



**SAN MATEO COUNTY HEALTH  
EMERGENCY  
MEDICAL SERVICES**

<b>EMS POLICY</b>	<b>502</b>
Effective:	<b>April 2025</b>
Approval: EMS Director <b>Travis Kusman, MPH</b>	Signed:
Approval: EMS Medical Director <b>Greg Gilbert, MD</b>	Signed:

## **AUTHORITY AT SCENE**

### **I. PURPOSE**

This policy identifies the scene and medical authority at the scene of emergency medical services incidents.

### **II. AUTHORITY**

California Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797.220 and 1798.6(a)

### **III. DEFINITIONS**

Emergency Medical Services Agency (“LEMSA”) [or “Agency”]: The San Mateo County EMS Agency is designated as the Local Emergency Medical Services Agency (LEMSA) and is statutorily charged with primary responsibility for administration and medical control of emergency medical services in San Mateo County.

Medical Authority: LEMSA delegates the authority and responsibility to routinely function as the authority for patient healthcare management at the scene of an emergency to that licensed or certified health care professional at the scene of the emergency who is most medically qualified specific to the provision of rendering emergency medical care amongst San Mateo County EMS prehospital personnel present. If no licensed or certified health care professional is available, the authority shall be vested in the most appropriate medically qualified representative of public safety agencies who may have responded to the scene of the emergency. When on scene, the EMS Supervisor or Clinical Field Specialist of the County contracted emergency ambulance services provider, or EMS Supervisor of the County designated Paramedic First Response Service Provider shall function as the Medical Authority. The delegation of Medical Authority shall not supersede the medical control of the emergency medical services system vested in the LEMSA.

Medical Emergency: A condition or situation in which an individual has a need for immediate medical attention, or where the potential for such need is perceived by prehospital personnel or a public safety agency.

Scene Management Authority: Authority for the management of the scene of an emergency shall be vested in the appropriate public safety agency having primary investigative authority.

### **IV. POLICY**

A. The Scene Management Authority is responsible for management of the emergency scene, including but not limited to, the requesting and directing of needed resources and scene security.

- B. The Medical Authority is responsible for the medical management of the patient(s), including but not limited to, medical triage, treatment, and transport.
- C. The Scene Management Authority shall consult with the Medical Authority in the determination of relevant risks.
- D. Any conflicts between the Scene Management and Medical Authorities will be resolved via 524 – EMS System Issue Resolution. If an immediate decision must be made related to the care of the patient(s), the Base Hospital physician shall make the final decision.
- E. Except for an MCI or implementation of Central Patient Routing by the EMS Agency, in which case patient destination may be determined via the ICS structure, patient transport destination shall be determined by that paramedic or EMT who will retain primary responsibility for patient care throughout the transport until the time of arrival at the receiving facility.