

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

SUBJECT: **EMS CONTINUING EDUCATION (CE) PROVIDER
APPROVAL AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

REFERENCE NO. 1013

PURPOSE: To establish procedures for approval of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) continuing education (CE) providers and requirements to maintain program approval.

AUTHORITY: California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Chapter 11, Health and Safety Code, Div. 2.5, Section 1797, et seq.

DEFINITIONS:

Approved CE Provider: An individual or organization that has a valid California EMS Continuing Education Provider (CEP) number, an EMS CEP approved by another State, or a Commission on Accreditation for Pre-Hospital Continuing Education (CAPCE) provider number.

EMS CE: Course, class, activity, or experience designed to be educational, with learning objectives and performance evaluations for the purpose of providing EMS personnel with reinforcement of basic EMS training, as well as knowledge to enhance individual and system proficiency in the practice of EMS medical care.

Instructor Based CE: An instructor is readily available to the student during the educational time to answers questions, provide feedback, clarification and address concerns. The EMS Agency shall determine if a CE activity is instructor based.

Non-instructor Based CE: Learning situations where an instructor does not facilitate the instruction process. This includes such activities as magazine articles, internet, and precepting.

Internet Based CE Program: Distance learning programs designed to provide continuing education courses utilizing the World Wide Web.

Intranet Based CE Program: Distance learning programs designed to provide continuing education programs utilizing a privately maintained network within an organization that can be accessed only by authorized persons within that organization.

Tamper Resistant: A procedure or technique to prevent alteration, fraud or forgery of a CE document designed by the CE provider.

PRINCIPLES:


1. EMS CE may be achieved by a variety of structured learning experiences that are relevant to the medical scope of practice for EMS personnel.
2. EMS CE must be current and designed to enhance the scientific knowledge of direct patient care, develop and maintain technical skills, and keep abreast of changes in medical practice and technology.

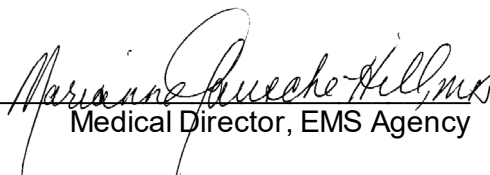
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APPROVED: 
Director, EMS Agency


Medical Director, EMS Agency

3. The information presented and skills performed must be related to the medical practice of emergency care to meet the requirements for renewal of an EMS healthcare professional's certificate or license.
4. Clinical Director(s) and Instructors must have adequate training, credentials, and/or experience in educational content and methodology to ensure that courses adequately address the educational needs of EMS personnel.

POLICY:

I. CE PROVIDER APPROVAL

The EMS Agency has the primary responsibility for approving and monitoring the performance of EMS CE providers in Los Angeles County (LAC) to ensure compliance with local policies, state regulations, and guidelines.

A. CE Provider Approval Process:

1. The EMS Agency shall be the approving agency for CE providers whose headquarters are located within LAC.
2. If a CE provider from another county relocates its headquarters to LAC, the LAC EMS Agency shall assume jurisdictional authority and the CE provider shall be required to relinquish prior approval and apply for LAC CE provider approval.
3. If a CE provider relocates its headquarters to another jurisdiction, the local EMS Agency of that county shall assume jurisdictional authority and may require the CE provider to apply for local CE provider approval.
4. The California EMS Authority shall be the approving agency for CE providers whose headquarters are out of state and for statewide public safety agencies.
5. Program approval shall be granted for four (4) years from the last day of the month in which the application is approved. This approval is not transferable from person to person or organization to organization.

B. CE Provider Application Process:

1. Interested organizations or individuals shall obtain a CE program application packet from the EMS Agency website.
2. Any individual or organization, public or private, interested in providing approved CE for EMS personnel shall submit a complete CE application packet. CE courses shall not be advertised or offered until approval has been granted.
3. The CE Provider application packet shall contain:
 - a. A complete and signed EMS CE Provider application.

