

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures for issuing and maintaining Paramedic Accreditation by the San Joaquin County Emergency Medical Services Agency (SJCEMSA).

AUTHORITY: Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Section 1797.220 & 1798 et seq.; California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 4, Section 100166.

POLICY:

I. Initial Accreditation:

- A. In order to be accredited as a Paramedic in San Joaquin County, the applicant shall:
1. Be currently licensed as a Paramedic in California.
 2. Submit a completed Paramedic Accreditation application packet which includes but is not limited to:
 - a) Verification of employment with an approved San Joaquin County ALS provider agency.
 - b) Copies of the following:
 - i. Valid state identification card (i.e., driver's license) or valid federal identification (i.e., Military Identification)
 - ii. Valid California paramedic license;
 - iii. Current certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for the Professional Rescuer or Healthcare Provider, from the American Heart Association, American Red Cross, or programs approved by SJCEMSA.
 3. If the applicant is on probation with the California EMS Authority or a local EMS Agency, submit a copy of their stipulation agreement with the application.
 4. Pay the application fee established by the Board of Supervisors. All fees are non-refundable and non-transferable.
 5. Attend Paramedic Accreditation Orientation (PAO) course conducted by SJCEMSA.
 - a) Pass with a score of 80% or higher an examination based upon the San Joaquin County EMS Policies. (Refer to the Testing Procedures section of this policy for information on scores below 80%).
- B. An applicant who has completed I. A., 1 through 5 may begin a supervised pre-accreditation field evaluation. The applicant shall work under the direct

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supervision of a paramedic preceptor approved by the SJCEMSA or a paramedic accreditation officer approved by the SJCEMSA.

1. Paramedic applicants that have completed an authorized paramedic student field internship in San Joaquin County with an approved SJCEMSA paramedic preceptor may use the last ten (10) advanced life support (ALS) contacts obtained in their paramedic student field internship for the purposes of the paramedic accreditation field evaluation process if:
 - a) The paramedic applicant completed at least four hundred eighty (480) hours of the paramedic student field internship in San Joaquin County; and,
 - b) The paramedic applicant completed a Paramedic Accreditation Orientation (PAO) course within the last twelve (12) months.
- C. The pre-accreditation field evaluation shall consist of at least seven (7) but not more than ten (10) ALS patient contacts and shall be completed with the applicant's paramedic employer under the direct supervision of an approved SJCEMSA preceptor or SJCEMSA accreditation officer.
 1. The preceptor or accreditation officer shall document the field evaluation on the SJCEMSA Paramedic Accreditation Field Evaluation Form 2540A.
 2. The provider shall verify that the applicant is competent in the SJCEMSA's expanded scope of practice by completing Paramedic Skills Verification Form 2540B (refer to paragraph II. E. below).
 3. Once the pre-accreditation field evaluation is complete the applicant shall have the ALS provider's CQI Coordinator review and verify patient contacts listed in the Paramedic Accreditation Field Evaluation form. Upon completion the CQI Coordinator shall sign and return the form to the applicant.
- D. Pre-accreditation applicant status may be maintained for a maximum of thirty (30) days as measured starting from the first field evaluation shift. If the applicant does not complete the accreditation process within thirty (30) days the individual shall re-start the accreditation process as an initial applicant. A paramedic may apply for accreditation only three (3) times in a twelve (12) month period. At the discretion of the SJCEMSA this time frame may be extended following a written request from the applicant and an explanation as to why the accreditation process was not completed during the initial 30 day time period.
- E. In order to complete the accreditation process the applicant shall submit Forms 2540A and 2540B to the SJCEMSA.
- F. The SJCEMSA Medical Director shall evaluate any applicant that fails to successfully complete the pre-accreditation process. The SJCEMSA Medical Director may recommend further evaluation, training, or denial of accreditation.

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- G. Paramedic Accreditation shall expire on the same date as the State of California Paramedic License.

II Maintenance of Accreditation:

