DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

SUBJECT: **PARAMEDIC TRAINING PROGRAM APPROVAL** REFERENCE NO. 901

PURPOSE: To define criteria for the approval of a paramedic training program in Los Angeles County.

AUTHORITY: Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Section 1797.173, 1797.185, 1797.192, 1797.194, 1797.206, 1797.208, 1797.213, and 1798.200.
California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 4 et seq., and Section 11500 of the Government Code.

DEFINITIONS:

ALS Patient Contact: Student interaction with a patient and performance of one or more advanced life support (ALS) skills, except cardiac monitoring and basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).

EMS System Quality Improvement Program (EMSQIP): Methods of evaluation that are composed of structure, process, and outcome evaluations, which focus on improvement efforts to identify root causes of problems, intervene to reduce or eliminate these causes, and take steps to correct the process and recognize excellence in performance and delivery of care.

Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP): Programmatic postsecondary accrediting body.

Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions: The recognized accreditation body for EMS education in the State is CAAHEP's Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the Emergency Medical Services Professions (CoAEMSP).

Paramedic: A healthcare provider who has a valid California license and is educated and trained in all elements of prehospital ALS; whose scope of practice to provide ALS is in accordance with the standards prescribed in Chapter 4 of Division 9 of Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations.

EMS Response: The physical response of an emergency medical services (EMS) provider due to activation of the EMS system with a request for medical evaluation.

National Paramedic Curriculum: U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) / National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) National EMS Education Standards, January 2009.

National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT): Organization that provides the cognitive (written) and psychomotor (skills) licensure examination for paramedics in California.

APPROVED: Richard Tadeo
Director, EMS Agency

Medical Director, EMS Agency

PRINCIPLES:

1. The purpose of a paramedic training program is to prepare individuals for licensure in order to render prehospital ALS at the scene of an emergency, during transport of the sick and injured, or during interfacility transfer within an organized EMS system.

2. Los Angeles County approved paramedic training programs shall meet State regulations and established EMS Agency policies.

3. Eligible training institutions requesting approval shall meet the standards for CAAHEP accreditation.

4. New training programs must receive a Letter of Review (LoR) from CoAEMSP and complete the EMS Agency's paramedic program approval process, prior to advertising and the starting of classes.

5. New programs shall submit their application, fee, and Initial Self-Study (ISSR) to CoAEMSP for accreditation within six (6) months of the first class' graduation.

6. New programs shall receive and maintain CAAHEP accreditation no later than two (2) years from the date of the ISSR submission to CoAEMSP for accreditation.

7. Programs Failing to maintain its LoR, submit their CAAHEP Request for Accreditation Services (RAS) form and ISSR to CoAEMSP, or obtain and maintain its accreditation with CAAHEP within their prescribed time frames shall result in withdrawal of program approval.

8. Only paramedic training programs and locations approved by the EMS Agency may provide training in Los Angeles County. This applies to all phases of training.

9. Approved training program shall provide clinical and internship assignments for 100% of their students within the required time frames.

10. Approved training programs shall notify the EMS Agency in writing, within thirty (30) days of changes in curriculum, hours of instruction, program staff, and clinical and field internship sites.

11. Approved training programs shall participate in the EMS System Quality Improvement Program (EMSQIP).

12. Training programs may be approved as a Continuing Education (CE) provider.

13. Paramedic interns shall be measured against the standard of entry level paramedics.

POLICY:

I. Approving Authority

The Los Angeles County EMS Agency is the approving authority for paramedic training programs whose headquarters or training locations are located within Los Angeles County including clinical and field internship experience.

II. Program Eligibility

Eligibility shall be limited to the following institutions:

A. Accredited universities and colleges, including junior and community colleges, and private post-secondary schools as approved by the State of California, Department of Consumer Affairs, Bureau of Private Postsecondary Education.

B. Medical training units of a branch of the Armed Forces or Coast Guard of the United States.

C. Licensed general acute care hospitals which meet all of the following criteria:

1. Hold a special permit to operate a basic or comprehensive emergency medical service pursuant to the provisions of Division 5.

2. Provide continuing education (CE) to other health care professionals.

3. Accredited by a Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services approved deeming authority.

D. Agencies of government.

III. Application

A. Eligible training institutions shall submit a written request for program approval to the EMS Agency Director.

B. Obtain an application packet from the EMS Agency. The required content that should be submitted to the EMS Agency is listed in the application instructions.

