



Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District

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Metro Fire Provides Pre-Hospital EMS in Accordance with Established SCEMSA Protocols

Mather, CA – The Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (Metro Fire or the District) provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) Emergency Medical Services throughout its jurisdiction in Sacramento County and a portion of Placer County. In the State of California, the EMS Authority provides statewide coordination, planning, development and implementation of local EMS systems. California has 33 local EMS systems providing emergency medical services to 58 counties. Every local EMS system has an EMS Medical Director to provide medical control and to assure medical accountability throughout the planning, implementation and evaluation of the EMS system. Metro Fire's EMTs and paramedics are accredited to practice by the Sacramento County Agency (SCEMSA). Patient care is delivered under the medical oversight of the SCEMSA Medical Director in accordance with protocols, procedures, and policies, collectively known as Program Documents. SCEMSA's Program Documents are based on national best practices, including American Heart Association Guidelines.

The Program Documents that EMTs and Paramedics in Sacramento County operate under are subject to biannual review and revision by SCEMSA with input from members of the Medical Advisory Committee (MAC) and the Operational Advisory Committee (OAC). Among other responsibilities, the MAC/OAC are advisory groups for SCEMSA and the SCEMSA Medical Director with a focus on education, training, quality improvement, data collection, and the operational impact within Sacramento County. In addition, the MAC/OAC serve to establish the standard of quality prehospital medical care for the SCEMSA system, and to have operational input into the establishment of that standard of quality prehospital medical care. The cardiac arrest protocol was last updated in July of 2020 and will be reviewed again in March of 2022. This revision did not include any substantive change regarding treatment and transport of patients in cardiac arrest.

Recently, the Los Angeles area news reported that EMT's and paramedics would be changing protocols on cardiac arrest patients. This guidance was not provided by SCEMSA, and therefore does not affect Metro Fire's provision of pre-hospital care and transport of patients in cardiac arrest. Changes made in one local EMS system are only applicable in that system, not all local EMS systems in the state.

In the cases of cardiac arrest in the out-of-hospital setting, the primary focus is on providing high quality Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) on scene of the incident in accordance with evidence based best practices for cardiac resuscitation. The goal is to render Basic and Advanced Cardiac Life Support appropriate to the situation, attempting to restore spontaneous breathing and blood circulation on scene, and determining transport disposition or declaration of death on scene based upon the patient's response to treatment.

Studies have shown high quality cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) provides the highest chance of survivability for patients experiencing cardiac arrest in the pre-hospital setting. For this reason, it is routine that Metro Fire, and other pre-hospital EMS personnel, provide resuscitation efforts on scene with the goal of restoring spontaneous circulation prior to initiating transport a hospital.

All decisions to end resuscitation efforts are made in consultation with family members present on scene, and our EMTs and Paramedics can call a base hospital to consult with a physician whenever needed. There is no blanket prohibition on transport of patients in cardiac arrest. However, there are situations where the patient presents with obvious death criteria (decapitation, incineration, decomposition, separation of brain or heart from the body, rigor mortis), where resuscitative efforts would be futile, and therefore not initiated.

Every Metro Fire paramedic is highly trained, including in Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and exceeds the minimum required training hours annually. Additionally, the District's Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) program reviews patient care report (PCR's), patient outcomes, and participates on many local and regional committees focused on improving EMS delivery systems for the benefit of those in our communities.

SCEMSA Program Documents are available for review at the following web link, which includes treatment protocols all District EMS personnel must follow:

<https://dhs.saccounty.net/PRI/EMS/Pages/Policy%20Pages/Policies.aspx>

For questions, please feel free to contact Metro Fire's on-call Public Information Officer at (916) 859-4589.

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Forged from a long line of tradition, Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (Metro Fire) provides professional and compassionate protection, education and service to all-risk emergency hazards and incidents. The District was formed in 2000 through the final consolidation of 16 predecessor departments in the Sacramento region. The combined District now consists of approximately 700 employees and serves an area encompassing 358 square miles to over 738,000 citizens including Sacramento and Placer counties. Metro Fire is the seventh largest fire agency in the State of California.