- b. A memo on program letterhead, signed by the program director, requesting approval or re-approval of the EMS CE program.
 - c. Curriculum vitae, copies of applicable licenses and certifications, and signed program staff forms for the program director and clinical director.
 - d. A complete self-developed course including a lesson plan to include: title of the course, goal, instructional objectives (minimum of 2 per course), lesson, CE hours awarded, references, resources (materials/equipment), handouts, method of performance evaluation with passing criteria, answer key, and instructor/course evaluation.
 - e. The program's quality improvement (QI) evaluation methodology and educational needs assessment to include supporting documents.
 - f. A copy of the EMS CE advertisement/schedule.
 - g. A copy of the EMS CE attendance record or description of on-line registration.
 - h. A copy of the EMS CE Course Completion Certificate.
 - i. A memo on program letterhead, signed by the program director identifying the CE program procedure for the tamper resistant method(s) used, duplicate certificate issuance, and electronic tracking mechanism (if utilized) with certificate issuance when employment is terminated.
4. The EMS Agency shall notify the applicant within fourteen (14) days that the application was received and specify missing information, if any. Failure to submit missing information within thirty (30) calendar days shall require the applicant to resubmit an original application packet for CE provider approval.
 5. The EMS Agency shall notify the applicant in writing within sixty (60) days from the receipt of a complete application of the decision to approve or deny. The application is only considered for approval if it is complete and all requirements are met.
 6. The EMS Agency may deny an application for cause as specified in subsection I.C.2.
 7. The EMS Agency shall issue a "California EMS CE Provider Number" to approved applicants.
 8. Approved CE providers shall offer a minimum of twelve (12) course hours of CE annually.
- C. Denial/Revocation/Probation of CE Provider Status
1. The EMS Agency may, for cause:

- a. Deny any CE provider application.
 - b. Revoke CE provider approval.
 - c. Place CE provider on probation.
2. Causes for these actions include, but are not limited to the following:
- a. Violating or attempting to violate, directly or indirectly, or assisting in or abetting the violation of, or conspiring to violate any of the terms of the California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Chapter 11; the California Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5; or LAC EMS Prehospital Care Policies.
 - b. Failure to correct identified deficiencies within the specified length of time after receiving written notices from the EMS Agency.
 - c. Misrepresentation of any fact by a CE provider or applicant of any required information.
3. The EMS Agency may take disciplinary action(s) on an EMS CE program if the EMS Agency has determined that probation, denial, or revocation is warranted. If this occurs, the proceedings shall adhere to the California Administrative Procedure Act, Chapter 5, commencing with Government Code section 11500.
4. If CE provider approval is denied or revoked, CE credit issued after the date of action shall be invalid.
5. A provider is ineligible to reapply for approval following a denial or revocation for a minimum of 12 months.
6. If a CE provider is placed on probation, the terms of probation shall be determined by the EMS Agency. During the probationary period, prior approval of all courses offered must be obtained. Course documents must be submitted to the EMS Agency at least thirty (30) days prior to each course being offered. Written notification of course approval shall be sent to the CE provider within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the request. Renewal of CE program approval is contingent upon completion of the probationary period.
- D. Relinquish Program Requirements
- A program electing to relinquish their EMS CE Program shall be subject to site audit to evaluate compliance with the requirements of this policy. A program which does not allow a site audit to be performed and/or meet the requirements shall be revoked. Program staff and program entity shall not be eligible to reapply for an EMS CE program for a minimum of 12 months following closure date.
- E. Notification
- The EMS Agency shall notify the California EMS Authority of each CE provider approved, denied, or revoked within their jurisdiction within thirty (30) days of action.

II. CE PROVIDER RENEWAL

- A. CE Programs shall be renewed if the provider applies for renewal and demonstrates compliance with the requirements of this policy.
- B. The CE provider must submit a complete application packet for renewal at least sixty (60) calendar days prior to the expiration date in order to maintain continuous provider approval.

III. CE PROVIDER REQUIREMENTS

- A. Approved CE providers shall ensure that:
 - 1. The content of all CE is relevant, enhances the practice of prehospital emergency medical care, and is related to the knowledge base or technical skills required for the practice of EMS.
 - 2. All records are maintained as required.
 - 3. The EMS Agency is notified within thirty (30) calendar days of any request for change in the CE provider name, address, telephone number, program director or clinical director by submitting the required documents for approval.
 - 4. All records are available to the EMS Agency upon request.
 - 5. The program is in compliance with all policies and procedures regarding EMS CE.
- B. A CE provider may be subject to scheduled site visits by the EMS Agency for program audits.
- C. Individual classes/courses are open for scheduled or unscheduled visits/educational audits by the EMS Agency and/or the local EMS Agency in whose jurisdiction the course is conducted.
- D. Internet/Intranet CE:
 - 1. CE providers that offer internet based CE must provide the EMS Agency with appropriate passwords or other techniques to freely access the web site and CE material for auditing purposes.
 - 2. CE providers that utilize an intranet based CE program shall provide the EMS Agency access to course materials during a site audit or hard copies when requested.

IV. CE PROGRAM STAFF REQUIREMENTS

Each CE provider shall designate a program director, clinical director, and instructor(s) who meet the requirements. Nothing in this section precludes the same individual from being responsible for more than one function.

A. Program Director

Each CE provider shall have an approved program director who is an employee of the organization who shall provide administrative direction and is qualified by education and experience in program development, methods, materials, and evaluation of instruction.

