



**County of San Mateo
Health Department
Emergency Medical Services Agency**

Request for Proposals
(Amended 5/5/2008)

**Emergency Ambulance
Service**

Service beginning July 1, 2009

**Proposer's Conference
April 23, 2008 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
San Mateo County Health Department
225 37th Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403**

**Proposal must be submitted to:
Barbara Pletz, EMS Administrator
San Mateo County EMS Agency
Health Department
225 37th Ave
San Mateo, CA 94403**

**Proposals Due
July 9, 2008 by 5:00 p.m.**

RFP Timeline
(dates are subject to change)

March 25, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RFP approved by Board of Supervisors • RFP Issued by Emergency Medical Services Agency
April 16, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline for receipt of all questions regarding the RFP by 12:00 p.m.
April 23, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposers' Conference, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm, San Mateo County Health Department, Room 100, 225 37th Avenue, San Mateo, CA 94403
April 30, 2008 May 7, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amendments to RFP released (if any)
July 9, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline for submission of proposals
July 16, 17, 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposer Interviews (Tentative)
July 22, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Department Director's recommendation announced.
August 1, 2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final date for protests
To be determined	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final recommendation of award to Board of Supervisors by Health Department Director and Declaration of Intent to Contract
July 1, 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of service by the Contractor at 8:00 a.m.

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I. IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PROPOSERS

Request For Proposals - Not A Commitment. This Request for Proposals (RFP) is not a commitment or contract of any kind.

County May Accept or Reject Any Or All Proposals. The County reserves the right to accept or reject any or all proposals received as a result of this request, or to cancel in part or in its entirety the RFP process if the County deems it is in its best interest to do so. This RFP shall not be construed to be a low bid process. The contract, if awarded, will be negotiated with the proposer who can best meet the County's needs as identified in this RFP.

County May Waive RFP Requirements. The County reserves the right to waive any requirements of this RFP when it determines that waiving a requirement is in the best interest of the County.

SubContractors May Be Used. This RFP encourages combinations of organizations in order to provide the required services. However, there shall be only one contractor, under whose auspices the proposal is submitted and who must assume all liability and responsibility for achieving the performance levels specified in this RFP. Any subcontracts for essential services, as described in the RFP, between the proposer and separate entities must be pre-approved in writing by the County and shall be described within the proposals.

Need For A Complete Response to RFP. It is in the proposer's best interest to submit a complete and accurate proposal. Where documentation or response is incomplete or silent, it shall be assumed that the proposal is deficient. Further, it is in the proposer's best interest to make a proposal that meets the stated requirements contained in this RFP. While proposers may provide alternatives to the requirements for consideration, failure to comply with all minimum requirements described within the RFP may disqualify proposals. Proposers are invited to submit alternatives to the services described within this RFP, if such alternatives are in the best interests of the County.

Accuracy of Information. The County specifically makes no promises or guarantees concerning the number of emergency and non-emergency calls or transports, quantities of patients or distance of transports that will be associated with this procurement. The County has made every effort to provide accurate data and information but does not guarantee the accuracy of any data included in the RFP or its website.

County Not responsible For Proposer's Cost To Respond. Costs for developing the proposals are entirely the responsibility of the proposers and shall not be reimbursed.

General Provisions Regarding Public

Nature of Proposals. Government Code Section 6250 et. seq., the Public Records Act, defines a public record as any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public's business prepared, owned, used, or retained by any state or local agency regardless of physical form or characteristics. The Public Records Act provides that public records shall be disclosed upon request and that any citizen has a right to inspect any public record, unless the document is exempted from disclosure.

Proposer's Rights regarding Confidentiality of Proposals. The County cannot represent or guarantee that any information submitted in response to the RFP will be confidential. If the County receives a request for any document submitted in response to this RFP, it will not assert any privileges that may exist on behalf of the person or business submitting the proposal. If a proposer believes that a portion of its proposal is confidential and notifies the County of such in writing, the County may, as a courtesy, attempt to notify the proposer of any request for the proposal. However, it would be the sole responsibility of that proposer to assert any applicable privileges or reasons why the document should not be produced, and to obtain a court order prohibiting disclosure. The proposer understands that the County is not responsible under any circumstances for any harm caused by production of a confidential proposal.

