

**TITLE: CITY OF STOCKTON EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCH  
CENTER REQUIREMENTS**

EMS Policy No. **3109**

**PURPOSE:**

The City of Stockton is not compliant with the EMS Policy No. 3001, Guidelines for EMS Call Screening by Primary Public Safety Answering Points. The purpose of enacting this policy is to ensure medical control of the continuing emergency medical dispatch services being performed by the City of Stockton.

**AUTHORITY:**

Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Section 1797.220; and San Joaquin County Ordinance No. 4231, Title 4, Division 7.

**DEFINITIONS:**

- A. "Ambulance Provider" means an entity properly permitted to operate an emergency advanced life support ambulance service in San Joaquin County.
- B. "ASTM" means American Society for Testing and Materials.
- C. "Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency" means the San Joaquin County Emergency Medical Services Agency.
- D. "Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD)" means a series of components that allow the dispatcher to triage calls, send appropriate resources with the appropriate response, and provide pre-arrival/post-dispatch instructions as needed.
- E. "Lifecom" means the EMD center operated by American Medical Response and designated as the EMS dispatch center for all of San Joaquin County.
- F. "MPDS" means the Medical Priority Dispatch System.
- G. "NAED" means the National Academies of Emergency Dispatch.

**POLICY:**

- I. The City of Stockton shall provide a system for EMS dispatch meeting the standards of the ASTM F 1258 (Standard Practice for Emergency Medical Dispatch) and ASTM 1560 (Standard Practice for Emergency Medical Dispatch Management.)
- II. The City of Stockton is required to have a written agreement with the EMS Agency authorizing the City's provision of EMD service.

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Page 1 of 6

Approved: Signature on file  
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III. Dispatch Operations:

- A. The City of Stockton shall provide dispatch services necessary to receive and process requests for emergency ambulance service.
- B. The City of Stockton's dispatch center shall:
  - 1. Be approved by the State of California as a public safety answering point (PSAP).
  - 2. Receive and process calls for emergency medical assistance from primary and secondary 9-1-1 PSAPs and seven digit telephone lines.
  - 3. Determine the nature and severity of medical incidents utilizing EMS Agency approved MPDS protocols.
  - 4. Prioritize the urgency of the EMS response utilizing EMS Agency approved MPDS protocols.
  - 5. Complete case entry and dispatch/notify appropriate EMS resources.
  - 6. Provide post-dispatch and pre-arrival instructions to callers.
  - 7. Coordinate requests and responses with Lifecom and other PSAPs.
  - 8. Provide required data and reports to the EMS Agency.
  - 9. Ensure an on-going comprehensive Quality Improvement program.
- C. The City of Stockton dispatch center shall obtain and continuously maintain accreditation as a center of excellence by the NAED.
- D. The City of Stockton shall ensure that all dispatching and communication functions are conducted in compliance with EMS Agency and NAED policies, procedures, protocols, and standards.
- E. EMS Agency policy is controlling in any disagreement between standards.
- F. A computer-aided dispatch (CAD) system shall be utilized to record dispatch information for all EMD requests. The CAD system shall include the date, hours, minutes and seconds. The CAD shall be 100% compatible with the CAD system used by Lifecom, including all CAD interface requirements. Failure of the City to maintain compatibility with the CAD interface used by Lifecom shall be considered a failure of the City's CAD system by the EMS Agency.
- G. The City of Stockton shall update CAD GIS address and street data on no less than a bimonthly basis.

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- H. The City of Stockton shall immediately transfer all medical 9-1-1 calls to Lifecom during any period of CAD failure or other system failure adversely affecting the EMD process. The transfer to Lifecom shall occur within five (5) minutes of failure.
- I. The City of Stockton EMD dispatch center shall have capabilities for 24-hour, "real time" recordings of all incoming emergency telephone lines and radio frequencies. All radio and telephone communications shall be recorded on digital recording medium and kept for a minimum of 120 days. City of Stockton shall provide the EMS Agency with unrestricted remote access to search, select, play, and record/download digital audio recordings.
- J. The City of Stockton is responsible for the purchase, installation, and maintenance of equipment and technology at the EMS Agency office to include:
  - 1. Remote access audio equipment and technology to provide the EMS Agency with unrestricted remote access to search, select, play, and record/download digital audio recordings.
  - 2. A fully functional CAD terminal.
  - 3. The FirstWatch CAD monitoring program.
- K. The City of Stockton shall pay fees to the EMS Agency in the amount necessary to properly monitor the City of Stockton's compliance with local, state and national policies and standards, including the cost of EMS Agency personnel and resources.

