



RUHS-Palo Verde Hospital Master Services Agreement **FACT SHEET**

On Thursday, February 19, 2026, Riverside County and the Palo Verde Healthcare District entered into a time-limited Management Services Agreement (MSA) to stabilize emergency medical services at Palo Verde Hospital. The agreement establishes a 180-day stabilization period beginning Monday, February 23, 2026 and continuing through Saturday, August 22, 2026, focused on maintaining uninterrupted Emergency Department, Clinic, and supporting operations for the Blythe community.

Under the agreement, the County has agreed to provide management services solely to protect public life, health and safety, and not to assume ownership, licensure, or long-term operational responsibility. The Palo Verde Healthcare District remains the licensed hospital operator and retains all regulatory, licensure, and Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) responsibilities. Hospital employees remain employees of the District, and ownership of the hospital does not change.

During this 180-day period, the County "Strike Team" will assess current conditions to make long-term recommendations.

KEY TAKEAWAYS



The County of Riverside's Riverside University Health System is deploying an operational "Strike Team"



The "Strike Team" will provide management services over a 180-day period to stabilize Palo Verde Hospital's Emergency Department, Clinic, and supporting departments



The "Strike Team" will officially be on site starting 2/23/26

Clarifying the MSA Fast Facts



GOVERNANCE AUTHORITY

It preserves the existing governance authority of the Palo Verde Healthcare District.



TIME-LIMITED

It establishes a temporary, 180-day management structure.



STATUS

It functions as a temporary support arrangement, not a merger or acquisition under federal or state healthcare law.



FUNDING

Any further County funding would require approval by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors.



REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

It maintains the District's responsibility for regulatory compliance.



EMPLOYEES

It maintains Palo Verde Healthcare District employees as employees of the District, not the County of Riverside.



RUHS-Palo Verde Hospital Master Services Agreement FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Which departments are involved?

The Hospital Emergency Department; the Hospital's Clinic; and departments directly supporting emergency services, including laboratory, radiology, pharmacy, registration, environmental services, human resources, plant operations, finance department, and security, to the extent necessary to support emergency operations.

Who will be the lead on-site?

During the 180-day period, a County-led operational "Strike Team" composed of County personnel will lead and direct the day-to-day operations.

What roles are a part of the "Strike Team"?

The "Strike Team" will consist of an Interim Chief Executive Officer and senior executive and physician leaders from RUHS working together to provide operational support.

What will happen to the current hospital executives when the County has temporary personnel in place?

Current hospital leadership will continue to play an important role during this period. Their presence and support are needed and valued. Any future leadership decisions will be made as part of the ongoing assessment and will be guided by the goals of strengthening operations, ensuring continuity of care, and supporting a stable transition for the hospital and the community.

RUHS-Palo Verde Hospital Master Services Agreement **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS** CONTINUED

What does it mean to assess the hospital emergency operations?

In general, operational “strike teams” in hospital settings are deployed to review operations, improve revenue cycle management, and discover ways to strengthen financial stability. Despite the financial position of the hospital, the “strike team” ensures that the hospital’s Emergency Department continues to provide required medical care regardless of a patient’s ability to pay. The goal is to maintain a vital community safety net and prevent total closure, at this time.

Why is this management services agreement model being used?

This structure allows the County to deploy experienced operational resources in recognition of the hospital’s critical role for the Blythe community. By bringing in temporary expertise, the approach is designed to help avoid disruption and support ongoing access to care for patients, staff, and the community.

Does this agreement change hospital ownership?

No. This agreement does not constitute a change of ownership. The hospital remains owned and licensed by the Palo Verde Healthcare District.

Why is the County only coming in for a 180-day period?

The 180-day timeframe establishes a defined stabilization window. It provides a structured period for leadership to evaluate and stabilize operations. During this time, there will be focused management of the Emergency Department, Clinic, and supporting departments to carefully assess current conditions and develop recommendations for next steps. The defined timeline ensures accountability and prevents the arrangement from becoming open-ended.

RUHS-Palo Verde Hospital Master Services Agreement **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS** CONTINUED

Will Palo Verde Healthcare District employees become Riverside County or RUHS employees once this agreement begins?

No. Under the Management Services Agreement, employees of Palo Verde Hospital will remain employees of the Palo Verde Healthcare District. The agreement establishes a temporary operational management authority model for the Emergency Department, Clinic, and supporting services during the 180-day stabilization period. It does not transfer ownership of the hospital, and it does not convert District employees into County or RUHS employees. Employment status, compensation, benefits, and post-retirement benefits are not changed by this agreement.

What operational power does the County have?

- **Staffing**
 - Direct work activities of Hospital employees assigned to covered departments;
 - Establish schedules, staffing patterns, and workflows;
- **Clinical**
 - Issue operational directives necessary for patient safety;
 - Coordinate physician and Advance Practice Providers;
 - Support and refine, as necessary, clinical and administrative protocols;
- **Coordination & Contracts**
 - Coordinate with EMS agencies regarding diversion and routing;
 - Take immediate action necessary to prevent loss of life or serious patient harm;
 - Enter into new contracts or terminate existing contracts for reasonable operations of the Emergency Department;
 - Authority to approve or reject all Hospital expenditures and contracts;
- **Operations**
 - All other administrative actions necessary to support the Emergency Department, Clinic, and supporting operations;
 - Authority over any other Hospital department deemed necessary to support the Emergency Department, Clinic, and supporting operations.

RUHS-Palo Verde Hospital Master Services Agreement **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS** CONTINUED

Who does the “Strike Team” report to?

All members of the “Strike Team” shall remain employees of the County and are subject to the County’s exclusive direction.

What does the Palo Verde Healthcare District retain sole responsibility for?

- Hospital licensure and certification;
- Emergency Medical Treatment & Labor Act (EMTALA) compliance and designation as the EMTALA hospital;
- Medicare and Medi-Cal provider enrollment and billing;
- Compliance with Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services Conditions of Participation;
- Hospital-wide regulatory compliance;
- Ownership and maintenance of facilities and equipment, including replacement of equipment essential to operation of the ED;
- Premises safety;
- All patient billing and collections;
- All pre-petition and post-petition debts and liabilities.

What is the relationship with the Master Services Agreement and Loan Agreement?

The County provided the Palo Verde Healthcare District a \$1 million loan, effective January 16, 2026, to support continued operations of the Hospital’s Emergency Department, Clinic, and related services. The loan addresses financial stability and establishes repayment terms. The master services agreement establishes the temporary operational management framework for the 180-day stabilization period. While the loan supports ongoing operations financially, the MSA provides defined operational authority and leadership during the stabilization period.