County's Rights Regarding Confidentiality of Proposals. To the extent consistent with applicable provisions of the Public Records Act and applicable case law interpreting those provisions, the County and/or its officers, agents and employees retains the discretion to release or to withhold disclosure of any information submitted in response to this RFP.

Waiver of Right To Privacy. Submission of a proposal constitutes a complete waiver of any claims whatsoever against the County of San Mateo, and/or its agents, officers or employees, that the County has violated a proposer's right to privacy, disclosed trade secrets or caused any damage by allowing the proposal to be inspected.

Use of Ideas. County reserves the right to pursue any and/or all ideas generated by this request.

Restrictions from Contact. As of the issuance date of this RFP and continuing until the final date for submission of proposals, all County personnel are specifically directed not to hold meetings, conferences, technical discussions, or communications of any kind with any applicant for purposes of responding to this RFP. Any attempt by a proposer, or agent thereof, to contact County personnel or a member of the Proposal Review Committee regarding the proposal process may be considered tampering and may result in the applicant being disqualified from entering into any contract that may result from this RFP.

Modifications. The County may modify the RFP prior to the fixed date for submission of proposals by issuance of an addendum

II. INTRODUCTION

Invitation

Pursuant to Health and Safety Code §1797.224, the County of San Mateo has an exclusive operating area for a county-wide emergency ambulance response that includes all of the County's jurisdiction with the exception of the City of South San Francisco (see map Attachment A). The County invites proposals from organizations who have demonstrated excellent experience as a provider of emergency ambulance to submit proposals to provide emergency ambulance service within the County's exclusive operating area. The successful proposer will be granted a contract for exclusive operating rights for emergency ambulance service at the advanced life support level for five years commencing July 1, 2009, with a possible extension of up to five additional years. Conditions for contract extensions may include, but are not be limited to, the following:

Contract compliance

Provider's quality improvement (QI) program for all facets of the local operation through implementation of a Baldrige or Baldrige-like process, International Service Organization (ISO) certification, or other QI program

Extent to which the Provider has implemented County initiatives such as cultural competence and linguistic access

This RFP is for emergency ambulance service. It includes all 911 medical requests and any requests directly received by any ambulance company for emergency ambulance transport. It does not include air ambulance, non-emergency interfacility transports, interfacility critical care transports, or air ambulance service.

Background Information

The emergency ambulance contract is overseen by the San Mateo County EMS Agency (EMS Agency) which is the County's Health Department. The Agency's EMS website is <http://www.smhealth.org/ems>. That website contains substantial information on the EMS system design, current contract and its amendments, policies/protocols, as well as the recommendations made as a result of the recent "EMS Redesign Process."

The present ambulance contractor is American Medical Response West (AMR) and this contract includes both emergency ambulance service and fire service paramedic first response. The contract commenced January 1, 1999.

Background information regarding San Mateo County, its EMS system, and information such as numbers of ambulance transports is included as Attachment B.

III. PROPOSER REQUIREMENTS

Experience

Proposer must have experience as the provider of emergency ambulance services for a population of over 400,000 or equivalent experience in a single contiguous area. Such experience should include compliance with fractile response time performance and other regulatory/contractual expectations. The proposer must have an excellent business reputation and show evidence of stability as a provider of services comparable to those outlined in this RFP.

Financial Strength

Proposer must provide evidence of its fiscal strength to implement and maintain the services outlined within this RFP for the term of the contract period. The proposer must have sufficient capital for contract implementation and financial reserves to sustain operations. The proposer must be free of commitments and potential commitments which might impact assets, lines of credit, guarantor letters, or otherwise negatively affect the company's ability to perform the contract.

Use of Subcontractors

The use of subcontractors is permissible; however, all subcontractors for essential services must meet the applicable qualifications contained in the RFP and must be approved by the County. If a proposer intends to subcontract any portion of the services, the credentials of that subcontractor must be described in the proposal, together with a detailed description of the services to be subcontracted and the terms of the subcontractual relationship. The County reserves the right to reject requests for use of subcontractors.

