

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to define the standards for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Continuing Education (CE) delivery formats and limitations, record keeping and CE provider program approval.

AUTHORITY:

Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Section 1797.220;
Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 11

DEFINITIONS:

- A. "Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Continuing Education Provider" means an individual or organization approved to conduct continuing education courses, classes, activities or experiences and issue earned continuing education hours to EMS personnel for the purpose of maintaining certification/licensure or re-establishing lapsed certification or licensure.
- B. "EMS Service Provider" means an organization employing certified EMT-I, EMT-II or licensed paramedic personnel for the delivery of emergency medical care to the sick and injured at the scene of an emergency, during transport or inter-facility transfer.
- C. "EMS System Quality Improvement Program" or "QIP" means 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.
- D. "Continuing Education" or "CE" means a course, class, activity or experience designed to be educational in nature, 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 pre-hospital emergency medical care.

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I. Approved Continuing Education:

- A. Continuing education for EMS personnel shall be any of the topics contained in the National Standard Curriculum developed under the auspices of the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration for the specified level of training of EMS personnel including the National Standard curricula for EMT Basic, EMT Intermediate, Paramedic or First Responder.
- B. In lieu of completing the required continuing education hours, EMT-I certification may be maintained by successfully completing an approved EMT-I refresher course provided by an approved EMT training program.
- C. All approved CE shall contain written and/or skill competency based evaluation related to the course, class, activity or experience objectives.
- D. Approved CE courses shall be accepted statewide.

II. Continuing Education Delivery Formats and Limitations:

- A. Delivery formats for CE courses shall be any of the following:
 - 1. Classroom — didactic or skills laboratory where direct interaction with an instructor is possible.
 - 2. Organized field care audits or patient care records.
 - 3. Courses offered by accredited universities and colleges including junior and community colleges.
 - 4. Structured clinical experience with written instructional objectives to review or expand the clinical experience of the individual.
 - 5. Media based or serial productions including film, video, audiotape, CD/DVD, periodicals, home study courses, computer simulation, or interactive computer modules.
 - 6. Serving as an assigned hospital or field clinical preceptor to EMS students or EMS personnel assigned by an EMS training program or CE provider. CE earned as a preceptor may only be earned for actual time spent with the student or EMS personnel and must be issued by the EMS training program or CE provider that has a written agreement with the preceptor or the preceptor's employer.
 - 7. Advanced topics in subject matter outside the scope of practice of the certified or licensed EMS personnel but directly relevant to

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emergency medical care (e.g. surgical airway procedures, chest tube insertion).

- B. A minimum of fifty percent of required CE hours must be in a format that is instructor based, which means that the instructor resources are readily available to the student to answer questions, provide feedback, provide clarification and address concerns.
- C. During a certification or licensure cycle an individual may receive credit, one time only, for service as a CE course, class or activity instructor. Credit shall be the same as the number of CE hours applied to the class or activity.
- D. During a certification or licensure cycle an individual may receive credit, one time only, for service as an instructor of an EMT-I, EMT-II or paramedic training program, except that the hours of service shall not exceed fifty percent of the total CE hours required in a single certification or licensure cycle.
- E. When guided by the EMS service providers QIP, an EMS service provider that is an approved CE provider may issue CE for skills competency demonstrations to address any deficiencies identified by the service provider's QIP. Skills competency demonstrations shall be conducted in accordance with the respective National Standard Curriculum skills outline or in accordance with the policies and procedures of the San Joaquin County EMS Agency.
- F. An individual may receive credit for taking the same course, class or activity no more than two times during a single certification or licensure cycle.
- G. If it is determined through a QIP that EMS personnel working in the San Joaquin County EMS System need remedial or refresher instruction in an area of the individual's knowledge or skills, the Medical Director of the San Joaquin County EMS Agency or the EMS service provider may require the EMS personnel to take an approved CE course with learning objectives that address the remedial or refresher instruction needed, as part of the individual's required hours of CE for maintaining certification or licensure.

III. Individual Continuing Education Records:

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- A. In order for CE to satisfy the requirements for maintaining EMS personnel certification or licensure, CE shall be completed during the current certification or licensure cycle.
- B. In order for CE to satisfy the requirements for renewal of lapsed EMS personnel certificate or license, CE shall be earned within two years of the date of application for renewal.
- C. EMS personnel shall maintain for four years CE certificates issued to them by any CE provider.
- D. CE certificates may be audited by the San Joaquin County EMS Agency as part of the continuing education verification process.
- E. Ten continuing education hours (CEHs) shall be awarded for each passing academic quarter unit or fifteen CEHs shall be awarded for each academic semester unit for college courses in physical, life, social and behavioral science (e.g. anatomy, physiology, sociology, psychology.)

