

# EMSA Dispatch

Volume 1, Issue 3

November 2024

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## Box Truck, Big Hearts: EMSA Team Delivers Holiday Lunches for Local Youth

By Ken Paglia

EMSA's Disaster Medical Services (DMS) Division employs a team of experts in disaster preparedness and response. They also have big trucks and plenty of holiday spirit, which they utilized this month when they helped deliver holiday meals for children in the Sacramento City Unified School District. On November 5, DMS delivered and unloaded 10 pallets of boxed lunches from Sacramento Food Bank to the school district using the division's 26-foot box truck. The meals will be given to local kids to take home during the upcoming holiday break.

"We wanted to make sure the kids got food this holiday season and it was a great team building exercise for DMS," said Division Chief Tim Reed.

For more info visit DMS online at [emsa.ca.gov/disaster-medical-services-division-links](https://emsa.ca.gov/disaster-medical-services-division-links).

## A Season of Gratitude and Service

By Elizabeth Basnett

As we move into the heart of the holiday season, we are reminded of the importance of gratitude—not just for the joys of family and friends, but for the collective work that keeps our communities safe and healthy. This time of year, offers a natural pause, and opportunity to reflect on what we've accomplished together and express our thanks to those who make a difference every day.

At EMSA, we are grateful for the dedicated emergency medical professionals, healthcare partners, and external agencies who tirelessly support the wellbeing of Californians. Whether you are an emergency responder on the frontlines, a community partner contributing to health initiatives, or one of the many individuals who work behind the scenes to ensure the efficiency of our systems, your contributions are valued more than words can express.

This season, as we celebrate the spirit of giving, I encourage all of us to remember that our work is not just a job, but a calling—one that impacts lives, families, and communities. From the heroic efforts during this year's wildfire season to the continuous innovation in our emergency medical services, we have much to be proud of.

As we look ahead, EMSA remains committed to advancing the standards of care and fostering partnerships that drive meaningful change. Our collective efforts make California a safer, stronger place, and for that, I am deeply thankful.

On behalf of the entire EMSA team, we wish you and your loved ones a safe and joyful holiday season. Thank you for your service and dedication.

## **Spotlight on Sponsorship: Support the EMS Awards!**

By Ken Paglia

We are thrilled to invite you to become a part of the 2024 EMS Awards, an incredible event celebrating EMS professionals throughout California. Set to take place on June 4, 2025, in Anaheim, this prestigious ceremony is an opportunity to recognize colleagues in EMS who have done exceptional work and shown outstanding leadership in 2024.

Check out our highlight video from last year's event at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8nKkFmvC3pg>

Why Sponsor?

- **Brand Visibility:** Position your brand at the forefront of our statewide community, showcasing your support for California's emergency response professionals.
- **Community Engagement:** Align your organization with the mission of EMS heroes who serve our communities!
- **Networking Opportunities:** Gain access to a unique once-a-year gathering of stakeholders, leaders, and decision-makers.

- **Media Exposure:** Amplify your commitment to EMS through media coverage of our awards and ceremony.
- **Customized Sponsorship Packages:** Tailored sponsorship levels from \$2,500 to \$20,000 to fit your marketing strategy and budget.

Get Involved:

Explore the various sponsorship opportunities by visiting [emsa.ca.gov/awards](https://emsa.ca.gov/awards) and click "Become an EMS Awards Sponsor!"

Whether it's through event signage, speaking opportunities, or digital mentions, we have options designed to maximize your exposure. Let's discuss how we can customize your involvement!

Your sponsorship is more than an investment; it's a partnership in celebrating and supporting the vital work of EMS professionals. Let's make the 2024 EMS Awards a memorable event which not only honors excellence but also strengthens our community!

We look forward to collaborating with you to create an unforgettable tribute to our EMS heroes.

Contact us at: [EMSA.ExternalAffairs@emsa.ca.gov](mailto:EMSA.ExternalAffairs@emsa.ca.gov)

## **EMSA's Strategic Vision for 2025**

By Ashley Williams

As we prepare for the year ahead, EMSA is committed to advancing our mission of providing high-quality emergency medical services for all Californians. Our strategic goals for 2025 focus on key pillars: equity and patient-centered care—principles that are at the heart of our work.

