



Date: July 18, 2011

To: Chief Sean Grinnell, Bodega Bay FPD

From: Bryan Cleaver
Regional EMS Administrator

Mark Luoto, MD
Regional EMS Medical Director

Re: Revision of EMS Agency Fees and Authorizations

Please accept this letter as early notification of the EMS Agency's intent to recommend modification of the fee schedule for EMS providers in Mendocino and Sonoma Counties effective July 1, 2012.

Since 1994 the EMS system within Mendocino and Sonoma Counties has received State Regional Grant funding to support the EMS System. California State Regional Grant Funding was previously provided to the EMS Agency as a result of a multi-county agreement. A condition of eligibility for the State funding of a multi-county agency is that the agency consist of three or more counties. As of July 1, 2011 the Coastal Valleys EMS Agency was no longer eligible for this funding due to only having two member counties.

Although state assistance in the form of grant funding has been eliminated, the requirements to provide system oversight have not. The EMS Agency requirements in regard to ambulance transport providers are defined in Division 2.5 of the California Health & Safety Code §1797 et seq., and include, but are not limited to, the following:

- BLS, LALS, ALS, CCT-P and CCT System Development
- Transport provider authorizations, vehicle equipment standards, and establishment of response zones
- Medical direction and oversight including policy development and revision
- System monitoring, data collection and reporting

The EMS Agency will sustain essential, although limited, operations through July 1, 2012 through a combination of reducing expenses and one-time interim support from the County of Sonoma, Department of Health Services.

The EMS Agency has conducted an analysis of revenue sources as well as a work study to determine essential funding amounts to support core responsibilities. It is the intent of the agency to recommend an ambulance transport provider fee of \$8.00 per transport. This would represent a new fee in Sonoma and an increase of \$3.25/per transport for the Mendocino providers. This would eliminate the need for the current Mendocino permit fee and per/ambulance fees, as well as avoid the imposition of those fees on Sonoma provider agencies.

We understand the difficult financial situation each of us may currently be experiencing. We chose this fee schedule as our primary recommendation over other fee structures as one that has an equitable impact. We feel the costs associated with ambulance transportation oversight are most appropriately assigned to a user fee. We do understand this fee will have a fiscal impact and may require you to increase current rates to recuperate this cost. As the ultimate user of the service provided, individuals transported by the system should cover the costs, including the enabling regulatory oversight for the service.

I want to thank you again for your valued partnership in our mission to serve the medical transportation needs of our community. While this is a difficult recommendation, the Agency believes it is a vital step in maintaining a sustainable EMS System that is compliant with State Law. Failure to establish funding would impact the Agency's capacity to meet compliance mandates; provide system planning, oversight and monitoring; conduct training program approvals; approve and monitor the requirements of the EMS Dispatch Center and to plan, train and support disaster/health emergency services.

In an effort to thoroughly understand the impact this recommendation may have on our providers, and the system as a whole, we would like to invite public comment through September 1, 2011.

This item was the topic of discussion in our July 6, 2011 Medical Advisory Committee (MAC) meeting. Participants of this meeting provided EMS Agency staff with excellent suggestions on alternative methods for collecting the transport fees. We would like to continue these discussions at the following pre-scheduled meetings:

September 1, 2011 Mendocino Emergency Medical Care Committee (EMCC)
Provider Fee Workshop 11:30-12:30

October 5, 2011 Medical Advisory Committee (MAC)
Provider Fee Workshop 12:00-1:00

October 24, 2011 Sonoma Emergency Medical Care Committee (EMCC)
Provider Fee Workshop 12:30-1:30

Respectfully,



Bryan Cleaver, Regional EMS Administrator
Coastal Valleys EMS Agency
625 5th Street
Santa Rosa, Ca 95404
707 565-6501
BCleaver@Sonoma-County.org