C. Current CAAHEP accredited programs shall submit the following:

1. All documents submitted to and received from CoAEMSP and CAAHEP to include, but not limited to:

a. Initial approval documentation

b. Self-study documents

c. Documents required to maintain accreditation

d. Annual report

e. Copy of current accreditation certificate

f. Copy of academic affiliation

IV. Program Requirements

A. Student Eligibility: All candidates shall:

1. Possess a high school diploma or general education equivalent (GED).

2. Possess a current basic cardiac life support (CPR) card for BLS Provider, Healthcare Provider or Professional Rescuer which meet the current American Heart Association Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care.

3. Be certified as one of the following:

   a. California emergency medical technician (EMT)

   b. California Advanced EMT

4. Have current CPR and EMT certifications at time of entry into a paramedic training program and remain current throughout all phases of training.

5. Have a minimum of six (6) months full-time or one (1) year part-time EMT experience.

B. Course Content

1. Paramedic Training Program course hours shall consist of no less than one thousand and ninety (1090) hours and are divided as follows:

   a. Minimum of four-hundred and fifty (450) hours didactic instruction and skills laboratories.

   b. Minimum of one hundred and sixty (160) hours clinical experience.

   c. Minimum of four hundred and eighty (480) hours field internship with at least fifty (50) ALS contacts. An ALS patient contact shall be defined as the performance of one or more ALS skills, except cardiac monitoring and CPR.

2. Excluded from program hours are:

   a. Course material designed to teach or test exclusively EMT knowledge or skills, including CPR.

   b. Examination for student eligibility.

   c. The teaching of any material not prescribed in the National EMS Education Standards – Paramedic.

   d. Written and practical student testing.

   e. Examination for paramedic licensure.

3. Didactic Instruction and Skills Practice

   a. Didactic/skills practice shall consist of no less than four hundred and fifty (450) hours.

b. The content of a paramedic course shall meet the current National EMS Education Standard, Paramedic Curriculum.

c. Course shall include EMS Agency mandatory training programs, which reflect current practice and policies, Ref. No. 1200, *Treatment Protocols* and Ref. No. 1300, *Medical Control Guidelines*.

d. Conduct periodic competency-based examinations and a final comprehensive written and practical examination using program passing criteria.

e. No more than six (6) students shall be assigned to one instructor during skills practice/laboratory.

4. Clinical Education

a. The clinical education and training shall consist of no less than one hundred and sixty (160) hours.

i. A minimum of one hundred and twenty (120) hours must be assigned in a general acute care hospital.

ii. An additional forty (40) hours may be assigned out of the hospital setting as approved by the EMS Agency.

b. Program shall provide clinical assignments for 100% of their students within thirty (30) days of completion of didactic instruction. The course director and student may mutually agree to a later date in the event of a special circumstance such as student illness, death or birth in the family, student's military duty, etc.

c. Program shall have signed written agreements (to include end date) with each clinical facility.

d. Clinical assignments shall include, but not limited to emergency, cardiac, surgical, obstetrical, and pediatric patients.

e. No more than two (2) students shall be assigned to one preceptor or health care professional during the supervised clinical education, which includes direct patient care responsibilities.

f. Medication administration and procedures shall include those in Ref. No. 803, Paramedic Scope of Practice and any paramedic skill that the precepting health care professional feels comfortable having the student perform with supervision.

5. Field Internship

a. The student must meet the EMS Agency requirements to intern in Los Angeles County and pass the written Accreditation Examination.

b. Programs shall provide internship assignments for 100% of their students within ninety (90) days after completion of the clinical education. The course director and student may mutually agree to a later date in the event of a special circumstance such as student illness, death or birth in the family, student's military duty, etc.

c. Field internship shall consist of no less than four hundred and eighty (480) hours and shall not go beyond six (6) months from the date of beginning field internship.

d. The field provider must be a primary 9-1-1 ALS provider with a minimum run volume of one thousand two hundred (1200) EMS responses in the previous calendar year.

e. Programs shall have signed written agreements (to include end date) with ALS providers.

f. Field preceptor assignments shall be coordinated with the training program and the ALS provider to ensure the preceptor has the required experience and training.

