

# Monterey County EMS System Policy



Policy Number: 4040  
Effective Date: 7/1/2025  
Review Date: 6/30/2027

## FIELD TRAUMA TRIAGE CRITERIA

### I. PURPOSE

- A. The Adult and Pediatric Field Trauma Triage Algorithms are designed to guide the EMS provider in identifying the Major Trauma Patient and determining the appropriate destination. It uses a four-step decision process to determine the potential for injury severity and whether it is likely that the patient would benefit from Trauma Center level of service.

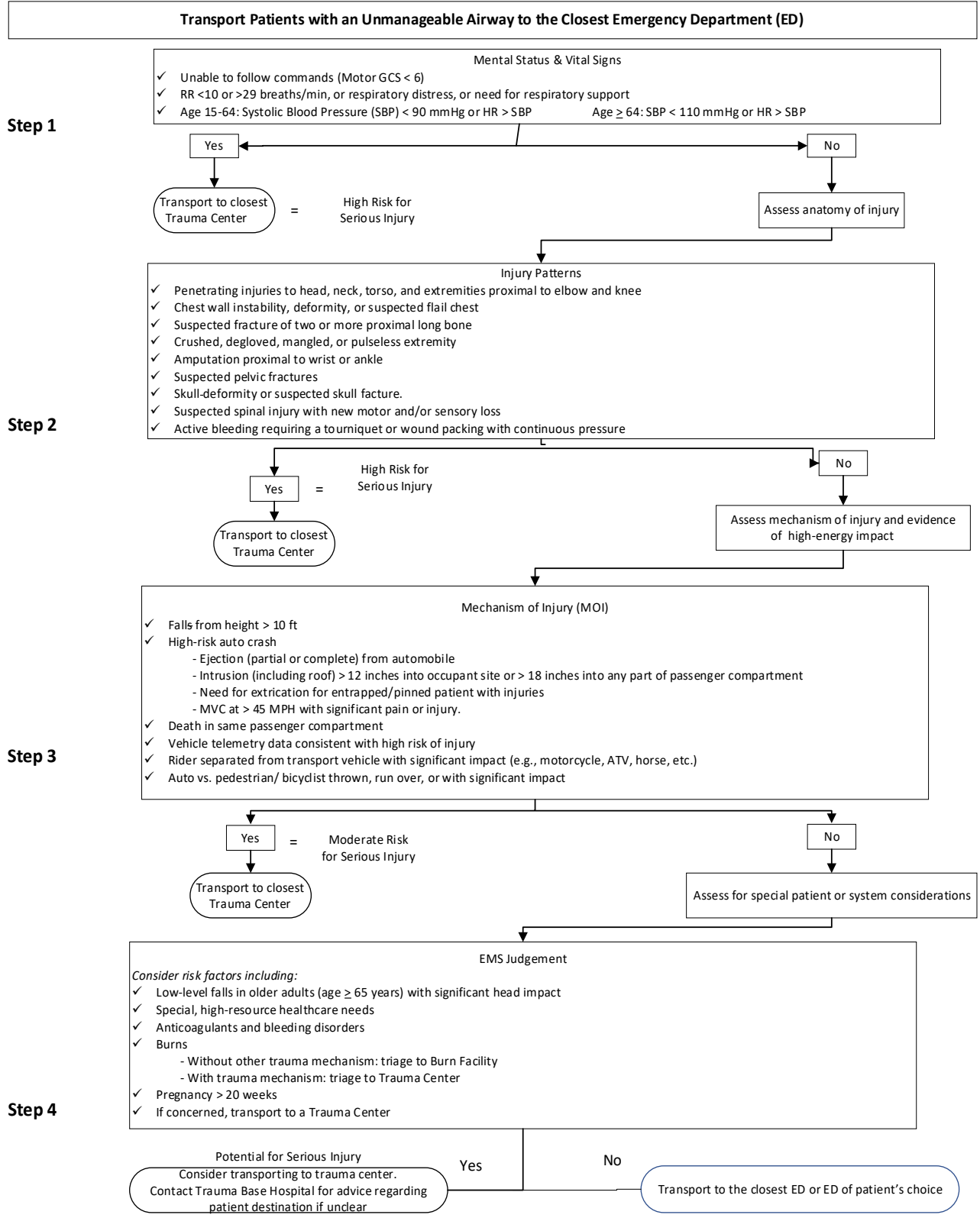
### II. POLICY

- A. All patients who have sustained trauma will be evaluated using the Field Trauma Triage Decision Algorithm.
- B. Trauma patient destination shall be determined in accordance with the Field Trauma Triage Decision Algorithm appropriate to the patient's age.
- C. Patients determined to have an unmanageable airway shall be transported to the closest Emergency Department (ED).
- D. For patients meeting trauma triage criteria, EMS crews should limit on-scene time to 10 minutes whenever possible.
- E. Pediatric Major Trauma Patients (less than age 15) meeting Step 1 and/or Step 2 criteria are to be flown to the closest designated Pediatric Trauma Center. If the patient cannot be flown for any reason (e.g., parental refusal, helicopters unable to fly), transport directly to the closest Trauma Center (TC).
