

**CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority
Board of Directors**

REGULAR MEETING
July 13, 2026
4:00 p.m. OPEN SESSION
Stockton City Hall
501 W. Weber Ave., Building 1, First Floor
Stockton, California 95203

1. MEETING COMMENCEMENT

- 1.1. Call the Meeting to Order
- 1.2. Roll Call
- 1.3. Pledge of Allegiance

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

The public is invited to speak on any matter not appearing on the agenda, and within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Authority. Comments should be limited to three minutes. Please state your name and address for the record.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- 3.1. MEETING MINUTES FOR JUNE 8, 2026 REGULAR MEETING

4. REGULAR AGENDA

- 4.1. RECEIVE AND FILE THE MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORT
- 4.2. AMBULANCE PATIENT OFFLOAD TIMES (APOT) UPDATE
- 4.3. IMPLEMENTATION OF SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY EMS AGENCY POLICY NO. 5201 – MEDICAL PATIENT DESTINATION
- 4.4. ACCEPTANCE OF THE 2025 – 2026 SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORT – SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY EMS: A SYSTEM RE-IMAGINED: THE FUTURE OF EMS IN SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 5.1. Fire Chief Comments
- 5.2. Future Agenda Items
- 5.3. Board of Directors Comments

6. ADJOURNMENT

Americans With Disabilities Act - The CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority ("Authority"), in complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act ("ADA"), requests individuals who require special accommodations to access, attend and/or participate in Authority Board meetings due to a disability, to please contact the Authority's Administrator's office, (209) 831-6737, at least one business day prior to the scheduled Authority Board meeting to ensure that we may assist you.

Addressing the Board on Items on the Agenda - The Brown Act provides that every regular meeting shall provide an opportunity for the public to address the Authority on any item within its jurisdiction before or during the Authority's consideration of the item, provided no action shall be taken on any item not on the agenda.

Consent Calendar - All items listed on the Consent Calendar are considered routine and/or consistent with previous Authority direction. A motion and roll call vote may enact the entire Consent Calendar. No separate discussion of Consent Calendar items will occur unless members of the Authority Board, Authority staff or the public request discussion on a specific item at the beginning of the meeting

Addressing the Board on Items not on the Agenda – The Brown Act prohibits discussion or action on items not on the posted agenda. Members of the public addressing the Council should state their names and addresses for the record, and for contact information.

Staff reports or other written materials relating to each item of business referred to on this agenda are on file in the Administrator's Office at the South San Joaquin County Fire Authority, located at 835 N. Central Avenue, City of Tracy, CA. A public counter copy is available for public inspection and reproduction during normal business hours at the Administrator's Office. Related materials submitted after distribution of the agenda packet are available in the Administrator's Office during normal business hours. If you have questions regarding any agenda item, please contact the Administrator. Any writings or documents regarding any item on this agenda, not exempt from public disclosure, provided to a majority of the Authority Board and distributed subsequent to distribution of the agenda packet will be made available for public inspection in the Administrator's Office during normal business hours.

Note: This agenda was prepared and posted pursuant to Government Code Section 54954.2. This agenda is subject to amendment up to 72 hours prior to the date and time set for the meeting. Please refer to the agenda posted at the Administrator's Office and Stations listed below for any revisions or call the Administrator's Office at (209) 831-6737 for more information.

I hereby certify that this agenda in its entirety was posted on July 10, 2026 at the South San Joaquin County Fire Authority Administration offices, Lodi Fire Department Administration Offices, Stockton Fire Administration Offices, Stockton City Hall, and online at www.cencalfire.org.

Nicole Boswell

Nicole Boswell, Clerk of the Board

**CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority
Board of Directors**

REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
June 8, 2026

1. MEETING COMMENCEMENT

- 1.1. The Board of Directors convened in Open Session at 4:00 P.M. on June 8, 2026 in-person at Stockton City Hall – Council Chambers, 425 N. El Dorado Street, Stockton, CA 95202.
- 1.2. Roll Call found Jeff Ramsey (Chairperson), Michelle Padilla (Alternate for Christina Fugazi), and Lisa Craig-Hensley (Alternate for Mikey Hothi) present.
- 1.3. Pledge of Allegiance

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairperson Ramsey opened the floor for Public Comment. There was no comment from the public.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

3.1. MEETING MINUTES FOR APRIL 13, 2026 REGULAR MEETING

3.2. MEETING MINUTES FOR APRIL 30, 2026 SPECIAL MEETING

There were no questions or comments from the public, Board or staff.

ACTION: Motion was made by Director Craig-Hensley and seconded by Director Padilla to approve Items 3.1 and 3.2. Said motion carried a unanimous 3 – 0 vote in favor; passed and so ordered.

4. REGULAR AGENDA

4.1. FISCAL YEAR 2025 – 2026 THIRD QUARTER BUDGET STATUS UPDATE

John Driscoll, Fire Services Administrator presented the staff report, and provided an overview of the item and related PowerPoint presentation.

Discussion ensued amongst the Board and staff regarding JRUG, negotiations, impact on dispatch center with potential added agencies, and details of expenditures and revenues.

There were no questions or comments from the public or staff.

ACTION: Motion was made by Director Craig-Hensley and seconded by Director Padilla to accept the budget update for the third quarter of fiscal year 2025-2026. Said motion carried a unanimous 3 – 0 vote (Ayes: Ramsey, Craig-Hensley, and Padilla) in favor; passed and so ordered.

4.2. FEDERAL MEDICAID PROPOSED RULEMAKING AND PUBLIC PROVIDER GROUND EMERGENCY MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION (PP-GEMT) PROGRAM UPDATE

Randall Bradley, Fire Chief of the South San Joaquin County Fire Authority, presented the staff report. He reviewed the proposed rules with the Board, explained potential impacts and details and impacts surrounding the potential effective date. He reviewed PP-GEMT, SPA, and key points detailed in the staff report.

Discussion ensued amongst the Board and staff regarding SPA application terms, SPA details, timeline for PPGEMT rates in California, standard/historical rate increases, Medi-Cal and Medicaid payments and how rates vary throughout the state.

There were no questions or comments from the public or staff.

ACTION: Motion was made by Director Padilla and seconded by Director Craig-Hensley to accept the program update for the Federal Medicaid proposed rulemaking and Public Provider Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (PP-GEMT). Said motion carried a unanimous 3 – 0 (Ayes: Ramsey, Craig-Hensley, and Padilla) vote in favor; passed and so ordered.