g. No more than one intern shall be assigned to a response vehicle during the intern's internship.

h. The intern shall perform a minimum of fifty (50) ALS patient contacts. At least 50% of contacts shall be in the team lead role providing the full continuum of care, beginning with the initial contact through release of the patient to a receiving hospital or medical care facility.

i. Documentation of the intern's progress, including identified weaknesses or problems, shall be provided to the intern daily with a comprehensive evaluation at the 7th, 14th, and 20th shift, and following extension shifts.

j. Internship must be completed within six (6) months after the end of the clinical phase. The course director and student may mutually agree to a later date in the event of a special circumstance such as student illness, death or birth in the family, student's military duty, etc.

k. Successful performance in the clinical and field setting shall be required prior to course completion.

V. Teaching Staff Qualifications and Responsibilities

Each program shall consist of a medical director, course director, principal instructor(s), clinical and field preceptor(s), and teaching assistants who meet all requirements. Nothing in this section precludes the same individual from being responsible for more than one (1) position.

Any one of the following shall fulfill the requirement of being qualified by education and experience in methods, materials, and evaluation of instruction documented by at least forty (40) hours in teaching methodology.

1. Four (4) semester units of upper division credit in educational materials, methods, and curriculum development, or equivalent.

2. California State Fire Marshall (CSFM) “Instructor I and II.

3. National Fire Academy’s (NFA) “Fire Service Instructional Methodology Course”, or equivalent.

5. National Association of EMS Educators “EMS Instructor Course”.

5. Courses which meet the U.S. Department of Transportation/National Highway Traffic Safety 2002 Guidelines for Educating EMS Instructors.

A. Medical Director

1. Qualifications:

a. Currently licensed and in good standing in the State of California as a physician.

b. Two (2) years experience in prehospital care in the last five (5) years.

c. Qualified by education or experience in methods, materials, and evaluation of instruction

d. Attend the Los Angeles County EMS Orientation (new Medical Directors, only).

2. Responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:

a. Review and approve educational content of the program curriculum, training objectives for clinical and field instruction, and to certify the ongoing appropriateness and medical accuracy of the program.

b. Review and approve the quality of medical instruction, supervision, and evaluation of students in all areas of the program.

c. Approve provisions for hospital and/or medical facilities for clinical and field internship experiences.

d. Approve principal instructors in conjunction with the course director.

B. Course Director

1. Qualifications:

a. Currently licensed in California as a physician, registered nurse, or paramedic who has a baccalaureate degree, or an individual who holds a baccalaureate degree in a related health field or education.

b. Minimum of one (1) year experience in an administrative or management level position.

c. Minimum of three (3) years academic or clinical experience in prehospital care education within the last five (5) years.

d. Qualified by education and experience in methods, materials, and evaluation of instruction with at least forty (40) hours of documented teaching methodology.

e. Attend the Los Angeles County EMS Orientation (new Course Directors only).

2. Responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:

a. Provide administrative oversight, organize, and supervise the educational program.

b. Approve principal instructor(s), teaching assistant(s), clinical and field preceptors, in conjunction with the Medical Director.

c. Approve clinical and field internship assignments.

d. Coordinate the development of curriculum, including instructional objectives, and approve all methods of evaluation.

e. Ensure training program compliance with State regulations, current EMS policies, and other related laws.

f. Sign all course completion records.

g. Maintain all course records for a period of four (4) years.

C. Principal Instructor(s)

1. Qualifications:

a. Currently licensed in California as a physician, registered nurse, physician assistant, or paramedic.

b. Two (2) years experience in advanced life support prehospital care.

c. Knowledgeable in the course content of the most recent National EMS Education Standards, Paramedic course curriculum.

d. Work Experience and Education:

i. Six (6) years experience in an allied health field and an associate degree; OR

ii. Two (2) years experience in an allied health field and a baccalaureate degree.

e. Qualified by education and experience in methods, materials, and evaluation of instruction with at least forty (40) hours of documented teaching methodology

2. Responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:

a. Curriculum development

b. Course coordination

c. Course instruction

d. Teach and test the required skills

D. Teaching Assistant(s)

1. Qualifications:

Teaching Assistant (s) are qualified by training and experience in prehospital care. A teaching assistant shall be supervised by a principal instructor, the course director, and/or the medical director.

2. Responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to:

a. Assist with teaching the course content.

b. Teach and test the required skills.

E. Hospital/Medical Facility Clinical Preceptor(s)

1. Qualifications:

a. Currently licensed in California as a physician, registered nurse, or physician assistant.

b. Worked in emergency medical care for the last two (2) years.

e. Received instruction in evaluating paramedic students in the clinical setting which may include educational brochures, orientation, clinical training programs, or training videos.

2. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

a. Create a positive and supportive learning environment.

b. Evaluate student ability to safely administer medications and perform assessments.

c. Assess student behaviors using cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains.

d. Document student performance using established criteria.

e. Identify appropriate student progress.

f. Counsel the student who is not progressing.

g. Utilize training program support services available to the student and the preceptor.

h. Contact appropriate training program personnel regarding a student who is ill, injured, or has had an exposure to a communicable disease or hazardous material.

3. A clinical preceptor shall be supervised by a principal instructor, the course director, and/or the medical director.

F. Field Preceptor(s)

1. Qualifications:

a. Currently licensed in California as a paramedic and accredited by Los Angeles County EMS Agency.

b. Working in the field as a licensed paramedic providing direct patient care for the last two (2) years.

c. Completed field preceptor training approved by the EMS Agency.

2. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

a. Create a positive and supportive learning environment.

b. Measure students against the standard of entry level paramedics.

c. Assess student behaviors using cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains.

d. Perform and document daily, cumulative, and final evaluation of students using written field criteria.

e. Identify appropriate student progress.

f. Counsel the student who is not progressing.

g. Utilize training program support services available to the student and the preceptor.

h. Contact appropriate training program personnel regarding a student who is ill, injured, or has had an exposure to a communicable disease or hazardous material.

i. Ensure the required minimum number of fifty (50) ALS contacts are met.

3. A field preceptor shall be supervised by a principal instructor, the course director, and/or the medical director.

VI. Course Completion Records

The training program shall issue a tamper resistant Course Completion Record no later than ten (10) working days from the date of successful completion of the program. The document must include the following information and statements:

A. Name of the individual.

B. Date of course completion.

C. Name of the paramedic training program approving authority.

D. Signature of the program medical director, optional.

E. Signature of the course director.

F. Name and location of the training program issuing the course completion record.

G. Statement: *The individual named on this record has successfully completed an approved paramedic training program*.

H. Statement in bold print: ***THIS IS NOT A PARAMEDIC LICENSE***.

I. Course hours of instruction divided into didactic/skills instruction, clinical training and field internship with a minimum of fifty (50) ALS patient contacts. In lieu of placing on the completion record, these may be addressed in a letter on official program letterhead.

J. List of optional scope of practice procedures and/or medications taught in the course approved pursuant to subsection §100146 (c) (2) (A-D) of the California Code of Regulations, Title 22. In lieu of placing on the completion record, these may be addressed in a letter on official program letterhead.

K. List of additional National ALS courses completed (ACLS, PALS, PHTLS, PEPP, etc.). In lieu of placing on the completion record, these may be addressed in a letter on official program letterhead.

VI. Record Keeping

Each program shall maintain the following records for four (4) years:

A. All required documentation as specified in the application packet for program approval.

B. Paramedic Program Class Roster.

C. Documentation of course completion certificates issued.

D. Original documentation or summaries of student performance and course evaluations.

E. Curriculum vitae for instructors with a copy of current licenses and certifications in their field of expertise, or evidence of specialized training.

VII. Program Reporting

A. During the approved program period, the EMS Agency shall be notified in writing, a minimum of thirty (30) days in advance, of any changes in the following:

1. Summary of changes to curriculum

2. Hours of instruction

3. Program staff

4. Clinical or field internship sites

B. The training program shall submit a complete course schedule thirty (30) days prior to the start of each course.

C. The training program shall submit a course roster and student application a minimum of thirty (30) days prior to the Accreditation Examination. Programs shall coordinate with the EMS Agency's Office of Certification for scheduling the Accreditation Examination.

IX. Program Re-approval

A. The training program must receive and maintain CAAHEP accreditation to be considered eligible to be re-approved. The training program shall continue to meet all requirements to be considered for renewal.