- F. All other trauma patients shall be transported via ground ambulance unless such transport is unavailable or if ground transport is significantly longer than air transport, and this difference in time may negatively impact the patient's condition. See EMS Aircraft Operations policy.
- G. Base hospital contact with Natividad Medical Center shall be made when considering transporting an Adult or Pediatric trauma patient who meets Step 1, 2, or 3 criteria to a different facility than is directed by the Field Trauma Triage Decision Algorithm.
- H. Consider sending adult family members to the same trauma center as their children when both adult and child family members meet trauma criteria. Adult family members who sustain injuries but do not meet trauma criteria and have a child or children who do meet trauma criteria may be transported to the same hospital as their children.
- I. This policy is not intended to guide mass casualty events. See the Monterey County EMS Multiple Casualty Incident (MCI) Response Plan.

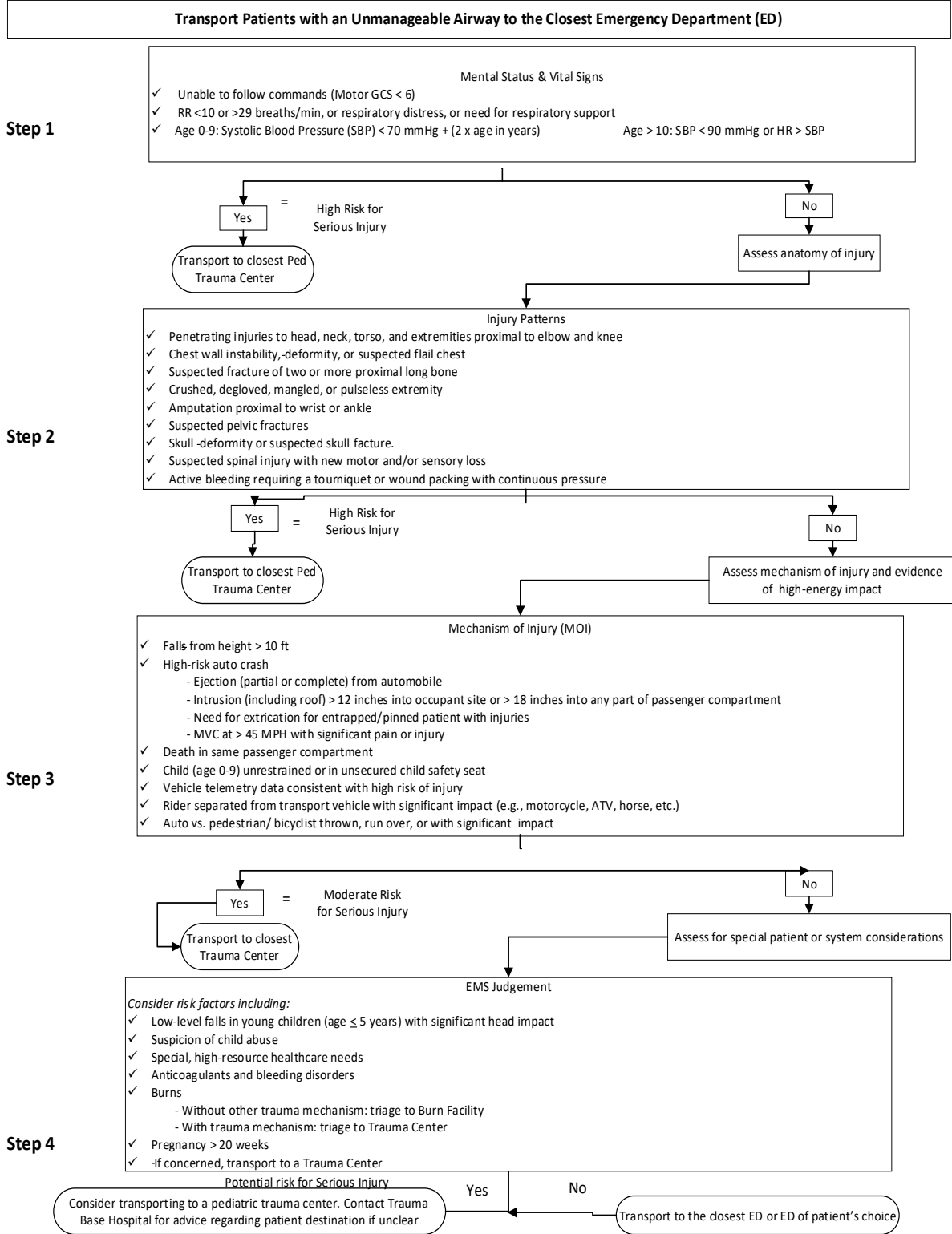
### III. PROCEDURE

Use the following Field Triage Decision Algorithm to help determine the destination for trauma patients:

**FIELD TRAUMA TRIAGE DECISION ALGORITHM – ADULT (AGE 15 OR GREATER)**  
**Trauma Center consultation is recommended for questions about destinations for injured patients.**



**FIELD TRAUMA TRIAGE DECISION ALGORITHM – PEDIATRIC (LESS THAN AGE 15)**  
**Trauma Center consultation is recommended for questions about destinations for injured patients.**



**END OF POLICY**