One of the cornerstone efforts in our 2025 vision is the development of an equity metrics framework to ensure that emergency medical services are delivered fairly across all communities. Supported by a \$400,000 grant from the CARESTAR Foundation, this initiative is set to foster meaningful conversations and statewide collaborations to define what equity truly means in EMS.

In 2025, EMSA will also host a statewide Data Summit, bringing together stakeholders from across the healthcare and emergency services spectrum. This two-day event will focus on how we can use data to improve not only equity in care but also critical outcomes for time-sensitive emergencies such as STEMI, stroke, and pediatric care. By sharing best practices and innovative

approaches, we believe the summit will pave the way for improved care coordination and more responsive EMS systems.

As part of our ongoing regulatory updates, EMSA is working to modernize several aspects of the state's EMS regulations. This process will include reviewing and revising policies to align with the evolving needs of emergency medical services. Our goal is to create a regulatory environment that supports innovation, improves service delivery, and ensures the highest standards of care. EMSA is currently working on updates to chapter 6, Specialty Programs, and expects it to go out for public comment in early 2025.

As we look toward 2025, EMSA remains focused on building a more resilient, patient-centered EMS system—one that addresses the unique needs of California's diverse populations. We invite our community partners to join us in shaping this future, as we work together to ensure that every patient, regardless of location or background, receives equitable, high-quality care.

## **Supporting the Health of First Responders During the Holidays**

By Ashley Williams

As we approach the holiday season, it's essential to recognize the unique challenges that first responders face during this time. While many people are enjoying time with their families, first responders continue their vital work—often under heightened stress and demanding conditions. This can take a toll not only on their physical health but also on their mental well-being. Supporting our teams during these high-stress periods is more important than ever.

### **Physical Health Tips**

The work is physically demanding, especially with long shifts and emergency responses. To avoid fatigue and injury, focus on maintaining proper body mechanics during patient lifts, staying hydrated, and doing regular stretching exercises to reduce muscle tension.

### **Managing Mental Stress**

The holidays can amplify emotional stress as these professionals face high-pressure situations. Small mindfulness practices, like deep breathing or brief moments of reflection, can help ease stress. Don't hesitate to seek support through peer networks or mental health resources when needed.

### **Balancing Work and Life**

Although shifts might not allow for much time off, it's essential to carve out brief moments for rest and recovery. Use this time to disconnect from work, recharge, and spend quality time with loved ones.

## **Access Wellness Resources**

Take advantage of wellness programs when time permits. Whether it's physical fitness, counseling, or stress management workshops, these resources are there to support your well-being.

## **Tips to Reduce Holiday Stress**

1. **Open Up:** Share your feelings with trusted friends, family, or colleagues. Talking about your experiences can help relieve stress.
2. **Set Realistic Expectations:** Recognize that everyone, including you, has limits. Allow yourself to recharge and focus on doing your best rather than striving for perfection.
3. **Take Short Breaks:** Simple practices like two-minute breathing exercises or brief moments of stillness can help you pause and reset. Try deep breathing by inhaling for five seconds, exhaling for five seconds, and repeating a few times.
4. **Stay Active:** Physical exercise, even a short walk, can do wonders for your mood and stress levels. Squeeze in a brisk 10–20-minute walk if time is tight, and remember that even a brief stretch or walk outside can help.
5. **Prioritize Sleep:** Aim for 7–9 hours per night. Quality sleep promotes both mental and physical resilience.
6. **Hydrate Smartly:** Water is your best choice. Consider adding sliced fruit or cucumber for flavor, and avoid excess caffeine or sugary drinks.
7. **Connect with Loved Ones and Pets:** Spending quality time with family and pets can boost your mood and relieve stress. Research shows that petting animals can lower blood pressure and improve mental health.

## **National EMS Information System (NEMSIS) Version 3.5.1 Transition**

By Adrienne Kim

California EMS Information System (CEMSIS) first started as a demonstration project for improving EMS data across California. Today, CEMSIS is a statewide database that offers a secure, centralized data system for collecting data about individual emergency medical service requests, patients treated at hospitals, and EMS provider organizations. CEMSIS uses the universal standard for how patient care information resulting from an emergency 9-1-1 call for assistance is collected called NEMSIS.