1. Program director's qualifications by education and experience shall be documented by 40 hours of training in teaching methodology such as:
 - a. Four (4) semester units of upper division credit in educational materials, methods, and curriculum development or equivalent; OR
 - b. California State Fire Marshall (CSFM) "Instructor I and II"; OR
 - c. National Fire Academy's (NFA) "Fire Service Instructional Methodology Course" or equivalent; OR
 - d. National Association of EMS Educators (NAEMSE) "Level I Instructor Course".

NOTE: New program requests shall meet the program director requirement upon submission of application for approval. Current programs may receive provisional status up to one year to meet this requirement with approval for change in personnel.

2. The duties of the program director shall include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Administering the CE program and ensuring adherence to state regulations, guidelines, and established EMS Agency policies.
 - b. Submitting and receiving all correspondence to and from the EMS Agency regarding the EMS CE Program.
 - c. Approving course content and instructional objectives.
 - d. Assigning course hours and professional categories.
 - e. Approving all methods of evaluation.
 - f. Maintaining all records.
 - g. Coordinating or delegating coordination to the clinical director for clinical and field activities approved for CE credit.
 - h. Approving instructor(s) in conjunction with the clinical director.
 - i. Signing all rosters and course completion certificates and maintaining those records in a manner consistent with this policy. Signing course completion certificates may be delegated to the clinical director or a designated instructor by submitting a formal request identifying the individuals for approval to the EMS Agency.

- j. Attending the mandatory EMS Agency Orientation Program within six (6) months of approval as the program director.
- k. Attending all mandatory CE program updates.

B. Clinical Director

Each CE provider shall have an approved clinical director who is an employee of or who is contracted with the organization to monitor the overall quality of the EMS content of the program.

- 1. Clinical director qualifications shall be based on the following:
 - a. Currently licensed and in good standing in the State of California as a physician, registered nurse, physician assistant, or paramedic.
 - b. Minimum of two (2) years academic, administrative or clinical experience in emergency medicine or prehospital care within the last five (5) years.
- 2. The duties of the clinical director shall include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Monitoring all clinical and field activities approved for CE credit.
 - b. Approving the instructor(s) in conjunction with the program director.
 - c. Monitoring the overall EMS content of the program.
 - d. Attending all mandatory CE program updates.

C. Instructor

Each CE provider instructor shall be approved by the program director and clinical director as qualified to teach the topics assigned.

- 1. Instructor qualifications shall be based on one of the following:
 - a. Currently licensed or certified in their area of expertise; OR
 - b. Have evidence of specialized training which may include, but is not limited to, a certificate of training or advanced education in a given subject area; OR
 - c. Have at least one (1) year of experience, within the last two (2) years, in the specialized area in which they are teaching; OR
 - d. Be knowledgeable, skilled and current in the subject matter of the course or activity.

V. CE HOURS

The CE program director shall assign the CE hours for each course on the following basis:

- A. One (1) CE hour is awarded for every fifty (50) minutes of approved content. In cases of media or internet based CE, it is the responsibility of the CE provider to document the methodology that was used to relate the awarded CE hours to the material presented. This methodology shall be available for audit by the EMS Agency.
- B. Courses or activities less than one (1) CE hour shall not be approved.
- C. Courses greater than one (1) CE hour may be granted credit in no less than half hour increments.
- D. Each hour of structured clinical experience shall be accepted as one (1) CE hour.
- E. College credit applied towards meeting EMS CE requirements must be pertinent to emergency medical care and approved by the CE Program Director and Clinical Director. Credit shall be given on the following basis:
 - 1. One academic quarter unit shall equal ten (10) CE hours.
 - 2. One academic semester unit shall equal fifteen (15) CE hours.

VI. APPROVED COURSES

- A. All EMS CE must be relevant to and enhance the practice of emergency medical care. Courses directly related to patient care must be structured with learning objectives and incorporate a course evaluation that indicates that learning has occurred.
- B. The presentation must be delivered at a level appropriate for the target audience. Consideration should be given to the specific educational needs and scope of practice of prehospital care personnel.
- C. Individual courses or seminars shall not be approved by the EMS Agency, but may be co-sponsored by a CE provider (Section VII).
- D. The CE provider shall issue certificates of completion to all attendees who fulfill the credit requirements. It is up to the CE recipient to determine if each CE hour awarded is appropriate for their particular renewal.
- E. All CE activity is not of equal value for purposes of recertification. Refer to the LAC CE manual and policies related to Mobile Intensive Care Nurse (MICN) and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) recertification for specific limitations.

VII. CO-SPONSORING A COURSE

When two or more CE providers co-sponsor a course, only one approved provider number shall be used for that course, and that CE provider assumes the responsibility for all requirements.