IV. Medical Priority Dispatch System:

- A. The City of Stockton shall utilize the NAED Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS) as approved by the EMS Agency. The City of Stockton shall ensure compliance with MPDS to include:
  - 1. Standardized caller interrogation questions.
  - 2. Standardized dispatch life support and pre-arrival/post-dispatch instructions.
  - 3. Standardized coding of protocols that allow the EMS Agency to match the dispatcher's evaluation of the injury or illness severity with the appropriate response level.
- B. The City of Stockton shall dispatch resources to medical emergencies in accordance with the response and resource level approved by the EMS Agency.

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Page 3 of 6

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- C. When instructed to do so by Lifecom the City of Stockton dispatch center shall ensure that all responding EMS resources dispatched by the City comply with instructions to upgrade, cancel, or reduce their response to code 2 (no lights and siren).

V. Staffing:

- A. The dispatch center shall be staffed with sufficient emergency medical call takers and dispatchers to accomplish all EMD functions.
- B. The City of Stockton shall ensure that no EMD dispatcher works a shift longer than 12 hours. The City of Stockton shall ensure that EMD dispatchers completing a 12 hour shift have at least 8 hours off work before returning to work. In extraordinary circumstances the EMS Agency Duty Officer may grant an exemption to this standard.
- C. Each emergency medical dispatcher shall have completed an initial training program meeting the requirements of the California EMS Authority's Emergency Medical Services Dispatch Program Guidelines (EMSA #132, March 2003).
- D. Each emergency medical dispatcher must obtain and maintain national certification in emergency medical dispatch by the NAED and be currently accredited by the EMS Agency in accordance with EMS Policy No. 2110, Emergency Medical Dispatcher Accreditation.
- E. Each emergency medical dispatcher shall receive a minimum of 32 hours of continuing dispatch education (CDE) every two years, meeting the standards of the NAED and the EMS Agency.
- F. Each emergency medical dispatcher is required to complete an annual 8 hour ride-along with an American Medical Response ambulance. Ambulance ride time may not be used to satisfy continuing dispatch education requirements.

VI. Continuous Quality Improvement:

- A. The City of Stockton shall employ 1 FTE San Joaquin County EMS Agency Mobile Intensive Care Nurse (MICN), who shall obtain EMD certification and accreditation within three (3) months of hire to serve as the EMD CQI Coordinator providing oversight of the emergency medical dispatch program

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Page 4 of 6

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ensuring that EMD is performed as directed by the EMS Agency Medical Director, who is responsible for medical control of the San Joaquin County EMS System.

- B. The City of Stockton's EMD CQI Coordinator shall cooperate fully with the EMS Agency QI Coordinator.
- C. The City of Stockton shall establish a continuous quality improvement (CQI) program for its dispatch system meeting the standards of the NAED and the EMS Agency. The CQI program shall address structural, resource, and/or protocol deficiencies as well as measure compliance with EMD standards as established by the EMS Agency and NAED.
- D. The City of Stockton shall report performance standard compliance to the EMS Agency, including all deviations from standards on a monthly basis. The occurrence of a sentinel event shall be reported within one (1) hour of occurrence, and shall include but are not limited to any EMD incident reported to city, dispatch center, or fire department administration and/or risk management.

VII. Performance Standards:

- A. The City of Stockton shall ensure that each EMD dispatcher and the center meets or exceeds the following monthly case evaluation compliance standards as established by the NAED:
  - 1. 95% case entry;
  - 2. 90% key questions;
  - 3. 95% pre-arrival instructions;
  - 4. 90% post-dispatch instructions;
  - 5. 95% chief complaint accuracy;
  - 6. 90% final coding accuracy; and
  - 7. 90% total compliance score.
- B. Complete case entry and dispatch/notify appropriate EMS resources in compliance with performance standards established by the EMS Agency through the CQI process.
- C. Answer 9-1-1 calls within 10 seconds of the first ring.

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Page 5 of 6

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VIII. Penalties:

- A. The City of Stockton shall be liable for the penalties as set by the Board of Supervisors.
- B. The City of Stockton shall pay the EMS Agency monthly for any penalties assessed by the EMS Agency.

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Page 6 of 6

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