

## **Powers, Benefits, and Responsibilities of a Trauma Agency**

1. As a first step, a county government or an agency appointed by the county government must develop a trauma systems plan for their geographical area and have it approved by the state before it can function and operate as a trauma agency. The agency plan describes how the trauma agency will carry out its mission and achieves the goals and objectives specified in the agency plan. The plan will as well act as a guide for the development and ongoing evaluation of the trauma system within the agency's service area. The plan must be updated at least every five years and can be updated as needed through resubmission to the state for approval.
2. A trauma agency is charged with the responsibility of recommending the number and location of trauma centers within its service area. This is done through its approved agency plan. Also, all applications from hospitals requesting trauma center status within the service area must demonstrate that their application is consistent with the agency plan.
3. The agency can develop uniform trauma transport protocols (TTPs) to which all EMS provides in the service area must adhere. With the approval of the state, the uniform TTPs can be implemented. If the trauma agency does not elect to develop uniform TTPs, they will have the opportunity to review and comment to the department on any proposed TTPs of EMS providers operating in their geographical area.
4. The trauma agency is specifically charged with conducting an annual evaluation of the trauma system and sharing the results with the state.
5. The agency is empowered to carry out quality assurance activities and is afforded protection from discovery or having its proceedings entered as evidence into civil administrative action.
6. The agency is empowered to collect data from participants in the trauma system in order to conduct its quality assurance activities and to conduct a systems evaluation.
7. Of great importance is the trauma agency's role in the coordinating the delivery of care between prehospital and hospital trauma care providers. The trauma agency acts as a vital link.
8. County commissions can enact ordinances concerning the transport of trauma patients upon the recommendation of the trauma agency.