



**PUBLIC SAFETY GROUP
SAN DIEGO COUNTY FIRE**

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August 28, 2026

**NEW CALIFORNIA SPECIALTY CARE REGULATIONS, EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2026:
IMPLICATIONS FOR HOSPITALS**

Dear Specialty Care Medical Director,

This correspondence notifies you that the State has updated the California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 6: Critical and Specialty Care Programs. These regulations take effect October 1, 2026, and impose new requirements on hospitals. We look forward to collaborating with you on implementing these regulatory updates, which significantly enhance patient management across the critical and specialty care system.

Standardized data collection is a significant new requirement. Hospitals must submit patient outcome data for all specialty care patients transported to them by EMS. This includes patients not entered into the registry for whom specialty care services are not activated. This change is expected to result in a substantial expansion of data submission requirements, potentially resulting in a need for new hospital system workflows.

All specialty care facilities maintain a signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with San Diego County Emergency Medical Services (CoSD EMS) requiring compliance with all applicable federal, State, County, and local laws, rules, and regulations. Implementation of these updated reporting requirements aligns with those MOA obligations. Since the release of the proposed regulations in February 2025, CoSD EMS has been in communication with specialty care program managers to prepare for these new regulatory requirements. Throughout these discussions, stakeholders have consistently expressed concerns about:

- Increased resource needs for data submission
- Anticipated need for manual data submission until long-term technical solutions are implemented

We recognize these concerns and remain committed to supporting your teams as you navigate these new requirements and adjust workflows to comply with the updated regulations. While resource-intensive manual data collection may be necessary for regulatory compliance in the short term, we encourage hospitals to expedite establishment of automated, bi-directional data exchange systems, such as the Hospital Information Hub.

For technical assistance, contact Josh Smith, Senior Epidemiologist (joshua.smith@sandiegocounty.ca.gov). Thank you for your continued partnership as we work together to implement these improvements in specialty patient care.

Sincerely,

Kristi L. Koenig, MD, FACEP, FIFEM, FAEMS, Medical Director
San Diego County Emergency Medical Services Office
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cc: Andrew Parr, EMS Administrator