4.3. AUTHORIZE BY RESOLUTION THE FISCAL YEAR 2026 – 2027 BUDGET

John Driscoll presented the staff report, provided an overview of the item and reviewed the PowerPoint presentation detailing the proposed fiscal year 2026 – 2027 budget.

Discussion ensued amongst the Board and staff regarding contingency, start up funding, interest bearing, excess revenues, and potential to build reserves in anticipation of the proposed rulemaking.

There were no questions or comments from the public or staff.

ACTION: Motion was made by Director Padilla and seconded by Director Craig-Hensley to adopt a resolution approving the Fiscal Year 2026 – 2027 budget. Clerk of the Board, Nicole Boswell conducted a Roll Call Vote (Jeff Ramsey: Aye, Lisa Craig-Hensley: Aye, Michelle Padilla: aye). Said motion carried a unanimous 3 – 0 (Ayes: Ramsey, Craig-Hensley, and Padilla) vote in favor; passed and so ordered.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS

5.1. Fire Chief Comments

Executive Director, Lonnie Gutierrez advised the Board of the response data and system performance measures of CENCAL during it's first month in service.

Discussion ensued amongst the Board and staff and staff agreed to bring this information to the Board monthly.

5.2. Future Agenda Items

There were no additional future agenda items requested.

5.3. Board of Directors Comments

Chairperson Ramsey advised that he would not be available to attend the next Regular meeting scheduled for July 13, 2026.

6. ADJOURNMENT: 4:47 P.M.

ACTION: Motion was made by Director Craig-Hensley and seconded by Director Padilla to adjourn. Said motion carried a unanimous 3 – 0 vote (Ayes: Ramsey, Craig-Hensley, and Padilla) in favor; passed and so ordered.

The above agenda for the Regular Meeting was posted on June 4, 2026 at the South San Joaquin County Fire Authority's Administration Building, Lodi Fire Department Administration Offices, Stockton Fire Administration Offices, Stockton City Hall, and online at www.cencalfire.org.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Nicole Boswell
Clerk of the Board

Jeff Ramsey
Chairperson of the Board

CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority

835 Central Avenue, Tracy, CA 95376 | Tel: (209)831-6702 Fax: (209)831-6732

STAFF REPORT

TO: Board of Directors **MEETING DATE:** July 13, 2026

PREPARED BY: Lonnie Gutierrez, Executive Director
REVIEWED BY: Randall Bradley, Fire Chief
Bryan Carr, Fire Chief
Ken Johnson, Fire Chief

ITEM: RECEIVE AND FILE THE MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board of Directors receive and file the Monthly Performance Report for informational purposes.

BACKGROUND

At the June 8, 2026 Regular Meeting, the Board of Directors requested that staff develop a recurring monthly report providing a high-level overview of CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority's operational activity and performance measures. The purpose of the report is to provide the Board with consistent monthly reporting on system activity and key operational metrics.

DISCUSSION

In response to the Board's request, staff has prepared the attached Monthly Performance Report. The report is intended to serve as a high-level operational summary and includes key performance indicators for the previous month, including:

- Total incident responses by service zone;
- Total patient transports by service zone; and
- Other summary operational statistics and performance measures, as applicable.

The report is designed to provide the Board with a concise overview of system activity and trends while supporting ongoing transparency and operational awareness. Additionally, this report is intended to support the Board's oversight responsibilities by providing meaningful operational data that can be used to monitor system performance, identify trends, and inform future policy and operational decisions.

Moving forward, staff recommends that the Monthly Performance Report be included as a recurring item on the Consent Agenda for informational purposes. This approach will provide the Board with regular updates on CENCAL's monthly performance while allowing staff to expand or refine reporting metrics over time as the system continues to evolve.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with receiving this report.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Monthly Performance Report



CENCAL FIRE & EMS AUTHORITY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

MAY - JUNE 2026

7,456

**May
Incidents**

240 Per Day

5,571

**May
Transports**

180 Per Day

7,042

**June
Incidents**

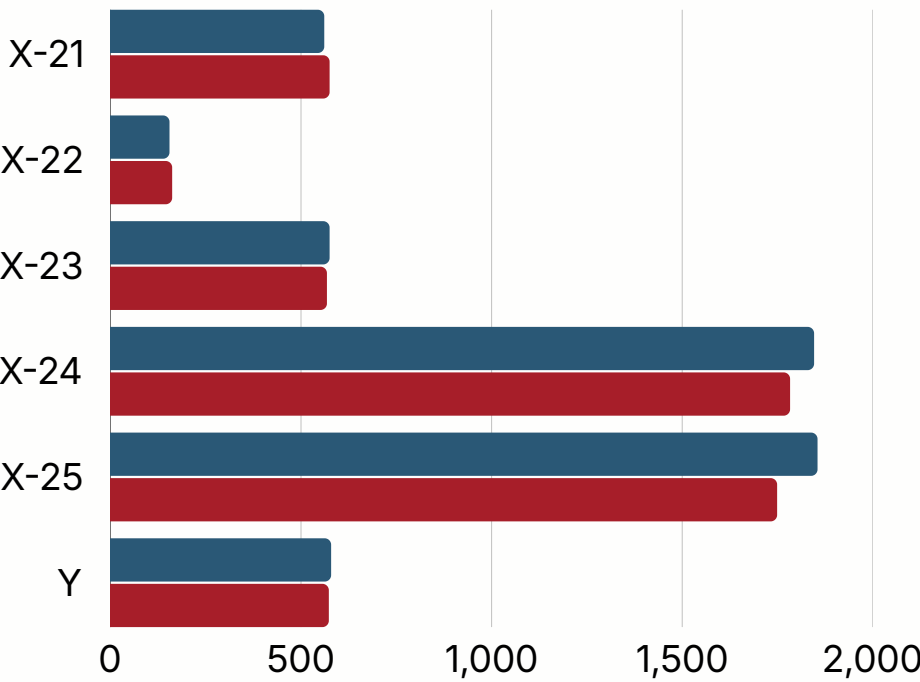
235 Per Day

5,410

**June
Transports**

180 Per Day

Transport Volume by Zone



Transport Rate by Zone

Zone	May	June
X-21	76%	79%
X-22	59%	72%
X-23	70%	76%
X-24	79%	79%
X-25	76%	77%
Y	68%	71%



*Data Source: San Joaquin County EMS Agency OCU Reports (FirstWatch). Data extracted July 5, 2026.

