



County of Santa Cruz

HEALTH SERVICES AGENCY

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EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES PROGRAM

Policy No. 4200
Reviewed 4/2009

Emergency Medical Services Program

Approved

Medical Director

Subject: Mass Casualty Incident

I. Definition

Calls and incidents occur in any EMS system that, due to their size, complexity, and number of patients, may overwhelm the resources available for a typical EMS response. Any incident which significantly overwhelms the day-to-day emergency medical response system may be deemed a Mass Casualty Incident (MCI). Neither this policy, nor the Santa Cruz County Mass Casualty Plan that it references, is designed to accommodate a Countywide, ongoing disaster.

II. Authority and References

MCI organization is based on the latest version of the Santa Cruz County Multiple Casualty Incident Plan which is Attachment No. 8 to the Health Services Agency's Annex to the Santa Cruz County Emergency Plan. The Plan complies with the State of California Standard Emergency Management System (SEMS) as well as the principles and practices of standard Incident Command System (ICS) and the Simple Triage And Rapid Treatment (START) method of triage.

References: Operational System Description ICS 420-1, Incident Command System Publication. SEMS Guidelines, State of California Publication, Governor's Office of Emergency Services, 2006

III. Applicability

The MCI Plan is applicable to ALL emergency responders and to ALL governmental and non-governmental medical support services in Santa Cruz County.

IV. Scope and Activation

- A. An MCI may be declared when an incident overwhelms the initial responder's human resources and/or equipment.
- B. An MCI may be declared by any fire, law enforcement, or EMS personnel.

- C. When an MCI is declared, NetCom will be immediately notified so that appropriate incident organization may be established and appropriate resources activated.
- D. MCIs in Santa Cruz County will be managed using the guidelines established in the Santa Cruz County Mass Casualty Incident Plan. These will include using the precepts of the Incident Command System, Unified Command, and START Triage.
- E. In managing an MCI, it is understood that certain Santa Cruz County EMS policies and protocols may need to be modified in order to meet the needs of any particular incident. This may include field screening treatment and release of minor injured individuals, discontinuation of dual response by both first responders and ambulances, alternate patient transport modes or destinations as well as alternate patient field dispositions, among other things. At no time will any responder to an MCI work outside his/her scope of practice or outside an acceptable standard of care for the circumstances presented at the incident.
- F. When deviations in County EMS policies or protocols occur, they will be thoroughly documented. In addition, when necessary, Base Station contact will be made to advise the Base Station Physician of these changes, and to seek Base Station guidance. In all situations where the Incident Commander has modified or suspended specific Policies or Protocols an After Action Report will be submitted to the EMS Medical Director documenting the action.