CEMSIS recently completed a major transition to version 3.5 at the start of this year. Before CEMSIS transitioned, CEMSIS only had 33 LEMSAs participating with 566 EMS providers and received 4,203,585 EMS records (version 3.4) in 2023. Now after the transition, CEMSIS now has all 34 LEMSAs participating since CEMSIS was established! With all 34 LEMSAs participating, CEMSIS is receiving data from 550 EMS providers and has received 5,194,872 EMS records to date. In mid-2025,

CEMSIS will undergo another transition, version 3.5.1. This transition includes major and minor changes and these changes are expected to be finalized by the NEMSIS technical advisory committee at the end of December 2024.

By the end of 2024, it is anticipated that CEMIS will receive over six million records. The data collected serves to provide an image of the EMS system, the number and types of patients being cared for, and the EMS and hospital institutions and individuals who are providing that care. As more data becomes available to the EMS Authority, that image will sharpen. As the reliability of the data improves, answers to questions about the quality of the care provided to EMS patients will be possible.

## **CalMAT Response Performance: A Closer Look at CalFIRE Requests**

By Tim Reed

This fire season, CalMAT teams played a crucial role in supporting CalFIRE during major wildfire incidents across California. Data from CalFIRE requests show how efficiently teams mobilized and responded. Each request, tracked from the moment it was received through to demobilization, provides valuable insight into CalMAT's rapid deployment in emergency situations.

### **Key Stages of Response:**

- Request Received: The initial request from CalFIRE.
- Approval Process: Time taken from submission to approval.
- Coordinating: The time spent organizing and preparing the team.
- Enroute: When teams are dispatched to the incident location.
- Onscene: Arrival at the site, ready to provide medical support.
- Demobilization: The conclusion of the operation and team withdrawal.

### **Key Highlights from 2024 Data:**

THOMPSON Fire (Butte Unit):

- Request approved within 17 minutes.
- Coordination took 34 minutes before the team was enroute.
- Teams arrived on scene within 187 minutes of dispatch.
- Total time from request received to onscene: 9 hours (540 minutes).

LAKE Fire (Los Padres National Forest):

- The request approval process took 505 minutes.
- Coordination lasted 443 minutes, with the team enroute shortly afterward.
- Total request-to-onscene time: 23 hours and 21 minutes (1,401 minutes).

### SHELLY Fire (Klamath National Forest):

- Request approved in 1,483 minutes, showing an extended timeframe for this incident.
- Coordination took 1,085 minutes, with the team enroute 617 minutes later.
- The team arrived onsite within 287 minutes after being enroute.
- Total request-to-onscene time: 23 hours and 7 minutes (1,388 minutes).

### Average Timelines:

- Approval Process: Typically completed, on average, in 2.78 hours.
- Coordination: Average time is 6.98 hours
- Received to Enroute: Average time 9.76 hours
- CalFire MOU requires medical teams to be enroute in less than 12 hours.
- Enroute to Onscene: Took 6.42 hours
- Total Request-to-Onscene Time: Typically ranges between 16.2 hours
- CalFire MOU requires medical teams to be onsite within 24 hours of request.
- These times reflect the complexity and urgency of wildfire response. In high-pressure situations, CalMAT continues to be a vital part of California's emergency response system, delivering rapid medical support to those in need. As we move forward, optimizing these timelines is critical to maintaining efficient and effective responses to California's growing wildfire challenges.

## **Celebrating Excellence in Emergency Medical Services: Nominate an EMS Hero!**

By Ken Paglia

We invite you to participate in recognizing exceptional individuals in California's EMS community. Whether it's a firefighter, EMT, nurse, officer, educator, administrator or paramedic—your nomination will shine a light on those who made outstanding contributions to EMS in 2024. You can nominate individuals or groups, and we even have an award for civilian heroes!

This year we expanded the award categories to include Paramedic of the Year, Dispatcher of the Year, and Mobile Intensive Care Nurse of the Year, bringing the total to 15 prestigious awards.

Nominating someone for an EMS Award is a powerful way to recognize the extraordinary efforts of those who go above and beyond in their service to the community. It provides well-deserved acknowledgment that not only inspires colleagues but also highlights the critical role of EMS professionals in ensuring public safety and health. These awards are an opportunity to celebrate the dedication and impact of those who make a difference every day.