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STAFF REPORT

TO: Board of Directors **MEETING DATE:** July 13, 2026

PREPARED BY: Ken Johnson, Fire Chief
REVIEWED BY: Randall Bradley, Fire Chief
Bryan Carr, Fire Chief

ITEM: AMBULANCE PATIENT OFFLOAD TIMES (APOT) UPDATE

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board of Directors receive the report regarding Ambulance Patient Offload Times (APOT) within San Joaquin County and provide direction as appropriate.

BACKGROUND

Ambulance Patient Offload Time (APOT) is a statewide performance measure established by the California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA) to evaluate the efficiency of transferring patients from ambulance crews to emergency department (ED) staff.

APOT is defined as the elapsed time from an ambulance's arrival at an emergency department until the patient is transferred to an emergency department gurney, bed, chair, or other approved treatment location and the hospital assumes responsibility for patient care.

Following collaboration with Local EMS Agencies (LEMSAs), hospitals, EMS providers, and other stakeholders, the California EMS Authority established a statewide performance goal that:

“No patient transported by ambulance should wait longer than 20 minutes before transfer of care to the receiving emergency department.”

Extended offload delays have become a significant operational issue throughout California and nationally due to increasing emergency department crowding, hospital capacity constraints, and staffing shortages.

DISCUSSION

Ambulance Patient Offload Time directly impacts both patient care and EMS system performance.

When ambulance crews remain at hospitals waiting to transfer patients, those ambulances are unavailable to respond to additional 9-1-1 emergencies. Extended delays reduce system capacity, increase response times, require additional unit move-ups, and increase operational costs for EMS providers.

For CENCAL Fire & EMS Authority, monitoring APOT is particularly important as ambulance deployment and contractual performance continue to mature within the Exclusive Operating Area (EOA) for Zone X and Zone Y. APOT data provides valuable information regarding:

- Emergency department operational efficiency
- EMS resource availability
- System reliability
- Community access to emergency medical services
- Hospital and EMS coordination opportunities

The San Joaquin County EMS Agency publishes APOT performance data for each receiving hospital approximately every two months. This information allows EMS providers, hospitals, and governing agencies to monitor trends and identify opportunities for collaborative system improvements.

Current reporting includes the following receiving hospitals:

- Adventist Health Lodi Memorial Hospital
- Dameron Hospital
- Doctors Hospital of Manteca
- Kaiser Permanente Manteca Medical Center
- San Joaquin General Hospital
- St. Joseph's Medical Center
- Sutter Tracy Community Hospital

Information Regarding the APOT times for hospitals in San Joaquin County can be found here: <https://www.sjgov.org/departments/ems/Menu/system-reports/apod>

System Impact

Monitoring APOT provides the Board with an important indicator of overall EMS system performance. Persistent offload delays may result in:

- Reduced ambulance availability throughout the county.
- Increased response times to subsequent emergency incidents.
- Increased utilization of mutual aid resources.
- Increased unit-hour utilization and operational costs.
- Delays in returning ambulances to service.
- Increased emergency department congestion.

Conversely, improved offload performance enhances ambulance availability, improves response reliability, and increases overall EMS system efficiency.

CENCAL Performance Monitoring

CENCAL staff will continue to monitor APOT performance in coordination with:

- San Joaquin County EMS Agency
- Area hospitals
- American Medical Response (AMR)
- Fire agency partners (City and Fire Districts)

Performance trends will be recommended to the San Joaquin County EMS Agency for incorporation into ongoing system performance monitoring and quality improvement initiatives. Significant changes or emerging trends will be reported to the Board as part of regular system status updates.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with receiving this informational report. However, prolonged ambulance offload delays can contribute to increased operational costs through reduced ambulance availability, increased unit-hour utilization, and the need for additional system resources.

ATTACHMENTS

None

CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority

835 Central Avenue, Tracy, CA 95376 | Tel: (209)831-6702 Fax: (209)831-6732

STAFF REPORT

TO: Board of Directors **MEETING DATE:** July 13, 2026

PREPARED BY: Ken Johnson, Fire Chief
REVIEWED BY: Randall Bradley, Fire Chief
Bryan Carr, Fire Chief

ITEM: IMPLEMENTATION OF SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY EMS AGENCY POLICY NO. 5201 - MEDICAL PATIENT DESTINATION

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board of Directors receive and file this report regarding the implementation of San Joaquin County Emergency Medical Services Agency (SJCEMSA) Policy No. 5201, Medical Patient Destination, effective May 1, 2026.

BACKGROUND

The San Joaquin County EMS Agency has adopted revised EMS Policy No. 5201 establishing standardized patient destination guidelines for all licensed EMS providers operating within the county. The policy provides consistent direction for determining the most appropriate receiving hospital based on the patient's medical condition, specialty care needs, and personal preference when clinically appropriate.

The policy supports statewide requirements contained within California Health and Safety Code Sections 1797.220, 1798, and 1798.170 and is intended to ensure patients receive timely access to definitive care while maintaining an efficient regional EMS system.

DISCUSSION

Policy No. 5201 establishes a clear hierarchy for determining patient destination.

General Patient Transport

EMS personnel are required to evaluate every patient and offer ambulance transportation to any patient requiring medical care. Patients requesting transportation with implied or expressed consent shall be transported to an appropriate receiving hospital.

Priority Medical Destinations

The policy identifies specific destination requirements for time-sensitive medical emergencies including:

- Cardiac arrest patients are transported to the closest receiving hospital.
- Suspected ST-Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI), Return of Spontaneous Circulation (ROSC), and sustained ventricular tachycardia patients are transported directly to the nearest designated STEMI Receiving Center.

- Stroke patients with a Last Known Well time of less than four hours are transported to the nearest Primary Stroke Center to maximize eligibility for advanced stroke intervention.
- Patients with other stroke presentations may be transported to the Primary Stroke Center of their choice or the nearest Primary Stroke Center if no preference is expressed.
- Patients with other life-threatening medical conditions are transported to the nearest appropriate receiving hospital unless otherwise directed by a Base Hospital physician.

Labor and Delivery Patients

The policy differentiates between uncomplicated and complicated labor.

Patients experiencing uncomplicated active labor may select any hospital providing labor and delivery services. Patients with obstetrical complications, including breech presentation or prolapsed umbilical cord, shall be transported to the closest hospital with labor and delivery capability.

Patient Choice

For non-emergent medical conditions, patient preference remains the primary consideration. EMS personnel are encouraged to transport patients to the facility where they routinely receive medical care or to their health plan's preferred hospital whenever feasible.

