



IMPERIAL COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Imperial County Officials Announce Transition of Local Emergency Ambulance Services

[EL CENTRO, CA] Imperial County officials announced today that the County of Imperial will officially transition emergency ambulance services effective Wednesday, February 20, 2019. Although the current agreement with Schaefer Gold Cross runs through December 31, 2022, local officials have determined that an early transition of services is necessary to ensure stability of the emergency medical services system. Officials continue to work closely with Gold Cross to effect a smooth and organized transition. American Medical Response (AMR) has agreed to serve as the interim provider while the County works to implement a long-term stability plan. Long-term sustainability will include the selection of a provider through a competitive process.

Ryan E. Kelley, Chairman, Imperial County Board of Supervisors stated, “We are pleased that AMR will be serving our community and are confident with AMR’s capabilities to provide a robust emergency ambulance services focusing on providing high quality care.” During the time leading up to the transition, Gold Cross will continue all operations and services at the same level of performance. “Maintaining the stability and integrity of the County emergency medical services system is our top priority and we are taking every measure to make sure that public safety is not at risk,” stated Chairman Kelley.

James McNeal III, Director of Operations for Schaefer stated, “It is with deep disappointment that Schaefer Ambulance Service, dba Gold Cross Ambulance Service, must end its EMS Agreement with the County of Imperial. Gold Cross and its employees have been providing excellent emergency services to the County of Imperial since 1974, and will continue to do so through the planned transition to a new provider. Gold Cross is committed to ensuring a smooth transition of services, as well as continuity of employment for its valued employees. Gold Cross would like to thank the County, local hospitals and law enforcement for the opportunity to provide service to the community of Imperial County for the past 45 years.”

Chris Herring, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency Manager, stated, “The dedication of Gold Cross’s staff and first responders should be commended. We are well aware of the challenging situation that they are in and they have continued to respond to calls and provide emergency medical care to our community.” AMR is working to transition the current workforce in order to assure an organized change in service providers.

The EMS Agency will continue to monitor the performance of the EMS system during the transition period to ensure that adequate ambulance services are provided to the community. In the

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event of a decrease in service level, the County has contingency plans in place to ensure ambulance services remain at levels the community requires. AMR is currently staging resources in the county to facilitate a smooth transition of services. These resources include ambulances stocked with critical supplies necessary to respond to emergency calls. Additional equipment and resources will continue to be brought to the County through the transition period. For information about AMR visit: <http://amr-sandiego.com/>

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