



TRIAGE PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES

Introduction	The objective of triage is to sort casualties so that the maximum number of lives can be saved through effective utilization of rescuers, medical personnel and medical facilities. The Coastal Valleys EMS Region MCI Plan utilizes the START system of triage.
Assumption	During a multi-casualty incident, injured will outnumber rescuers and emergency medical treatment must be prioritized.
General Principles	Coastal Valleys EMS Region MCI Plan Triage Protocols & Procedures are based upon the following principles: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Primary triage, utilizing the START system, will be done by first-in responders▪ Primary triage takes priority over emergency treatment▪ Casualties are sorted according to the seriousness of their injuries and identified with tags establishing priority of treatment and transportation▪ Personnel will perform a basic triage examination, categorize the patient and attach the appropriate colored tag in 60 seconds or less▪ All victims must be tagged. It is time consuming and potentially fatal to triage without tagging victims▪ Emergency care administered by triage teams is restricted to opening airway, controlling severe hemorrhage and elevating patient's feet▪ Personnel assigned to treatment areas will perform a secondary exam (secondary triage) and complete the triage tag
Triage Categories	Casualties will be examined and tagged according to the seriousness of injury based on four categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Non-salvageable or dead = Black Tag▪ Immediate (Major Injury) = Red Tag▪ Delayed (Minor Injury) = Yellow Tag▪ Minor (Walking Wounded) = Green Tag
Category Definitions	Category definitions are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Non-salvageable or dead: No ventilation present after airway is opened.▪ Immediate: Ventilation present after positioning airway or respirations over 30 per minute or capillary refill greater than 2 seconds or cannot follow simple commands.▪ Delayed: Any patient not in Immediate or Minor categories. These patients are generally non-ambulatory.▪ Minor: Any patient requiring attention who "passes" the triage screening and is able to walk.
Triage Procedures	Primary triage, using the above categories, will be assigned to first-in responders other than law enforcement officers. Personnel assigned to primary triage will function individually.



TRIAGE PROTOCOLS AND PROCEDURES CONTINUED

Initial Triage	Ambulatory patients may be separated from the general group at the start of triage by stating "Anyone who can walk....." followed by an area assignment which the patients will walk to. These patients are to be tagged Minor.
Exam & Tag	All possible victims involved in the incident are to be quickly examined and tagged whether injured or not injured.
Exam In Place	Non-ambulatory casualties are to be triaged where they lie, unless they are in an unsafe area which requires patient's removal
Austere Intervention	Initial triage personnel may perform the following intervention procedures, then move to the next victim: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Open the obstructed airway▪ Stop arterial bleeding▪ Elevate the legs (if indicated & easily accomplished)
Tag Placement	Triage tags of the appropriate color are attached to casualties near the head.
Care Givers	Minor casualties (Green Tag) may be used to stay with casualties needing critical care treatment, (e.g. mother & child)
Team Reassignment	When all patients have been triaged, triage teams will be reassigned.
Secondary Triage	Casualties will be triaged a second time upon arrival at the treatment area, preferably by an ACLS provider.
Category Change	Triage categories may be changed by treatment teams based on results of a second examination. If the triage priority of the patient improves, remove the entire bottom portion of the tag, leaving the injury information and add a new tag identifying the new triage priority and the reason(s) for the upgrade
Treatment Teams	Following secondary triage, treatment teams will: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Provide stabilizing care▪ Complete the attached triage tag▪ Note priority information & vitals▪ Indicate treatment given
Transport Priority	Priority of transportation will be given to casualties tagged Immediate following evaluation and necessary stabilization in the treatment area, but not delaying transport for stabilization. Note: It could be necessary to transport immediate, delayed or minor patients in the same ambulance.