How to Nominate:

- Visit [emsa.ca.gov/awards](https://emsa.ca.gov/awards) to explore the various award categories. Take a few moments to read through the categories and select the most appropriate award.
- Click "Nominate an EMS Hero". Provide details and let us know the story behind your award nomination!

Let's come together to ensure that our EMS heroes are both appreciated and celebrated.

Nominate at [emsa.ca.gov/awards](https://emsa.ca.gov/awards) to help us honor the best and brightest in our community!

Important Dates

- Nominations are open through January 31, 2025. Don't miss this opportunity to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of your EMS colleagues!
- The event is scheduled for June 4, 2025, in Anaheim.

## **EMSA Announces Regulations Update**

By Ken Paglia

In a significant development for California's EMS system, the Office of Administrative Law (OAL) has approved a comprehensive re-chaptering of EMSA's regulations. The update to Title 22, set to take effect on January 1, 2025, promises to bring clarity and efficiency to the state's EMS framework.

"We're modernizing the regulations and continuing to put patient outcomes at the forefront. This re-chaptering is a huge win for the EMS system in California because the regs will be more accessible and easier to understand for everyone," said Director Liz Basnett.

For years, the EMS community has navigated a complex regulatory framework which has evolved over time. While this framework aimed to serve, there has



been a recognized need for modernization to better align with current practices. The re-chaptering initiative refines and streamlines the regulations, ensuring they meet the needs of today's EMS professionals more effectively.

The revisions aim to modernize the regulations by:

- **Restructuring for Clarity:** The reorganization will present the regulations in a more logical sequence, making it easier for EMS practitioners and agencies to locate and understand.
- **Facilitating Compliance:** With clearer regulations, the 34 local EMS agencies and nearly 30,000 EMS personnel in California will benefit from processes which better support their vital patient care work.
- **Future-Proofing:** The updates not only simplify current regulations but also set the stage for smoother updates in the future.

A guide to the re-chaptering is available here: <https://bit.ly/3C4AUvB>

This overhaul is seen as a victory for EMSA and its partners, have long advocated for a more intuitive regulatory system. The changes are expected to enhance emergency response operations across California, ensuring that those on the frontlines of emergency care can operate with clearer guidelines.

## **Anitra Quinn Joins EMSA as Chief of Professional Standards Division**

EMSA is excited to announce Anitra Quinn is joining the team as the new Chief of the Professional Standards Division. Anitra brings over 20 years of leadership experience s across multiple state agencies, including three years with the Department of Consumer Affairs, where she played a role in upholding regulatory excellence, and 21 years with the Department of Justice, where she contributed to advancing justice and public safety.

Anitra's leadership style is grounded in integrity, collaboration, and a deep commitment to public service. Outside of work, Anitra enjoys spending time outdoors—whether tending to her garden or hiking scenic trails. She's also an avid concert-goer and passionate about sports, always ready to cheer on her favorite teams, the Cincinnati Bengals and the Sacramento Kings.

Her dedication to giving back and helping others perfectly aligns with EMSA's mission. She is passionate about helping others and making a positive impact wherever she can.

We are excited to have Anitra join our team, and we look forward to the energy, expertise, and vision she will bring to her new role. Please join us in giving her a warm welcome!

## **Utilization of Current Forms and Reminder of New Address**

By Jeff Hates and Dana Preston

Attention: Paramedic Programs, Students, EMS Coordinators, Local EMS Agencies, Paramedic Applicants, and Future Applicants

To ensure timely and accurate processing, please use the updated forms and applications available at <https://emsa.ca.gov/forms/> for the following:

- Initial Licensure
- Renewal Licensure
- Renewal Audit Licensure
- Reinstatement of Licensure

Note: EMSA has received outdated applications. Please be aware that outdated applications may include incorrect fee amounts or the EMSA's previous address.

