



POLICY MEMORANDUM 3400

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REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:

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SUBJECT: PARAMEDIC ACCREDITATION/REACCREDITATION PROCESS

AUTHORITY: California Code of Regulations Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 4, Article 1, Section 100142 and Article 2, Section 100146 and Article 5, Section 100165, 100166 California Health & Safety Code Division 2.5, §1797.7, 1797.84, 1797.178, 1797.185, 1797.194, 1797.214, & 1797.220

PURPOSE/POLICY:

Accreditation is a process by which the Solano County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Agency and its Medical Director can be assured that all Paramedics functioning in the EMS system are oriented to local policies, procedures, and EMS system features as well as possess those skills necessary to perform any optional scope of practice skills and procedures currently being used in Solano County.

Nothing in this policy prohibits an employer from imposing stricter requirements for the employment or orientation of Paramedic personnel.

I. INITIAL ACCREDITATION

A. To be eligible for accreditation in Solano County, an individual must:

1. Provide evidence of possession of a valid California Statewide Paramedic license which is current. State Licensure means that the individual has met specified training and education standards and has been deemed competent to practice throughout the State of California in the Paramedic scope of practice, as defined in Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR).

2. Provide proof of employment with an authorized Solano County Advanced Life Support (ALS) Provider.
 - a. A Paramedic may become accredited as a Paramedic in Solano County if they are a volunteer firefighter for an authorized Solano County ALS Provider. The ALS fire department employing the Volunteer Firefighter/Paramedic must provide employment verification.
3. Provide evidence of a valid, current certification card in the following:
 - a. Basic Life Support (BLS) Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) for Healthcare Provider or equivalent; **and**
 - b. Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) card issued in accordance with the guidelines of the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA); **and**
 - c. Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) **OR** Pediatric Education for Prehospital Professionals (PEPP); **and**
 - d. Prehospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS) **OR** Basic Trauma Life Support (BTLS) **OR** International Trauma Life Support (ITLS).
4. Apply to Solano County EMS Agency. Application includes the following:
 - a. Completion of an on-line application form; and
 - b. Check or money order payable to "Solano County EMS" for the amount specified in Solano County EMS Policy Memo #3000.
5. Attend an EMS Agency orientation not to exceed eight (8) classroom hours, and submit orientation forms as specified in Solano County Policy #3600.
6. An application that has not had any activity in 120 days from creation will be considered abandoned. If the application is abandoned, the Paramedic must restart the accreditation process.

B. EMS Agency Orientation

1. Paramedics will be oriented to the local EMS system including EMS Agency organization, function, staff, policies, procedures, treatment protocols, base and receiving hospital protocols, specialty care center protocols, EMS Quarterly Meeting requirements, and other unique system features.
2. The orientation should not repeat items within the Paramedic scope of practice which are already covered in the State's written and skills examinations.
3. The orientation may not exceed eight (8) hours, excluding any necessary testing in the optional scope of practice.
4. The orientation shall be completed within 120 days of receipt of a completed application.

C. Pre-Accreditation Field Evaluation

1. The purpose of the field evaluation is to validate that the applicant is knowledgeable to begin functioning under local policies and protocols.