IV. Continuing Education Provider Requirements:

- A. Course Content:
 - 1. CE providers shall ensure that all EMS CE courses, classes and activities are relevant, designed to enhance the practice of emergency medical care and are related to the knowledge base or technical skills required for the practice of emergency medical care.
- B. Continuing Education Hours shall be assigned on the following basis:
 - 1. One continuing education hour (CEH) for every fifty minutes of approved classroom or skills laboratory.
 - 2. One CEH for each hour of structured clinical or field experience when monitored by a preceptor assigned by an EMS training program or EMS service provider.
 - 3. One CEH for each hour of media/serial based production CE as approved by the CE provider approving authority.
 - 4. CE courses or activities less than one CEH shall not be approved.
 - 5. CE courses or activities longer than one CEH, credit may be

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granted in no less than half hour increments.

C. Site Visits:

1. Individual classes, courses or activities shall be open for scheduled and unscheduled visits by the San Joaquin County EMS Agency.
2. Site visits to inspect provider records shall be performed on scheduled site visits during normal business hours.

D. Required CE Personnel:

1. Each CE provider shall provide for the function of administrative direction, medical quality coordination and actual program instruction through the designation of a program director, a clinical director and instructors. Nothing in this policy precludes the same individual from being responsible for more than one of these functions.
2. Each CE provider shall have an approved Program Director who is qualified by education and experience in methods, materials and evaluation of education instruction programs. Proof of such qualifications shall include a minimum of forty hours of instruction in teaching methodology. Examples of courses that meet the required instruction hours include but are not limited to the following:
 - a. California State Fire marshal "Fire Instructor 1A" and Fire "Instructor 1B";
 - b. National Fire Academy "Fire Service Instructional Methodology" course;
 - c. University of California / California State University "Techniques of Teaching" courses or four (4) semester units of upper division credit in educational materials, methods, and curriculum development or equivalent;
 - d. A training course that meets the U.S. Department of Transportation / National Highway Traffic Safety Administration 2002 Guidelines for Educating EMS Instructors, such as the EMS Educator Course of the National Association of EMS Educators;
 - e. Individuals with experience may be provisionally approved for up to two years by the San Joaquin County EMS Agency pending completion of the specified requirements.

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3. The duties of the program director shall include but are not limited to:
 - a. Administering the CE program and ensuring adherence to state regulations and San Joaquin County EMS Agency Policies and Procedures;
 - b. Approving each course, class or activity including the instructional objectives and assigning CEH to any CE program which the CE provider sponsors; approving all methods of evaluation and coordinating all clinical and field activities approved for CE credit; approving instructors and signing all course class or activity completion records and maintaining those records as required by policy and regulation.
 - i. The responsibility for signing course, class or activity completion records may be delegated to the course, class or activity instructor.
4. Each CE provider shall have an approved Clinical Director who is currently:
 - a. Licensed to practice as a physician, physician assistant, paramedic or registered nurse. In addition, the clinical director shall have two years of academic, administrative or clinical experience in emergency medicine or EMS care within the last five years.
 - b. Duties of the clinical director shall include but are not limited to: monitoring all clinical and field activities approved for CE hour(s), approving instructor(s) and monitoring the overall quality of the EMS educational content of the program.
5. Each CE provider instructor shall be approved by the Program Director and Clinical Director as qualified to teach 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 area; 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.

E. CE Provider Records:

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1. Records shall be completed and maintained for four years and shall contain the following:
 - a. Complete outlines for each course given including a brief overview, instructional objectives, comprehensive topical outline, method of evaluation and a record of participant performance.
 - b. Record of time, place and date of each course and the number of CEH granted.
 - c. A curriculum vitae or resume for each instructor.
 - d. A roster signed by course participants to include name and certification number of EMS personnel attending the course, class, or activity and a record of any course completion certificates issued.
 - e. Evaluation materials including sample test and summaries of test results or methods of evaluation.

