



COUNTY OF MONTEREY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Elsa Jimenez, Director of Health

Administration
Behavioral Health

Clinic Services
Emergency Medical Services
Environmental Health/Animal Services

Public Health
Public Administrator/Public Guardian

Recipient of The California Endowment's 2017 Arnold X. Perkins Award for Outstanding Health Equity Practice

**2017 – 2018 Investigation Statement by
Michael Petrie, EMS Bureau Chief/EMS Director
to the Monterey County Emergency Medical Care Committee
May 9, 2018**

Today, I am issuing a statement regarding the paramedic skills-verification and paramedic accreditation investigation. I am issuing this statement to ensure public health and safety, to assure that the public knows the Monterey County EMS System is intact and functioning, and to inform EMS System stakeholders, the media, and the public regarding the status of this investigation. Currently, there is confusion within the EMS System. For example, yesterday, the EMS Agency was contacted by field paramedics, asking if the Salinas Fire Department could provide ALS. I want to eliminate that uncertainty and ambiguity that could undermine confidence in the EMS System. Because this is an ongoing multi-agency investigation, I cannot answer questions or provide additional comment at this meeting.

Key Points

- The people in Monterey County should know that if you dial 9-1-1 for a medical emergency, you will receive a first responder and a trained and qualified paramedic staffed-ambulance.
- The public can be confident that all paramedics working within the Monterey County EMS System have had their skills verified and can professionally provide treatment

Status

- All paramedic service providers are currently providing paramedic level service. At this time, no organization's status as a paramedic service provider is affected. Therefore, if you have a medical emergency in Monterey County, dial 9-1-1. You will rapidly receive a first responder and a trained and qualified paramedic staffed-ambulance.

Background

In late 2017, the EMS Agency conducted a review of paramedic skills-verification and paramedic accreditation. This review included all agencies (first responder and ambulance) that provide paramedic service in Monterey County.

Early in our review, the EMS Agency identified deficits, and transitioned the review to a formal investigation focused on irregularities in paramedic skills verification processes and paramedic accreditation processes. The EMS Agency contacted the California EMS Authority, which is

responsible for paramedic licensure and licensure-based discipline of paramedics. The EMS Authority opened and is conducting an investigation related to the licensure of individual paramedics. We are cooperating and working closely with the EMS Authority.

The Monterey County EMS Agency remains responsible for investigating compliance with EMS System Policies and Procedures and state law, and to assure the integrity, operations, administrative and clinical control of the Monterey County EMS System, including taking necessary actions involving all paramedic service providers and continuing education training programs.

As soon as training and/or skills verification deficits were identified, to protect public health and safety, the Monterey County EMS Agency directed all paramedic service providers to verify their paramedics skills, using a curriculum and training collateral developed by the EMS Agency and approved by Dr. James Stubblefield, the EMS Medical Director. The EMS Agency also required each paramedic service provider organization to provide us with proof of training. All paramedics were retraining by February 15, 2018.

The EMS Agency has met or will meet with the leadership of each paramedic service provider organization, specifically, the signatory to the PSP agreement, when we have finished evaluating the evidence for that organization. No organization has been or will be blind-sided by the EMS Agency's actions.

Because this multi-agency investigation is ongoing, we cannot comment until the review/investigation is complete. The EMS Agency will not identify the specific agencies involved or not involved in this investigation, until the investigation is complete. However, when that investigation is complete, the EMS Agency will provide comprehensive information.

Referral

- For specific questions about any organization, please reach out directly to that organization.
- For any questions, please contact Health Department Public Information Officer Karen Smith at 831-540-8606 or 831-755-4639

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