2. The performance of skills and procedures by the accreditation applicant will be done in the presence of a field preceptor designated by the Solano County EMS Agency. Although the applicant may be licensed as a Paramedic in California, the preceptor has the ultimate responsibility for patient care rendered by the Paramedic during the evaluation period.
3. It is the responsibility of the field preceptor to determine if the applicant is ready to begin functioning within Solano County; practicing optional scope in accordance with local policies and procedures.
4. The pre-accreditation field evaluation is limited to a minimum of five (5) but no more than ten (10) ALS calls. An ALS call is defined as at least one (1) invasive skill performed or one (1) medication administered.
 - a. This requirement may be waived by providing documentation of a minimum of five (5) but no more than ten (10) ALS calls during a Paramedic education program field internship with a Solano County ALS Provider within the previous six (6) months.
5. The EMS Medical Director, or EMS Agency designee, shall evaluate the calls submitted to the EMS Agency to ensure that EMS Agency policy and protocol were followed and to evaluate the quality of patient care given. If it is demonstrated in this evaluation that the Paramedic applicant did not perform treatment as outlined in policy/protocol, the Paramedic applicant may be required to report back to his preceptor for further instruction or calls. The call documentation will also be submitted back to the Paramedic's precepting provider for further Quality Improvement review.
6. The EMS Medical Director shall evaluate any Paramedic applicant who fails to successfully complete the field evaluation and may recommend further evaluation or training. If, in the course of the field evaluation, the applicant's proficiency in the scope of practice comes into question, then the qualification of the individual to hold a license becomes an issue and the Solano County EMS Agency shall evaluate the situation for appropriate action including, but not limited to, forwarding to the State EMS Authority for further review.

D. Accreditation Procedure

1. Upon completion of an application, verification of employment with a Solano County ALS provider, submission of required documentation, and issuance of an "A-Number" identifier, the licensed Paramedic may practice the Solano County EMS scope of Paramedic practice as a second Paramedic on a unit. A designated preceptor need not be present at this time.
2. After issuance of the "A-Number" identifier, the Paramedic applicant may only utilize the optional scope of practice in the presence of a Solano County Designated Paramedic Preceptor during the pre-accreditation field evaluation.
3. The applicant may work as a single Paramedic once the pre-accreditation field evaluation, base hospital orientation, and provider employer orientations have been completed and reviewed by the EMS Agency and a Solano County Paramedic Number has been issued.

4. The applicant shall complete the EMS Agency orientation within 120 days of initiating the accreditation process.
 - a. If a Paramedic is issued a Solano County Paramedic Number prior to attending the EMS Agency orientation and fails to attend the next scheduled orientation, the Paramedic will be issued a mandatory notice to attend the next orientation. If the Paramedic fails to attend a second scheduled orientation, the Paramedic's accreditation will be suspended until the orientation until the orientation is attended.
 - b. If the EMS Agency cancels an EMS Agency orientation Paramedics will not be penalized.
 5. An applicant who fails to complete the accreditation process may not practice as a Paramedic in Solano County.
 6. The local EMS Agency accredits individuals to practice in Solano County. Accreditation to practice shall be continuous as long as State of California Paramedic license is maintained and local requirements are met.
 7. Accreditation is indicated by the issuance of a Solano County Accreditation Card bearing the date of issuance, date of expiration, and the signature of the EMS Agency Medical Director.
 8. The EMS Agency shall notify individuals applying for accreditation of the decision to accredit within ten (10) working days of completion of the above requirements.
 9. Every attempt will be made to mail the Solano County Accreditation Card to the applicant within ten (10) working days of completion of the above requirements.
- E. Paramedics Employed by Solano County EMS Agency
1. Paramedics that are employed by the Solano County EMS Agency are eligible for initial Solano County Paramedic Accreditation so long as requirements of Section I(A)(1), (3), and (4)(a) of this policy are met. All other accreditation requirements may be waived at the discretion of the EMS Agency Medical Director.

II. MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION

- A. Requirements to maintain accreditation:
1. Maintenance of a valid State of California Paramedic license;
 2. Maintenance of a valid, current certification card in the following:
 - a. BLS CPR for Healthcare Provider or equivalent; **and**
 - b. ACLS card issued in accordance with the guidelines of the Journal of the American Medical Association; **and**
 - c. PALS **or** PEPP; **and**
 - d. PHTLS **or** BTLIS **OR** ITLS
 3. Employment with an authorized ALS Provider or volunteer fire department within Solano County;