When a patient is unable to express a preference, EMS personnel should consider family wishes or the patient's physician. If no preference can be established, the patient will be transported to the nearest receiving hospital.

The policy also emphasizes that EMS personnel should present destination options without recommending or expressing opinions regarding the quality of any hospital.

Ventricular Assist Device (VAD) Patients

Special destination requirements are established for patients with implanted Ventricular Assist Devices.

- Unstable VAD patients shall be transported to the nearest STEMI Receiving Center.
- Stable patients experiencing VAD-related complications should be transported directly to their implant center without delaying transport while contacting the patient's VAD coordinator.
- Patients with non-VAD related complaints may be transported according to standard destination guidelines and patient preference.

Mass Casualty Incidents

During medical multi-casualty incidents, the Dispatch Communications Facility (DCF) may direct patient distribution among hospitals throughout Operational Area Region IV to balance available healthcare resources and prevent hospital overload.

Hospital Diversion and Facility Status

The policy reinforces that patients shall not be transported to hospitals that have declared an Internal Disaster or Closed status.

If a receiving hospital reports that specialty services are unavailable, patients requiring those

services should be advised and offered transport to another facility capable of providing the required level of care.

Operational Impact

Implementation of this policy provides several operational benefits:

- Standardizes destination decisions across all EMS providers operating within San Joaquin County.
- Reduces delays in transporting patients requiring specialty care.
- Improves compliance with regional EMS system standards.
- Supports improved patient outcomes by ensuring direct transport to appropriate specialty centers.
- Preserves patient choice whenever clinically appropriate.
- Enhances coordination during large-scale emergencies through centralized hospital distribution.

The policy also minimizes unnecessary Base Hospital consultation for routine non-emergent destination decisions, improving ambulance availability and reducing radio traffic.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no direct fiscal impact associated with adoption of this policy. Existing EMS personnel will implement the revised destination guidelines through ongoing education and operational training.

CONCLUSION

San Joaquin County EMS Policy No. 5201 establishes a comprehensive, clinically driven framework for determining patient destination while balancing specialty care access, patient preference, hospital capabilities, and regional EMS resource management. Implementation of this policy will improve consistency in patient care, support compliance with county EMS standards, and ensure patients are transported to the most appropriate receiving facility based on their medical needs.

ATTACHMENTS

1. San Joaquin County Hospital Specialties
2. San Joaquin County EMS Agency Policy No. 5201 – Medical Patient Destination

San Joaquin County Hospital Specialties**Hospital Designation Table**

Hospital	Trauma	Base	Receiving	Stroke	STEMI	Helipad
Dameron Hospital			X	X	X	
Doctors Hospital of Manteca			X	X		
Kaiser Permanente Hospital Manteca			X	X		
Adventist Health Lodi Memorial Hospital			X	X		X
San Joaquin General Hospital	Level II	X	X	X		X
St. Joseph's Medical Center			X	X	X	X
Sutter-Tracy Community Hospital			X	X		

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY



TITLE: MEDICAL PATIENT DESTINATION

EMS Policy No. **5201**

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to provide direction to EMS personnel on determining the appropriate destination for medical patients.

AUTHORITY:

Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Section 1797.220, 1798, and 1798.170

DEFINITIONS: See SJCEMSA Definitions policy

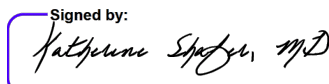
POLICY:

- I. Prehospital personnel shall assess all patients and offer ambulance transportation to any patient needing medical care and provide ambulance transportation to any patient requesting transport to a receiving hospital with implicit or implied consent.
- II. Medical patients shall be transported to a receiving hospital based on the following priorities:
 - A. Multi-casualty incident – destination as coordinated with DCF.
 - B. Cardiac arrest – closest receiving hospital.
 - C. Acute STEMI or ROSC – closest STEMI receiving center.
 - D. Sustained ventricular tachycardia with a pulse – closest STEMI receiving center.
 - E. Acute stroke:
 1. Patients with last known well time of less than 4 hours transport to closest PSC.
 2. All other patients transport to PSC of their choice or if no choice transport to closest PSC.
 - F. Non-traumatic life-threatening condition – closest receiving hospital or base hospital direction.
 - G. Active labor with complications – closest hospital with labor and delivery (L&D) service.
 - H. Active labor without complications – patient choice of receiving hospital with labor and delivery services.
 - I. Non-emergent condition – patient choice.
 - J. No preference specified – closest receiving hospital.
 - K. Ventricular assist devices stable patients – patients implant center
 - L. Ventricular assist devices unstable patients – nearest STEMI center.

Effective: May 1, 2026
Supersedes: November 10, 2025

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Approved:

Signed by:

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Medical Director

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EMS Director

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY



TITLE: MEDICAL PATIENT DESTINATION

EMS Policy No. **5201**

III. Parameters affecting transport destinations for medical patients:

- A. Acute ST Elevated Myocardial Infarction (STEMI) Patient Considerations:
1. Patients with an acute STEMI shall be transported to a designated STEMI Receiving Center (SRC) by-passing all other receiving hospitals.
 2. The following receiving hospitals are designated or recognized as SRCs for the San Joaquin County EMS System:
 - a. Dameron Hospital.
 - b. St. Joseph's Medical Center.
 - c. Doctors Medical Center
 - d. Memorial Medical Center.
 3. If a STEMI patient does not express a preference the patient should be transported to the closest SRC.
- B. The following receiving hospitals are designated or recognized as a Primary Stroke Center (PSC) by the SJCEMSA:
1. Adventist Lodi Memorial Hospital.
 2. Dameron Hospital.
 3. Doctors Hospital of Manteca.
 4. Kaiser Hospital Manteca.
 5. San Joaquin General Hospital.
 6. St. Joseph's Medical Center.
 7. Sutter-Tracy Community Hospital.
 8. Doctors Medical Center, Modesto.
 9. Kaiser Medical Center, Modesto.
 10. Memorial Medical Center, Modesto.
- C. Active Labor Considerations:
1. Active labor without complications is deemed to be a non-emergent condition. These patients may be taken to the receiving hospital with labor and delivery services (L&D) of their choice, as listed in subparagraph C. 3.
 2. Active labor with complications (prolapsed cord, breech presentation) shall be transported to the closest receiving hospital with L&D services.