IV. SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Proposals must adhere to the following system requirements.

A. Response Time Standards And Compliance Incentives

Response Time Standards

There will be fire service paramedic first responder and ambulance response time standards. For the response time standards, see Attachment C.

Response time standards vary for urban/suburban, rural, and remote/wilderness, see Attachment C.

There are five (5) response time compliance zones (see Attachment D). These zones may contain a mix of urban/suburban, rural and remote/wilderness areas. Proposals must evidence an ability to maintain response times with at least 90% compliance in each of these five zones, see Attachment D.

Proposers are encouraged to recommend modifications to the zone boundaries and/or deployment strategies that will result in consistent excellent response time compliance in hard to serve areas.

Compliance Incentives

Financial penalties provide incentive for maintaining excellent response time performance. Fines are levied for late responses for both Priority 1 (Code 3) and Priority 3 (Code 2) calls. For the anticipated fine schedule, see Attachment E.

Response Time Exceptions

In some cases, late responses can be excused from financial penalties and from response time compliance reports. Exceptions shall be for good cause only, as determined by the County. Examples of current exceptions include:

- Call was reduced from Priority 1 to Priority 3 by on-scene responders or by the dispatcher in accordance with County protocol.
- Multiple units to the same scene.
- Adverse weather conditions.

Response Time Calculations

Response time will be measured from the time that the ambulance or fire first responder vehicle is dispatched by PSC through the time of vehicle arrival at the address/location (wheels stopped).

Response Time Performance Report

The ambulance provider will submit a written report bi-weekly to the EMS Agency, in a manner required by the Agency, identifying each emergency call dispatched:

- which did not meet response time standard.
- each use of a BLS ambulance.
- each time an ambulance was requested and was not able to respond.
- each failure to properly report times necessary to determine response time, on-scene time, or transport time.
- the report will identify causes of performance failures and shall document efforts to eliminate these problems.

B. Ambulance Deployment Plan

The on-going ambulance deployment plan will be kept on file with the EMS Agency. Additional ambulance hours must be added by the provider if the response time performance standard is not met. The plan will describe:

- The proposed locations of ambulances and numbers of vehicles to be deployed during each hour of the day and day of the week.
- 24-hour and system status management strategies.
- Mechanisms to meet the demand for emergency ambulance response during peak periods or unexpected periods of unusually high call volume including disasters and other surge events.
- A map identifying proposed ambulance station or post locations and identifying those geographic areas within the response time compliance areas as indicated in this RFP.
- The full-time and part-time work force necessary to fully staff ambulances identified in the deployment plans.
- Any planned use of on-call crews.

- Ambulance shifts and criteria to be used in determining shift length.
- Any mandatory overtime requirements.
- Record keeping and statistical analyses to be used to identify and correct response time performance problems.
- Any other strategies to enhance system performance and/or efficiency through improved deployment/redeployment practices.

The initial ambulance deployment plan shall be maintained for at least the first three (3) months of operations.

Standby and special events

If an event sponsor wants a dedicated standby emergency ambulance at the event, the provider may enter into a separate agreement with the sponsor for the provision of standby and payment for such services.

C. Vehicles

Ambulances – all used under this contract will:

- Be of Type I or III;
- Be procured new for this contract;
- Be identically configured;
- Meet or exceed the current Federal KKK-A-1822 standards at the time of the vehicles' original manufacture, except where such standards conflict with State of California standards, in which case the State standards shall prevail;
- Meet or exceed the recommendations for ambulances by the Ambulance Manufacturers Division of the National Truck Equipment Association; and
- Meet or exceed the equipment standards of the State of California.

During the redesign process, the County received multiple recommendations regarding the configuration of ambulances. Proposers are encouraged to consider these recommendations, along with cost/benefit ratios, in developing their proposals.

Supervisor vehicles – all used under this contract will:

- Be of sufficient size to carry all required equipment.

- Be procured new for this contract.
- Have mileage standards consistent with ambulance mileage standards.
- Be identical in make and configuration.
- Have a tow package of sufficient rate to tow disaster trailers.
- Meet Department of Transportation and National Fire Protection Association standards for Code 3 response.