4. Compliance with the following requirements:
 - a. Maintenance of Continuing Education Requirements as specified in Policy #3700;
 - b. Completion of four (4) hours Advanced/Difficult Airway Management Course and manipulative skills as specified in Policy #6608;
 - i. If the Advanced/Difficult Airway Management Course is a portion of another Continuing Education (CE) Course, only the hours for Advanced/Difficult Airway Management will be used for reaccreditation and not the total hours of the course.
 - ii. One hour of AHA ACLS may be used to satisfy this requirement.
 - iii. One hour of AHA PALS may be used to satisfy this requirement.
 - c. Completion of four (4) hours, two (2) hours annually, of STEMI/12 Lead EKG training as specified in Policy #6609;
 - i. If the time from an initial accreditation to the date of renewal is less than one (1) year, two (2) hours of STEMI/12 Lead EKG training will satisfy this requirement.
 - ii. If the STEMI/12 Lead EKG course is including in another Continuing Education (CE) Course, only the hours required for STEMI/12 Lead will be credited toward reaccreditation (not the total hours for the course).
 - d. Paramedics may, at the discretion of the EMS Agency Medical Director, be required to:
 - i. Complete training courses on revised policies and procedures, treatment protocols, and/or optional scopes of practice.
 - ii. Obtain education aimed at specific clinical conditions or problems identified in the quality improvement program, which may include specialized training or certification in pre-established courses.
 - iii. Demonstrate competency of infrequently used skills.
 - e. All required reaccreditation documentation shall be turned into Solano County EMS 30 days prior to the current accreditation expiration date to allow adequate time for processing.
 - i. Failure to turn in reaccreditation documentation 30 days prior to the current accreditation expiration will result in a late fee as set forth in Solano County EMS Policy 3000. Reaccreditation will not be processed until the late fee is received.
- B. Paramedics Employed by Solano County EMS Agency
 1. Paramedics that are employed by the Solano County EMS Agency are eligible for Solano County Paramedic Reaccreditation provided the requirements of Section II(A)(1), (2), and (4) of this policy are met. All other reaccreditation requirements may be waived at the discretion of the EMS Agency Medical Director.

III. ADVERSE ACTIONS ON ACCREDITATION

- A. Accreditation may be denied or suspended by the Solano County EMS Agency for cause.
- B. If a Paramedic does not meet ALL local reaccreditation requirements by close of business (5:00pm) on the date of accreditation expiration, the Paramedic's accreditation will be considered expired and therefore Paramedic accreditation will be suspended.
 - 1. If the Paramedic accreditation is set to expire on a weekend or holiday, all reaccreditation documentation shall be submitted by close of business (5:00 pm) on the Friday prior to the weekend or the day prior to the holiday or the reaccreditation will be considered expired.
 - 2. If the EMS Agency has not received the Paramedic's completed reaccreditation documentation by 2:00pm on the day of, Friday prior to the weekend, or day prior to the holiday of expiration, a letter of eminent suspension will be sent to the Paramedic.
- C. Suspension of accreditation means that the Paramedic cannot work as a Paramedic in Solano County. If a Paramedic's accreditation is suspended, a letter explaining the circumstances will be sent to the Paramedic. Copies of this letter may also be sent to all EMS Agency staff, the Paramedic's immediate supervisor/employer, and the California State EMS Authority.
- D. If a California State Licensed Paramedic allows their Solano County Paramedic accreditation to lapse, Paramedic accreditation may be reinstated if ALL requirements for reaccreditation are met **AND** the appropriate late and reinstatement fees as stated in Policy 3000 are paid within 60 days of expiration.
- E. If a California State Licensed Paramedic allows their Paramedic accreditation to lapse for longer than 60 days, the California State Licensed Paramedic will be required to perform the initial requirements for Solano County Paramedic Accreditation.
- F. Accreditation will not be denied based on a Paramedic's accreditation history with another EMS Agency or their provider affiliation.
- G. Any circumstances and actions against a Paramedic's accreditation may be forwarded to the California State EMS Authority for further investigation and Paramedic Licensure action.

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