Effective: May 1, 2026
Supersedes: November 10, 2025

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Approved:

Signed by:

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Medical Director

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EMS Director

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY



TITLE: MEDICAL PATIENT DESTINATION

EMS Policy No. **5201**

3. The following is a list of receiving hospitals with L&D services in San Joaquin County and in areas immediately adjacent to San Joaquin County:
 - a. Adventist Lodi Memorial Hospital.
 - b. San Joaquin General Hospital.
 - c. St. Joseph's Medical Center.
 - d. Sutter-Tracy Community Hospital.
 - e. Kaiser Medical Center, Modesto.
 - f. Doctors Medical Center, Modesto.
 - g. Memorial Medical Center, Modesto.
 - h. Kaiser Medical Center, South Sacramento.

D. Non-Emergent Medical Patient Destination Considerations:

1. In a non-emergent situation, as determined by prehospital care personnel on scene or following base hospital consultation, the patient may be transported to the receiving hospital of their choice in San Joaquin County, Stanislaus County, or Sacramento County.
2. If the patient is unable or unwilling to express a choice, defer to the wishes of the patient's private physician and/or family. In the absence of such direction, patients should be transported to the closest receiving hospital.
3. Whenever possible ambulance personnel should determine where the patient normally receives medical care and encourage the patient to return to that hospital.
4. Prehospital care personnel should only provide the patient and/or family with the available destination options and should not endorse a receiving facility or otherwise provide their opinion on the quality or merits of any receiving hospital.
5. If the patient is a member of a health plan with a preferred hospital, an attempt should be made to transport the patient to a participating or preferred receiving hospital.
6. If the countywide system status management ambulance availability is less than seven (7) ambulances, non-emergent medical destinations may be limited to receiving hospitals in San Joaquin County.
7. Ambulance personnel are not required to contact and should not contact the base hospital for permission to transport a non-emergent patient to a receiving hospital in San Joaquin County, Stanislaus County, or Sacramento County.

Effective: May 1, 2026
Supersedes: November 10, 2025

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Approved:

Signed by:

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Medical Director

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EMS Director

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY



TITLE: MEDICAL PATIENT DESTINATION

EMS Policy No. **5201**

- E. Ventricular Assist Device (VAD) patients:
1. Unstable patients shall be transported to the nearest STEMI Center.
 2. Stable patients with complaints related to their VAD shall be transported to their VAD Implant Center, contact with the patient's VAD Coordinator is suggested but shall not delay transport.
 3. The following receiving hospitals located in Sacramento County, CA., are recognized as VAD Implant Centers by SJCEMSA for purposes of transport from the scene:
 - a. U.C. Davis Medical Center.
 - b. Mercy General Hospital Sacramento.
 - c. Sutter Medical Center Sacramento.
 4. VAD patients with non-emergent complaints unrelated to VAD shall be transported to the patient's preferred hospital and pursuant to Section III of this policy.

IV. Medical Multi-Casualty Incidents:

- A. During an MCI the DCF may expand patient destinations to any receiving hospital within OES Region IV with initial preference being hospitals located in San Joaquin County, Stanislaus County, and Sacramento County.

V. Receiving Hospital Facility Status:

- A. Patients shall not be transported to a receiving hospital with a facility status of internal disaster/closed.
- B. If a receiving hospital's facility status advises that a specialty care service is unavailable or limited, patients requiring such specialty care services should be advised and given the option of transport to similar receiving hospital with specialty care services.
- C. Specialty Care Services:
1. Trauma Center.
 2. Primary Stroke Center.
 3. STEMI Receiving Center.
 4. Labor and delivery services.

Effective: May 1, 2026
Supersedes: November 10, 2025

Page 4 of 4

Approved:

Signed by:

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Medical Director

DocuSigned by:

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EMS Director

CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority

835 Central Avenue, Tracy, CA 95376 | Tel: (209)831-6702 Fax: (209)831-6732

STAFF REPORT

TO: Board of Directors **MEETING DATE:** July 13, 2026

PREPARED BY: Randall Bradley, Fire Chief
REVIEWED BY: Randall Bradley, Fire Chief
Bryan Carr, Fire Chief
Ken Johnson, Fire Chief

ITEM: ACCEPTANCE OF THE 2025 – 2026 SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORT – SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY EMS: A SYSTEM RE-IMAGINED: THE FUTURE OF EMS IN SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board of Directors adopt a resolution accepting the findings and recommendations contained in the 2025–2026 San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury Report entitled *San Joaquin County EMS: A System Re-imagined: The Future of EMS in San Joaquin County* and authorize submission of the CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority's official response indicating that the Board agrees with the report and has no additional comments.

BACKGROUND

On June 2026, the San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury released its report entitled *San Joaquin County EMS: A System Re-imagined: The Future of EMS in San Joaquin County*. The report examines the transition to a regional, fire-based emergency medical services (EMS) delivery model and the implementation of ambulance transport services through the CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority (CENCAL).

As part of the Civil Grand Jury's investigation, representatives from CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority and the San Joaquin County EMS Agency appeared before the Civil Grand Jury on April 9, 2026, to provide an overview of the regional EMS model, discuss the development of CENCAL, and answer questions regarding the implementation of ambulance transport services within San Joaquin County.

The Civil Grand Jury report acknowledges the collaborative efforts of CENCAL and its member agencies in developing the regional EMS system and recognizes the significant planning and coordination undertaken to implement the new model. The report concludes that the transition represents an important step toward improving regional coordination, patient care, and system efficiency throughout San Joaquin County.

California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05 require governing bodies named in a Civil Grand Jury report to formally respond to the report's findings and recommendations within the prescribed statutory timeframe. Although there were no true findings within the report, staff recommends that the Board formally indicate whether it agrees or disagrees with the report and provides an opportunity for comments.

DISCUSSION

Staff has reviewed the Civil Grand Jury report and its findings and recommendations as they relate to CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority.

The report is supportive of the regional EMS delivery model and recognizes the extensive planning, collaboration, and coordination undertaken by CENCAL and its member agencies in preparation for the transition to a countywide fire-based ambulance transport system. The report further acknowledges the benefits of integrating ambulance transport services with fire-based EMS operations, including improved coordination, enhanced patient care, greater system accountability, and more efficient deployment of emergency resources.

After reviewing the report, staff finds that its conclusions accurately reflect the work performed by CENCAL and its partners during the development and implementation of the regional EMS system.

