Group Supervisor will determine the destination of the patients based upon the patient’s condition and the capability of the receiving hospital to handle the patient.

County Communications will notify the EMS Agency Administrator and/or designee in the event of a confirmed MCI Plan Declaration.

When the incident is not manageable with the resources available to San Benito County (or with existing mutual aid agreements), activation of the county Emergency Operation Plan will be made by the Incident Commander in conjunction with the Office of Emergency Services and/or Emergency Medical Services.

## **V. OPERATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS**

### **A. Command Structure**

Incident Organization shall be based on the Incident Command System (ICS). Incident Command will be as follows:

- For single jurisdictional incidents, command will be with the responsible jurisdictional agency having investigative or legal authority.
- For multi-jurisdictional incidents, a Unified Command structure will be established with the incident command responsibilities being jointly provided by those agencies sharing legal jurisdiction.

### **B. Command Authority Principles**

- The IC will be a Law Enforcement, Fire Department or Health Officer at the scene who is from the jurisdiction having investigative or legal authority for the incident.
- The first arriving unit or any agency may function as the IC implementing the necessary actions until the role can be relinquished to the appropriate agency.
- The first arriving unit of any agency should take responsibility for the declaration of the “Possible MCI” or “Activate MCI” and relay additional information to County Communications.
- Only those positions needed for the size and nature of the incident will be filled.

### **C. Other Considerations**

- Ambulance crews will take responsibility for managing patient transportation working under the authority of the Incident Commander.

- All incoming units/personnel shall assume support roles based upon assignment/mission designated by the Incident Commander or designee. All units/personnel shall report to staging for direction unless instructed otherwise.
- During the MCI, all agencies will request additional resources through the Incident Commander or designee.
- The Transportation Group Supervisor is the only person designated to make contact with a hospital to determine transport destination.
- Paramedics may establish Base Hospital contact with Medical Control (ER Physician) to obtain consult/orders.
- S.T.A.R.T. Triage is the designated means for establishing the condition of MCI involved patients. Patients shall be triaged and tagged using the California Fire Chief's Association Triage Tag upon contact and directed to the appropriate treatment area(s) for re-triage, care and transportation.
- The Incident Commander will direct all requests for air ambulances and will assign the Helispot Manager and landing zone(s).
- The Incident Commander will request Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) as soon as the need is identified.
- Any emergency service responder may activate the MCI Plan when any potential or actual situation may overwhelm the resources of any jurisdiction or geographic area.
- The Incident Commander or designee may deactivate the MCI Plan by contacting the San Benito County Communications Center.
- The County Emergency Operations Plan may be activated whenever the number of injured persons overwhelms the system and normal medical or logistical support services are degraded beyond the capabilities of the local resources within reasonable distance. The Incident Commander, in conjunction with the County Office of Emergency Services and/or the Emergency Medical Services Agency, may request the activation of this plan.
- The San Benito County EMS Agency may provide assistance to the Incident Commander on scene if requested. The EMS Agency will only provide technical support and information and will not become actively involved in the incident.

## **VI. MULTI-CASUALTY INCIDENT REVIEW/QUALITY ASSURANCE**

Copies of all multi-casualty incident forms will be forwarded to the EMS Agency by the Incident Commander or designee within forty-eight (48) hours of the incident. The EMS Agency may conduct an "all agency critique" of a Multi-Casualty Incident for the purposes of improving future coordination and performance.

## **VII. REFERENCES AND AUTHORITIES**

Multi-casualty planning is conducted by EMS Agencies in accordance with Sections 1797.204, 1797.220 and 1797.252 of the California Health and Safety Code.

# **ATTACHMENT**

## **#2**

**EMSA Letter of Approval (EOA)**

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY**

1930 9<sup>th</sup> STREET  
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814-7043  
(916) 322-4336 FAX (916) 324-2875



July 10, 2006

James Clark  
EMS Coordinator  
San Benito County  
111 San Felipe Rd., Suite 102  
Hollister, CA 95023

Dear Mr. Clark:

Thank you for submitting the additional materials requested by the EMS Authority to clarify the status of the ambulance zones in San Benito County. The EMS Authority has completed its review of the following materials:

- Revisions to the transportation plan indicating the county's intent to establish an exclusive operating area for 9-1-1 ALS emergency ambulance.
- Documentation in support of grandfathering the current provider, American Medical Response.

The EMS Authority finds that the transportation plan revisions are in compliance with the *EMS System Standards and Guidelines* and the *EMS System Planning Guidelines*. In addition, the Authority finds the supporting documentation demonstrates the county's compliance with Health and Safety Code section 1797.224 in the establishment of an exclusive operating area by grandfathering for ambulance service.

Your annual EMS plan update, utilizing the attached guidelines, will be due one year from your approval date. If you have any questions regarding the plan review, please call Sandy Salaber at (916) 322-4336, extension 423.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cesar A. Aristeiguieta, M.D.".

Cesar A. Aristeiguieta, M.D.  
Director

CAA:cg

Enclosure

RECEIVED

JUL 24 2006

SAN BENITO COUNTY  
EMERGENCY SERVICES

# **ATTACHMENT**

## **#3**

**San Benito County  
Response Zone Map**



Santa Cruz

Santa Clara

Merced

Madera

Fresno

# SAN BENITO COUNTY

## EOA-1

### Ambulance Response Times

- URBAN, 10 Minutes
- RURAL, 30 Minutes
- WILDERNESS, 90 Minutes
- WILDERNESS REMOTE, 120 Minutes

Map Prepared by San Benito County, Sept. 2008.  
Source: Ambulance Response Zones - San Benito County.