- A. In order to be maintain continuous accreditation in San Joaquin County, an accredited paramedic shall:
1. Submit a complete Paramedic Accreditation application packet thirty (30) days prior to expiration of their current San Joaquin County SJCEMSA Paramedic Accreditation including verification of continued employment with an approved San Joaquin County ALS provider.
 2. Submit with the Paramedic Accreditation application packet copies of the following:
 - a. Valid state identification card (i.e., driver's license) or valid federal identification (i.e., Military Identification);
 - b. Current California paramedic license;
 - c. Current certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for the Professional Rescuer or Healthcare Provider, from the American Heart Association, American Red Cross, or programs approved by the SJCEMSA.
 3. If a paramedic is on probation with the California EMS Authority or any other local EMS Agency, submit a copy of their probation or stipulation agreement along with their application packet.
 4. Complete an SJCEMSA policy and skills review (PSR) course, within six (6) months of expiration. This requirement is waived for paramedics that have successfully completed an initial SJCEMSA Paramedic Accreditation Orientation (PAO) course within the previous six (6) months.
 - b) Pass with a score of 80% or higher an examination based upon the San Joaquin County EMS Policies. (Refer to the Testing section of this policy for information on scores below 80%).
 5. Successfully complete mandatory training sessions as specified by the SJCEMSA. These sessions shall include training and testing on new or changing local EMS policies and procedures, and/or other topics pertinent to prehospital care.
 6. An individual, who is a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, whose paramedic license and accreditation expires during the time the individual is on active duty or license expires less than six (6) months from the date the individual is deactivated/released from active duty, has an additional six (6) months to comply with the requirements of Section II. A 1-5 and the late fee (application fee) is waived upon compliance with the following provisions:

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- a) Provide documentation from the respective branch of the Armed Forces of the United States verifying the individual's dates of activation and deactivation/release from active duty.

III. Lapsed Accreditation:

- A. In order for an individual whose accreditation has lapsed to be eligible for reinstatement, the following applies:
 1. For a lapse of less than six (6) months the paramedic shall pay the accreditation fee and meet all requirements listed in Section II. (Maintenance of Accreditation).
 2. For a lapse of more than six (6) months the paramedic shall complete the initial accreditation process listed in I. (Initial Accreditation).

- IV. Falsification of any of the accreditation/reaccreditation documents may result in denial of accreditation and may result in referral to the EMS Authority for disciplinary action.

V. CQI Process:

- A. If through the CQI process the employer or SJCEMSA Medical Director determines that a paramedic needs additional training, observation or testing, the employer, or the SJCEMSA Medical Director may create a specific and targeted program of remediation based upon the identified need of the paramedic. If there is disagreement between the employer and the SJCEMSA Medical Director, the decision of the SJCEMSA Medical Director shall prevail.

VI. Testing:

- A. An applicant is allowed to take the PAO/PSR course examination a maximum of three (3) times per year:
 1. First Attempt: During initial PAO course or PSR course.
 2. Second Attempt: May be scheduled after a one (1) week waiting period from the initial examination;
 3. Third Attempt: May be scheduled following completion of four (4) hours of remedial training pertaining to the SJCEMSA Policies.
 4. If the applicant's accreditation lapses because of repeated attempts to pass the exam, the requirement listed in Section III shall apply. Additionally, after three (3) failed attempts the SJCEMSA Medical Director may suspend or revoke the applicant's accreditation until such time that the applicant passes the examination.

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- B. It is a misdemeanor for any person to knowingly and willfully engage in conduct that subverts or attempts to subvert any certification or licensing examination or the administration of an examination, conducted pursuant to the Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, including any accreditation or authorization examination process. Unlawful conduct includes:
1. Conduct that violates the security of the examination material.
 2. Removing from the examination room any examination materials without authorization.
 3. The unauthorized reproduction by any means of any portion of the actual licensing or certification examination.
 4. Aiding by any means the unauthorized reproduction of any portion of the actual licensing or certification examination.
 5. Paying or using professional or paid examination-takers, for the purpose of reconstructing any portion of the licensing or certification examination.
 6. Obtaining or attempting to obtain examination questions or other examination material from examinees or by any other method, except by specific authorization before, during, or after an examination.
 7. Using or purporting to use any examination questions or materials that were improperly removed or taken from any examination for the purpose of instructing or preparing any applicant for examination.
 8. Selling, distributing, buying, receiving, or having unauthorized possession of any portion of a future, current, or previously administered licensing or certification examination.
 9. Communicating with any other examinee during the administration of a licensing or certification examination.
 10. Copying answers from another examinee or permitting one's answers to be copied by another examinee.
 11. Having in one's possession during the administration of the licensing or certification examination any books, equipment, notes written or printed materials, or data of any kind, other than the examination materials distributed, or otherwise authorized to be in one's possession during the examination.
 12. Impersonating any examinee or having an impersonator take the licensing or certification examination on one's behalf.
- C. The penalties provided for in Health and Safety Code Section 1798.207 are not exclusive remedies and shall not preclude remedies provided pursuant to any other provision of law.
- D. In addition to any other penalties, a person found guilty of violating Health and Safety Code Section 1798.207 shall be liable for the actual damages sustained by the agency administering the examination not to exceed ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) and the costs of litigation.

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