EMSA's New Address:

11120 International Drive, Suite 200  
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

As a reminder, the following paramedic applications can be processed or renewed online at <https://emsa.ca.gov/online-licensing-information/>:

- Initial Licensure
- Renewal Licensure
- Renewal Audit Licensure
- Reinstatement – Licensed Lapsed 0-6 Months

## **Voluntary AEMT Training Program Accreditation is Going Live!**

By Nicole Mixon

Effective January 1, 2025, the Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the EMS Professions (CoAEMSP) will begin accepting applications for voluntary AEMT training program accreditation. CoAEMSP provides accreditation services in support of the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), the nationally recognized organization for paramedic and AEMT education.

Currently, CAAHEP accreditation is required for all paramedic training programs in California, while the new AEMT accreditation is voluntary. However, to ensure the highest standard of care for California's citizens, EMSA encourages all AEMT training programs in the state to pursue this voluntary accreditation.

## **EMSA's Commitment to Inclusive Workplaces: The Role of the Disability Advisory Committee**

By Ken Paglia

Since its inception in 2015, EMSA's Disability Advisory Committee (EDAC) has been pivotal in fostering an inclusive environment for employees with disabilities. The EDAC works to ensure that all EMSA staff, especially those with disabilities, have access to necessary services and support. The EDAC's mission includes raising awareness about both visible and invisible disabilities like learning disabilities, mental health challenges, and chronic conditions such as diabetes.

EMSA Training and Workforce Analyst Samantha Gray took on the role of EDAC Chair in the Spring of 2024. Gray, who herself has a disability, sought out the role because she thought she could help improve awareness.

"Some days you may see me limping, or occasionally in a wheelchair. I don't mind when people offer to help. But it's also important to be aware of sensitivities. You don't want to treat someone with a disability as if they're incompetent. Sometimes people just need a little bit of time and help," said Gray.

Education is a core function of the EDAC. The committee organizes training sessions to educate employees on how to respond appropriately in scenarios involving disabilities.

The EDAC is currently focused on several key initiatives including disability awareness trainings, continuing to improve accessibility and updating evacuation plans.

Reflecting on her role as EDAC Chair, Gray expressed both surprise and pride in discovering the extensive support systems available.

There are so many resources that I had no idea about before joining the committee. Learning about laws and regulations has been eye-opening. It makes me proud to work for EMSA and proud to work for the state," she said.

The EDAC remains dedicated to its mission of supporting employees with disabilities, promoting inclusivity, and increasing awareness within the workplace. Shout out to the entire EDAC team for their incredible work and dedication: Laura Aceves, Nirmala Badhan, Samantha Gray, Aley Gucake, Candace Keefer, Kim Lew, Nicole Mixon, Katherine Rice, Jennifer Sanchez, and Kathryn Souza.

For more information visit [emsa.ca.gov/disability-advisory-committee](https://emsa.ca.gov/disability-advisory-committee)

## **Connect with EMSA on Social Media!**

To ensure you don't miss out on any valuable information, here's where you can connect with us:

- Facebook: Follow EMSA on Facebook for community stories, event highlights, and experts from the emergency medical field. [Facebook/EMSA](#)
- X: Join our X feed for real-time updates, industry news, and engaging discussions. It's a great place to stay informed and interact directly with EMSA. [Twitter/EMSA](#)
- LinkedIn: Our LinkedIn page is the go-to resource for professional connections, detailed articles, and EMSA career opportunities. It's an excellent platform for expanding your professional network within the emergency services community. [LinkedIn/EMSA](#)
- Instagram: Experience the visual side of EMSA on Instagram, where we share behind-the-scenes looks at EMS operations, training exercises, and the people who make it all happen. [Instagram/EMSA](#)
- YouTube: Subscribe to EMSA's YouTube channel for educational videos, training tutorials, and comprehensive insights into the world of emergency medical services. [YouTube/EMSA](#)

## **We Want to Hear from You: Share Your Ideas for Our Next Newsletter!**

At EMSA, we believe that collaboration is key to our success, and that includes hearing from our valued partners. We're always looking for fresh ideas and content that resonate with our community, and who better to ask than you?

Do you have a topic you'd love to see covered in our next newsletter? Whether it's a spotlight on a particular aspect of emergency medical services, an inspiring success story, or a feature on an innovative project, we want to hear your thoughts!

Send your ideas to [EMSA.externalaffairs@emsa.ca.gov](mailto:EMSA.externalaffairs@emsa.ca.gov)