Accordingly, staff recommends that the Board accept the Civil Grand Jury report and authorize submission of the Authority's official response indicating that the Board agrees with the report and has no additional comments. The proposed response also expresses CENCAL's appreciation to the San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury for its thoughtful review of the regional EMS system and recognition of the collaborative efforts undertaken by CENCAL and its member agencies. CENCAL remains committed to continually enhancing emergency medical services, strengthening regional partnerships, and providing the highest quality prehospital care to the residents and visitors of San Joaquin County.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with the acceptance of the Civil Grand Jury Report or submission of response.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Resolution accepting the 2025 – 2026 San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury Report regarding San Joaquin County's Emergency Medical Services and authorizing submission of CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority's official response
2. San Joaquin County EMS: A System Re-imagined: The Future of EMS in San Joaquin County

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-13

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CENCAL FIRE AND EMS AUTHORITY
ACCEPTING THE 2025 – 2026 SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY CIVIL GRAND JURY REPORT
REGARDING SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AND AUTHORIZING
SUBMISSION OF THE AUTHORITY’S OFFICIAL REPSONSE**

WHEREAS, the San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury issued its report entitled *San Joaquin County EMS: A System Re-imagined: The Future of EMS in San Joaquin County* in June 2026; and

WHEREAS, the report evaluates the transition to a regional, fire-based emergency medical services system and includes findings and recommendations relating to the CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority; and

WHEREAS, representatives of the CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority and the San Joaquin County EMS Agency presented the regional EMS model and the development of CENCAL to the San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury on April 9, 2026; and

WHEREAS, California Penal Code sections 933 and 933.05 require the governing body of a public agency named in a Civil Grand Jury report to provide a formal written response to the report's findings and recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the Grand Jury Report did not include any findings or recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors has reviewed the report and the recommendations of staff and finds that the report accurately reflects the collaborative efforts undertaken to develop and implement the regional EMS system; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors wishes to express its appreciation to the San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury for its review of the regional EMS system and its recognition of the collaborative efforts of CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority, its member agencies, and its partners to improve emergency medical services throughout San Joaquin County.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Directors of the CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority does hereby:

1. Accept the 2025–2026 San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury Report entitled *San Joaquin County EMS: A System Re-imagined: The Future of EMS in San Joaquin County*.
2. Agree with the findings and recommendations contained in the report.
3. Express its sincere appreciation to the San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury for its comprehensive review of the regional EMS system and for recognizing the collaborative efforts of CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority, its member agencies, and AMR in developing and implementing the regional fire-based EMS model.
4. Reaffirm the Authority's commitment to continually enhancing emergency medical services, fostering regional collaboration, improving patient outcomes, and providing exceptional EMS care to the residents and visitors of San Joaquin County.
5. Direct the Executive Director to submit the Authority's official response in accordance with California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05, indicating that the Board agrees with the report and has no additional comments

IT IS HEREBY CERTIFIED that the above and foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the Board of Directors of the CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority at its regular meeting held on the 13th day of July 2026, by the following vote:

AYES: BOARD MEMBERS:

NOES: BOARD MEMBERS:

ABSENT: BOARD MEMBERS:

ABSTAIN: BOARD MEMBERS:

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Nicole Boswell, Clerk of the Board

Jeff Ramsey, Chairperson of the Board



Attachment 2

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

COUNTY OF SAN JOAQUIN | CIVIL GRAND JURY

180 E. Weber Avenue, Suite 1114

Stockton, CA 95202

(209) 992-5695 | www.sjcourts.org

civilgrandjury@sjcourts.org

June 17, 2026

PRIVATE & CONFIDENTIAL

Mr. Jared Bagwell, EMS Administrator
Emergency Medical Services
San Joaquin County
505 W. Service Road
Benton Hall, Room 47
French Camp, CA 95231

Randall Bradley, SSJCFA Fire Chief
South San Joaquin County Fire Authority
835 Central Avenue
Tracy, CA 95376

Dear Mr. Bagwell and Fire Chief Bradley:

Enclosed you will find an informational report from the 2025-2026 San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury titled: *San Joaquin County EMS- A System Re-imagined: The future of EMS in San Joaquin County*.

The Grand Jury will release its Final Consolidated Report on June 25, 2026, which will include this informational report that may be of interest to your organization.

Unlike investigative reports, which may contain findings and recommendations requiring formal responses pursuant to applicable law, this report is intended primarily to inform the public and raise awareness regarding matters of community interest. As such, no formal response is required from your organization.

The San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury believes that your perspective and expertise would be valuable. We therefore invite any comments, observations, or feedback you may wish to provide regarding the report. Your input may help further the public discussion and contribute to future improvements in the areas addressed by the report.

We appreciate your commitment to serving our community and thank you for taking the time to review this report.

Should you choose to provide feedback, please submit your comments to:

Krystal Gonzalez
Judicial Secretary
San Joaquin County Superior Court
civilgrandjury@sjcourts.org

Sincerely,

2025-2026 San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury

Enc. As stated

Cc: San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors
Director Pete Reece, Tracy Rural Fire District
Mayor Pro Tem Steve Abercrombie, City of Tracy
Director Jeff Ramsey, Tracy Rural Fire Protection District
Councilmember Dotty Nygard, City of Tracy

2025-2026 San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury



San Joaquin County EMS

A System Re-imagined: The Future of EMS in San Joaquin County

Release Date: June 2026



Photo of CENCAL Fire and EMS emergency vehicles. (By: CENCAL Fire and EMS)

SUMMARY

On February 10, 2026, the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors approved a new agreement for 911 ambulance services with the CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority (CENCAL). This decision represents a significant change in how emergency medical services (EMS) will be delivered throughout much of the County, including Stockton, Lodi, Tracy, and surrounding communities. The new system is scheduled to begin on May 1, 2026.

For many years, ambulance transport services in San Joaquin County have been provided by AMR operating under an exclusive agreement since 2006. The current exclusive agreement with AMR to provide ambulance services in the county is due to expire in May 2026. While this model has delivered essential services, it has also required coordination between separate entities—fire agencies providing first response and a private provider responsible for ambulance transport. This separation has at times created challenges with response times, communication, and system efficiency.

The newly approved model transitions ambulance services to a regional, fire-based system led by CENCAL, aiming to serve the community better and improve patient care. This agreement specifically applies to Ambulance Zones X and Y. Zones D, E, and F will continue to operate under their own separate agreements with the County, though CENCAL may provide support to those areas through mutual aid agreements when needed.