2. All Records shall be made available to the San Joaquin County EMS Agency upon request.

3. CE Providers shall issue to each participant a tamper resistant document or certificate of proof of successful completion of the course, class, or activity within thirty days of completion of the course, class or activity. The CE certificate or documentation of successful completion shall contain the following information:
 - a. Name of participant.
 - b. Participant's certification or license number.
 - c. The title of the course, class or activity.
 - d. The CE provider's name, address and telephone number.
 - e. Dates of course, class or activity.
 - f. Signature of course, class or activity instructor or program director. A digitally reproduced signature is acceptable for media/serial based courses, classes or activities.
 - g. In addition, the following statements shall be printed on the CE certificate or document of completion with the appropriate information filled in:
 - i. "This course has been approved for (number) hours of continuing education by an approved State of California EMS CE Provider and was instructor based (check mark) or non-instructor based (check mark)."

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- ii. State of California EMS CE Provider #: 39 – (enter number.)
 - iii. “This document must be retained for a period of four (4) years.”
- F. All CE course advertisements (flyers, catalogs, etc.) shall include the following information:
- 1. A clear concise description of the course content, objectives and the intended audience (e.g. advanced life support practitioner, basic life support practitioner.)
 - 2. Specification of the number of hours of CE to be granted.
 - 3. CE provider name and CE provider number as assigned by the San Joaquin County EMS Agency.
 - 4. Course tuition or other costs (i.e. books, materials, etc.) and the CE provider’s policy on refunds in cases of non-attendance by the registrant or cancellation of course by the CE provider, if applicable.
- G. CE providers shall ensure that copies of all advertisements disseminated to the public or outside of their own agency shall be sent to the San Joaquin County EMS Agency prior to the start of the course, class or activity.
- H. When two or more CE providers co-sponsor a course, class or activity only one CE provider number shall be used for that course, class or activity and the CE provider, whose number is used, assumes all responsibility for meeting all applicable requirements of state regulation and San Joaquin County EMS Agency policy.
- V. Application for CE Provider Approval:
- A. In order to be eligible for approval a perspective CE provider shall submit an application packet to the San Joaquin County EMS Agency. The application packet shall include:
- 1. Name, address, telephone number, fax number, email address.
 - 2. The type of entity or organization requesting approval (e.g. public agency, hospital, business, not for profit.)
 - 3. Name of program director, clinical director and primary contact person, if other than the program director.
 - 4. Resume or curriculum vitae of program director and clinical director.

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- B. The San Joaquin County EMS Agency may require a CE provider applicant to participate in an orientation to the San Joaquin County EMS system for no more than four hours.
- C. The San Joaquin County EMS Agency shall acknowledge receipt of the application within fourteen days of receiving the application and shall approve or disapprove the application within sixty days of receipt of the application.
- D. The approved applicant shall be assigned a CE provider number by the San Joaquin County EMS Agency.
- E. CE provider approval shall be valid for no more than two years.
- F. CE providers shall submit applications for renewal at least sixty days before the expiration date of their current CE provider approval in order to prevent a lapse in approval. All CE provider requirements shall have been met and maintained throughout the previous two year period in order for CE provider to be eligible for renewal.
- G. The San Joaquin County EMS Agency shall notify the State of California EMS Authority of each approved CE provider.

VI. CE Provider Denial/Disapproval Process:

- A. Non compliance with any criterion required for CE provider approval, use of any unqualified teaching personnel, or noncompliance with any other applicable provision of this policy may result in the denial, probation, suspension or revocation of CE provider approval.
- B. Notification of noncompliance and action to place on probation, suspend or revoke shall be carried out as follows:
 - 1. The San Joaquin County EMS Agency shall notify the approved CE program director in writing by certified mail of the provision of regulation or policy with which the CE provider is not in compliance.
 - 2. Within fifteen days of receipt of the notification of noncompliance, the approved CE provider shall submit in writing, by certified mail, to the San Joaquin County EMS Agency the following:

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- a. Evidence of compliance with this regulation or policy for which the action is based; or
 - b. A plan for meeting compliance with the provisions of regulation or policy within sixty days from the date of receipt of the notification of noncompliance.
3. Within fifteen days of receipt of the response from the approved CE provider, or within thirty days from the mailing date of the noncompliance notification if no response is received, the San Joaquin County EMS Agency shall notify the State of California EMS Authority and the approved CE provider, by certified mail, of the decision to accept the evidence of compliance, accept the plan for meeting compliance, or place on probation, suspend or revoke the CE provider approval. If the San Joaquin County EMS Agency decides to place on probation, suspend or revoke the CE provider's approval, the notification of such action shall include:
- a. Beginning and ending dates of probation, suspension or the effective date of revocation; and
 - b. The terms and conditions for lifting probation or suspension.
4. Probation and suspension periods shall be effective for at least sixty days.
- C. If CE provider status is suspended or revoked, approval for CE credit shall be withdrawn for all CE classes, courses or activities. .

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