B. Application for re-approval process:

1. Submit a written request for re-approval to the EMS Agency.

2. Obtain a re-approval application packet.

C. Submit the following to the EMS Agency:

All documentation submitted to and received from CoAEMSP and CAAHEP during the approved program period to include but not limited to the current list of teaching staff and a copy of the current accreditation certificate.

X. Fees

Payment of the established fee, if applicable, is due at the time of initial program approval, or for program re-approval must be submitted with the re-approval application.

XI. Responsibilities of the EMS Agency

A. Process Applications

1. Notify the program applicant in writing within ninety (90) 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 have been met.

a. Notify the program applicant within sixty (60) days of receipt of the application that the application was received and/or what information is deficient, or is missing, and the date the information is due.

b. Failure to submit requested information within specified time frame after receiving written notification shall render the application null and void.

2. Upon receipt of a complete application, the EMS Agency shall establish the effective date of program approval.

3. Initial approval and re-approval shall be granted up to a period of four (4) years. Program approval or disapproval shall be made in writing by the EMS Agency to the program applicant.

B. Audit Programs

Approved paramedic training programs shall be subject to a site survey prior to initial program period and periodic on-site evaluations during the approved period by the EMS Agency.

XII. Program Disciplinary Actions

A. Failure to comply with the provisions of CCR Div. 9, Ch. 4, et seq., such as 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 4; the California Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5; or Los Angeles County Emergency Medical Services Prehospital Care Policies shall result in disciplinary action.

B. The requirements for training program noncompliance notification and actions are as follows:

1. The EMS Agency shall provide notification of noncompliance to the paramedic training program. This notification shall be in writing and sent by certified mail to the training program director.

2. Within fifteen (15) days from receipt of the noncompliance notification, the training program shall submit in writing, by certified mail, to the EMS Agency one (1) of the following:

a. Evidence of compliance with the provisions of Chapter 4, or

b. A plan to comply with the provisions of Chapter 4 within sixty (60) days from receipt of the notification of noncompliance.

3. Within fifteen (15) days from receipt of the training program's response, or if no response is received from the training program, then within thirty (30) calendar days from the mailing date of the noncompliance notification, the EMS Agency shall issue a decision letter by certified mail to the State of California EMS Authority and the training program. The letter shall identify the EMS Agency's decision to take one or more of the following actions:
   a. Accept the evidence of compliance provided.

   b. Accept the plan for meeting compliance.

   c. Place the training program on probation.

   d. Suspend the training program.

   e. Revoke the training program.

4. The decision letter shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

   a. The date of the EMS Agency's decision.

   b. The specific provisions found to be noncompliant.

   c. The probation or suspension effective and ending date, if applicable.

   d. The terms and conditions of the probation or suspension, if applicable.

   e. The revocation effective date, if applicable.

C. If the training program does not comply with subsection VII., B., 2, of this reference, the EMS Agency may uphold the noncompliance finding and initiate a probation, suspension, or revocation action as described in subsection VII., B., 3., of this reference.

D. The EMS Agency shall establish the probation, suspension, or revocation effective dates no sooner than sixty (60) days after the date of the decision letter as described in subsection VII., B., 3., of this reference.

E. Causes for actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

   a. Failure to correct identified deficiencies within the specified length of time after receiving written notice from the EMS Agency.

   b. Misrepresentation of any fact by a training program of any required information.

F. A paramedic training program is ineligible to reapply for approval following a denial or revocation for a minimum of twelve (12) months.

G. If a training program is placed on probation, the terms of probation shall be determined by the EMS Agency. During the probationary period, the EMS Agency must give prior approval for all programs offered. Course documents must be submitted to the EMS Agency at least thirty (30) days prior to each course being offered. The EMS Agency shall provide written notification of program approval to the program director within fifteen (15) days of the receipt of the request. Renewal of the training program is contingent upon completion of the probationary period.

CROSS REFERENCES:

Prehospital Care Manual:
Ref. No. 802, **Los Angeles County EMT Scope of Practice**
Ref. No. 802.1, **Los Angeles County EMT Scope of Practice (Field Reference)**
Ref. No. 803, **Los Angeles County Paramedic Scope of Practice**
Ref. No. 803.1, **Los Angeles County Paramedic Scope of Practice (Field Reference)**
Ref. No. 1006, **Paramedic Accreditation**