ACRONYMS and DEFINITIONS

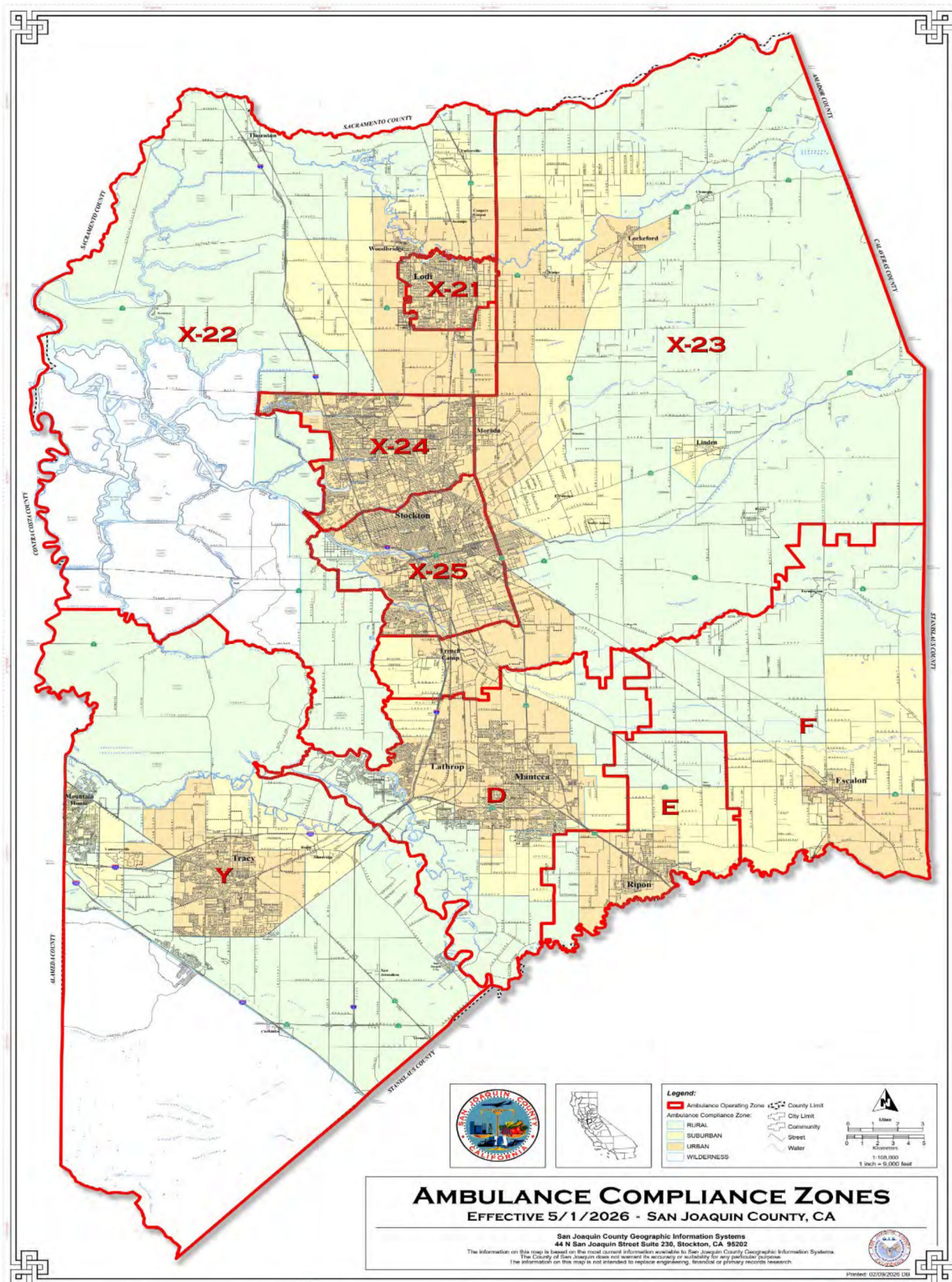
ALS	Advanced Life Support, a level of emergency care
AMR	American Medical Response, a private ambulance service provider
BLS	Basic Life Support, a level of emergency care
CENCAL	CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority is a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) formed by the fire departments of Stockton, Lodi, and the South San Joaquin County Fire Authority (Tracy) to manage 911 ambulance transport services in San Joaquin County.

CQI	Continuous quality improvements
EMS	Emergency medical services
EMT	Emergency Medical Technician
EOA	Exclusive Operating Area
SJCEMSA	San Joaquin County Emergency Medical Services Agency, a division within the San Joaquin County Health Care Services Agency.
STEMI	ST-elevation myocardial infarction, the most severe type of heart attack

SOURCES

- Presentation from SJCEMSA and CENCAL
- Reviewed County EMS agreement with CENCAL, press releases and other documents and websites of both CENCAL and SJCEMSA
- <https://www.sjgov.org/departments/ems/home>
- <https://www.cencalfire.org/about>
- https://www.lodinews.com/news/article_93e7a4ae-5720-4d63-91bf-1c79a7a03dcd.html
- <https://www.yahoo.com/news/articles/san-joaquin-county-fire-agencies-205600204.html>
- https://www.lodinews.com/news/article_f4b85559-2f99-4880-baff-b742a1e1e1a4.html
- <https://www.recordnet.com/story/news/politics/county/2014/12/10/sj-county-amr-agree-to/35771750007/>
- https://www.townmedia.com/tracy_press/south-san-joaquin-county-fire-authority/article_f0d6528d-bd6c-4bd9-a920-70626524cb26.html
- <https://youtu.be/X1D6ITvz888?si=oToNTq6OU1URrKc9>

The following map outlines the Ambulance Compliance Zones in San Joaquin County.



BACKGROUND

SAN JOAQUIN COUNTY EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY

Established by the San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors in 1982, the San Joaquin County Emergency Medical Services Agency (SJCEMSA) is responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating the county-wide emergency medical services system. SJCEMSA oversees ALS/BLS ambulance services, trauma care, and specialty care centers, ensuring compliance with 25+ contracts to maintain high-quality prehospital care and emergency readiness throughout the county.

SJCEMSA does not directly provide ambulance transport services; instead, it contracts with service providers and ensures accountability through performance measures and compliance requirements.

SJCEMSA key responsibilities include:

- System planning and evaluation – Developing and implementing EMS system plans to meet California Health and Safety Code requirements.
- Contract and compliance monitoring – Enforcing contracts with ambulance providers and monitoring performance, clinical care and response times.
- Specialty Care coordination – Oversight of trauma services (at San Joaquin General Hospital), ST-elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) centers and stroke centers.
- Training and Accreditation – Accrediting paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and authorizing training programs.
- Quality Improvement – Running a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) program to audit compliance and treatment protocols and improve patient care.