Vehicle Maintenance Program

A vehicle maintenance program must be designed and conducted so as to achieve the highest standards of reliability appropriate to a modern emergency service. The vehicle maintenance program will be reviewed and approved by the County. The proposer will have to maintain detailed vehicle maintenance records.

Vehicles shall be kept in excellent working condition at all times. Any vehicle with any deficiency that compromises, or may compromise, its performance shall be immediately removed from service. Fines estimated to be \$500 will be levied for each preventable mechanical failure in route to or transporting a patient from an emergency call.

Vehicle Safety Program

Provider will have a vehicle safety program that includes an on-going driver-training program for ambulance personnel, policies and procedures for safe driving, and other mechanisms to promote safe driving and prevent vehicular crashes/incidents.

D. Equipment and supplies

Ambulances

Each ambulance will carry standardized equipment and supplies that meet federal, State, and local requirements for advanced life support ambulances, including the requirements of the EMS Agency policies and procedures. A list of the EMS Agency required equipment and supplies is Attachment F. The location of such equipment and supplies will be stored in the same location in all ambulances.

Durable equipment does not need to be new at the beginning of the contract but will be required to meet specifications approved by the County.

All expendable supplies including medications and controlled substances must be restocked by the provider. The provider will have a supply inventory control process.

All medical equipment shall be in good repair and safe working order at all times. There shall be sufficient medical equipment and expendable supplies so that there is sufficient backup to accommodate replacement during repair and for times of excessive demand in the system.

Fire Service Paramedic First Responder

The ambulance provider will provide first responder vehicles with the same durable medical equipment and expendable supplies as are used by provider. Durable medical equipment does not need to be new at the beginning of the contract but will be required to meet specifications approved by the County. The amount of inventory on the first responder vehicles may be less than the ambulance inventory. Medical equipment and supplies shall be standardized throughout the system. A standard marker (Star of Life) will identify the location of of medical equipment and supplies on every first responder vehicle. ~~The medical equipment and supplies shall be located in the same place on all fire first response vehicles.~~

Field Supervisor's Vehicles

Field supervisor's vehicles will carry essential medical equipment and supplies so that initial patient care can be provided should this vehicle arrive first at the emergency scene. Additionally these vehicles will carry equipment and supplies likely to be needed at multi-casualty incidents.

Field supervisor vehicles include those for ambulance field supervisors and for fire first responder supervisors.

Communications Equipment

Provider will utilize the County's radio system for voice communications between the dispatch center(s), ambulances, and hospitals. The frequency range of the

County's radio system operates in the UHF T-Band 470-512 MHz range. The current annual cost to AMR for maintenance of the County radio system is \$98,000 as this amount was placed in the contract. According to the Information Services Department the charge for FY 2008/09 should be \$103,582 based upon the Department's standard fee schedule.

The fire first responders are on separate radio frequencies. These are 150-174 114-179 Mhz and ~~482-491~~ Mhz.

The provider must have AVL/GPS/MDT in place in ambulances and ambulance field supervisor vehicles. This equipment must be integrated with the PSC CAD.

Provider must equip each ambulance with appropriate emergency communications and alerting devices. Every ambulance must be able to communicate at all times and locations with PSC, other ambulances and supervisor's vehicles, receiving hospitals, and fire agencies.

Each ambulance must have a mobile radio and a portable radio that can be operated "hands free". Radios will be positioned in the ambulance so that a crew member in the patient compartment is able to use the mobile radio. Each ambulance must have emergency alerting devices capable of being used to notify ambulance personnel of response need and radio communications equipment sufficient to meet or exceed the requirements of County policies and procedures.

Each ambulance shall have a laptop computer with mobile data terminal capability, CAD access, mapping software, and ability to send electronic patient care records to the receiving hospital and to a centralized server via wireless technology. Each ambulance will be equipped with automatic vehicle location (AVL) and global positioning satellite (GPS). ✓

Each fire first response vehicle shall have a laptop computer with the ability to send electronic patient care records to the receiving hospital and to a centralized server via wireless technology.

E. Personnel

Ambulance Work Schedules And Conditions

At least 51% of the personnel who staff ambulances shall