VIII. SPONSORSHIP OF A ONE-TIME COURSE OR ACTIVITY

- A. An approved CE provider may sponsor an organization or individual that wants to provide a single activity or course. The CE provider shall be responsible for ensuring the course meets all requirements and shall serve as the CE provider of record. The CE provider shall review the request to ensure that the course or activity complies with the minimum requirements.
- B. Whenever continuing education hours are awarded the program director shall be responsible for retaining all required records.

IX. ADVERTISEMENTS AND TRAINING SCHEDULES

- A. Copies of all advertisements or training schedules shall be sent to the LAC EMS Agency and the local EMS Agency in whose jurisdiction the course is presented a minimum of fourteen (14) days prior to the beginning of the course.
 - 1. Changes or cancellations shall be submitted as soon as possible.
 - 2. Additional courses may be offered with less than a fourteen (14) day notice due to specific needs of the organization, provided last minute education is not routine.
- B. In cases of internet based CE, the provider shall notify the EMS Agency within 14 working days prior to making a new lesson available or discontinuing a lesson from the CE site. Dates for lessons available for CE must be noted on the CE Annual Summary record.
- C. Advertisements and departmental schedules announcing CE courses must contain all the elements set forth in the LAC EMS Continuing Education Program Approvals section of the EMS Agency web page.

X. EMS CE ATTENDANCE RECORD AND ANNUAL SUMMARY RECORD

- A. An EMS CE Attendance record must be completed for all CE provided. Each student must sign the attendance record or register online with all data fields completed in order to receive CE credit.
- B. The information on the EMS CE Attendance Record must contain all the elements set forth in the LAC EMS Continuing Education Program Approvals section of the EMS Agency web page.
- C. EMS CE attendees shall sign in or register only for themselves. Signing for another individual is strictly prohibited and subject to certification or licensure action.
- D. The original EMS CE Attendance Record shall be maintained by the CE provider. A legible copy (unless the original is requested) of the attendance records shall be submitted to the Office of Certification/Program Approvals upon request by the EMS Agency for the following:
 - 1. Any County mandated program.

2. Any EMS CE Attendance Record requested by the EMS Agency.

E. All CE providers shall provide an annual CE summary of all courses which EMS CE was issued no later than January 31st of the following year.

XI. COURSE COMPLETION CERTIFICATES AND DOCUMENTS

A. Providers shall issue a tamper resistant document (method determined by the CE provider) as proof of successful completion of a course within thirty (30) calendar days.

1. A CE provider may track completion of a CE event for employees electronically, but must still record EMS CE issued on the course roster. However, when requested, or upon termination of employment, the provider must be able to produce a course completion certificate for the employee.

2. Any individual who attends a CE event who is not an employee of the CE provider must be issued a certificate or document as proof of completion within thirty (30) days.

B. Any form, certificate or documentation of successful completion must contain all the elements set forth in the LAC EMS CE Program CE Program Approvals section of the EMS Agency web page.

XII. RECORD KEEPING

Each CE provider shall maintain the following records on file:

A. Complete lesson plans with outline and lesson for each course awarded CE hours as identified on the program review tool on the EMS Agency Program Approvals section of the web page to include:

1. Course title.

2. Description of course/goal.

3. Instructional objectives.

4. Educational focus for course and field care audits. This may be incorporated in the course objectives or course description.

5. Hours of instructor based or non-instructor based continuing education.

6. Handouts.

7. References.

8. Resources (materials/equipment).

B. Method of performance evaluation (e.g. post-test with answer key, skills assessment, or other measurement tool).

- C. Advertisement and/or course schedule.
- D. Agenda, if more than one (1) topic and/or more than a four (4) hour course.
- E. EMS CE Attendance Record.
- F. A curriculum vitae or resume from an instructor providing the CE course, class or activity, and verification that the instructor is qualified to teach the topics assigned, or have evidence of specialized training which may include, but is not limited to, a certificate of training or an advanced degree in a given subject, or have at least one year of experience within the last two years in the specialized area in which they are teaching, or be knowledgeable, skillful, and current in the subject matter of the course, class or activity.
- G. Original or summary of performance evaluations administered.
- H. Original or summary of course evaluations.
- I. Documentation of course completion certificates issued, or e-tracking documented.
- J. All records shall be maintained for four (4) years.
- K. All records must be available when audits are conducted.
- L. Result of the education quality improvement plan and the needs assessment.

XIII. FEES

Pay the established CE provider fee at the time of application for approval or re-approval.

CROSS REFERENCES:

Prehospital Care Manual:

Ref. No. 621, **Notification of Personnel Change**
Ref. No. 621.1, **Notification of Personnel Change Form**
Ref. No. 1006, **Paramedic Accreditation**
Ref. No. 1010, **Mobile Intensive Care Nurse (MICN) Certification**
Ref. No. 1014, **Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Certification**

LAC EMS Agency Continuing Education Program Manual