The following list summarizes the San Joaquin County EMS system:

- 4 EOA emergency ambulance providers
- 2 EMS dispatch centers

- 2 EMS emergency air ambulance services
- 7 acute care ambulance receiving hospitals
- 2 designated ST-elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI) receiving centers
- 7 designated stroke receiving centers
- 1 designated Level II Trauma Center
- 20 Fire Departments

The following table shows the specialty care designations of the 7 receiving hospitals in San Joaquin County and identifies those equipped with a Helipad.

Hospital	Trauma	Base	STEMI	Stroke	Rec'v	Heli
Adventist Health Lodi				X	X	X
Dameron			X	X	X	
Doctor's Hospital Manteca				X	X	
Kaiser Permanente Manteca				X	X	
San Joaquin General Hospital	LEVEL II	X		X	X	X
St. Joseph's Medical Center			X	X	X	X
Tracy Sutter Community				X	X	

Table 1: List of the 7 receiving hospitals in the County and their specialty care designations and which have a helipad.

Under the existing system, ambulance transport services are provided by AMR under an exclusive 10-year agreement with the County excluding ambulance zones D, E and F (see map above). This provider has been responsible for responding to 911 medical calls, transporting patients to hospitals, and meeting established response time requirements.

While the current provider has delivered necessary services, the model relies on coordination between independent agencies—fire departments and ambulance services—which can lead to inefficiencies. Fire personnel are often first on scene but must wait for ambulance transport units to arrive, which can delay patient transport and extend on-scene times.

DISCUSSION

CENCAL FIRE and EMS AUTHORITY

CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority (CENCAL) is a regional public agency formed through a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) among the Stockton, Lodi, and South San Joaquin County Fire Authorities. CENCAL serves a regional population of approximately 660,000 residents. Its mission is to strengthen local control of EMS delivery by providing ambulance transport services within a fully integrated, fire-based emergency medical services (EMS) system and improving system coordination across jurisdictions. To enhance its operational capabilities, CENCAL has partnered with AMR, an established and experienced provider of ambulance services.



Image: The re-branded AMR ambulances represent a move away from traditional AMR markings, toward a coordinated look with CENCAL branding to signify a regional approach to emergency services.

The transition to a fire-based EMS model signifies a move toward greater system integration, encouraging collaboration among responders for more effective emergency response. Key anticipated improvements include:

IMPROVED RESPONSE TIMES

Fire agencies are already distributed throughout the community and are frequently the first to arrive on scene. Integrating ambulance services within this system is expected to reduce delays between initial response and patient transport.

ENHANCED COORDINATION

Unifying and centralizing emergency ambulance and fire dispatch will result in better communication and coordination among initial responders.

ENHANCED MEDICAL REIMBURSEMENTS

As a public entity, CENCAL qualifies for enhanced Medi-Cal reimbursement, funds unavailable to private systems. These additional resources are required to be reinvested directly into service improvements, including bolstering staffing, increasing the ambulance fleet, advancing training initiatives, and improving patient care quality.

INCREASED ACCOUNTABILITY

With EMS oversight and a regional provider structure, performance standards will be consistently monitored and enforced, fostering transparency and public trust.

BETTER USE OF RESOURCES

The regional model allows for more flexible deployment of personnel and equipment, helping ensure that resources are available where they are most needed, particularly during peak demand periods.

IMPROVED PATIENT OUTCOMES

Faster response and transport times, combined with coordinated care, can improve outcomes for patients experiencing medical emergencies.

CONCLUSION

The move to a fire-based EMS system under CENCAL marks an important shift in how emergency medical services are delivered in San Joaquin County. By bringing ambulance transport and fire response together, the County is working toward a system that is more connected, more efficient, and better equipped to care for patients when every minute matters.

Of course, the real impact will depend on how well the system is put into practice and managed over time. But this change shows a clear effort to improve and modernize emergency services with the goal of better serving the people of San Joaquin County.

AFTERWORD

It is the opinion of this Civil Grand Jury that CENCAL and SJCEMSA agencies should be recognized for the work they've put into building this new countywide system. For the past three years, well before the current ambulance contract expired on May 1, 2026, they've been actively planning and working together to get it right. That kind of early, coordinated effort shows a real commitment to keeping services running smoothly, improving how the system operates, and focusing on what the community needs. Their work has helped set things up for a more seamless transition and a stronger EMS system going forward.

NOTES

Present and past San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury Final Reports and Responses can be accessed on the San Joaquin County Civil Grand Jury website at:

<https://www.sjcourts.org/divisions/civil-grand-jury>

RESPONSES REQUIRED FOR FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

California Penal Code §933(c) and §§933.05(a) and (b) require that specific responses to all Findings and Recommendations contained in this report be submitted to the Presiding Judge of the San Joaquin County Superior Court within 90 days of receipt of the report unless the responder is an elected County officer or agency head where such responses are required within 60 days.

For Findings: Pursuant to California Penal Code §933.05(a) the responding person or entity shall indicate one of the following for each Finding:

1. *The respondent agrees with the Finding.*
2. *The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the Finding; in which case the response shall specify the portion of the Finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reason(s) therefore.*

For Recommendations: Pursuant to California Penal Code §933.05(b) the responding person or entity shall indicate one of the following for each Recommendation:

1. *The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action.*
2. *The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a timeframe for implementation.*
3. *The recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a timeframe for the matter to be prepared for*

discussion by the officer or head of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This timeframe shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.

4. *The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation of the reason(s) therefore.*

RESPONSE DEADLINES

Response from San Joaquin County Emergency Medical Services and CENCAL Fire and EMS Authority is invited within 90 days from receipt of this report.

Mail or hand deliver response to:

The Honorable Lance G. Jacot, Presiding Judge
San Joaquin County Superior Court
180 E Weber Ave, Suite 1306J
Stockton, California 95202

Email response to:

Ms. Krystal Gonzalez
Staff Secretary to the Civil Grand Jury
San Joaquin County Superior Court
civilgrandjury@sjcourts.org

DISCLAIMER

Civil Grand Jury reports are based on documentary evidence and the testimony of sworn or admonished witnesses, not on conjecture or opinion. However, the Civil Grand Jury is precluded by law from disclosing such evidence except upon the specific approval of the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court or another judge appointed by the Presiding Judge (Penal Code Section 911. 924.1 (a))

and 929). Similarly, the Civil Grand Jury is precluded by law from disclosing the identity of witnesses except upon an order of the court for narrowly defined purposes (Penal Code Sections 924.2 and 929).