



FRESNO COUNTY FIRE

PROTECTION DISTRICT

Honor, Integrity, Cooperation & Professionalism

MEMORANDUM

Date: 01/21/2026

To: Board Directors

Attn: Brad Richter
President

From: Fire District Staff

Subject: Emergency Response Enhancements

BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S BRIEFING PAPER

ISSUE:

The Fresno County Fire Protection District currently provides Basic Life Support (BLS) medical response across a large and diverse service area that includes rural, suburban, and metro areas. Advanced Life Support (ALS) transport and paramedic services are primarily provided by American Ambulance, and other providers, under the oversight of Fresno County Emergency Medical Service (EMS).

BACKGROUND:

Fire-based ALS programs have been successfully implemented across California as non-transport ALS models, providing early paramedic-level care. These models emphasize system redundancy, faster ALS interventions, and improved patient outcomes, particularly in time-sensitive emergencies. ALS providers can administer lifesaving medications, perform advanced airway management, interpret cardiac rhythms, and initiate IV-IO interventions that BLS cannot provide and that are critical in the first minutes of high-acuity emergencies. Conditions such as cardiac arrest, stroke, severe respiratory distress, trauma, and overdoses, benefit significantly from rapid ALS care. Earlier ALS intervention is associated with higher survival rates and reduced complications.

DISCUSSION:

The proposed Fire-based (ALS) Pilot Program is intended to enhance EMS response to our Firefighters and constituents, while maintaining the integrity of Fresno County's existing EMS system. The program would be developed in close coordination with the Fresno County EMS Agency, which would retain authority over medical control, protocols, quality improvement, and system evaluation. Fire-based ALS units would operate in a non-transport role, delivering early paramedic-level care prior to ambulance arrival, particularly in high-acuity and time-sensitive incidents. American Ambulance and other providers would continue as the County's designated 911 transport provider, with clearly defined operational interfaces to ensure seamless dispatching, on-scene coordination, and patient handoff. This collaborative approach is designed to reduce ALS response times, improve patient outcomes, and increase system resiliency without duplicating services.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Do nothing and keep current levels of service


IMPACTS *(Consider potential consequences related to each of the following areas of concern for proposed alternatives):*

- Fiscal – Budget requests will be needed for future approval
- Operational – adds
- Legal – No known impact.
- Labor – No known impact.
- Sociopolitical – No known impact.
- Policy – No known impact.
- Health and safety – Increase the level of service provide
- Environmental – No known impact.
- Interagency – No known impact.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff is seeking direction to define program scope, interagency coordination, identify funding, and formal agreements to bring back at a later date for an Advanced Life Support (ALS) Pilot Program.

APPROVED:



Dustin Hail, Fire Chief

01-21-26
Date