



ACCREDITATION TO PRACTICE- PARAMEDIC

I. AUTHORITY:

Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1798 and 1797.185; California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 4, §100166.

II. APPLICATION:

This policy describes the process by which the EMS agency accredits a licensed California paramedic to practice in Orange County. Also described are approved endorsements for specialty paramedic accreditation.

III. DEFINITIONS:

"Local Accreditation" or **"accreditation"** or **"accreditation to practice"** means authorization by OCEMS to practice as a paramedic within Orange County. Such authorization indicates that the paramedic has completed the requirements of California Code of Regulations Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 4, §100142.

IV. ACCREDITATION CRITERIA:

In order to be eligible for accreditation to practice in Orange County, the paramedic must meet all of the following:

- A. Possess a valid, current State of California paramedic license.
- B. Not be precluded from accreditation to practice as a paramedic for reasons defined in Section 1798.200 of the Health and Safety Code.
- C. Be affiliated with an OCEMS approved advanced life support (ALS) service provider.
- D. Successfully complete the accreditation process (See Section V) within a 30-day period. If the application is not completed within this timeframe, the individual shall submit a new application and fee to begin another 30-day period.

NOTE: Accreditation is void once a paramedic leaves an OCEMS approved ALS provider agency. If the paramedic joins another OCEMS approved ALS provider, this individual must re-apply for accreditation.

V. ACCREDITATION PROCESS:

Paramedics applying for local accreditation must complete and submit the following to OCEMS:

- A. Copy of State of California paramedic license.
- B. For paramedics hired after October 1, 2024, a copy (front and back) of a valid current American Heart Association (AHA) or American Red Cross (ARC) Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) card. Paramedics employed prior to this date are exempt. ACLS cards obtained online must have hands on skills evaluation with an approved AHA or ARC instructor. All paramedics hired after October 1, 2024 will need to meet this requirement at the time of employment, regardless of other county job experience or paramedic accreditation at other agencies. Once achieved, no further enrollment in subsequent ACLS courses or additional ACLS card renewals will be required.
- C. Evidence of successful completion of an orientation program to the Orange County EMS system, as prescribed by OCEMS. The orientation shall not exceed eight (8) classroom hours, except when additional hours are needed for the paramedic to successfully complete training in any basic and/or local optional scope of practice for which the paramedic has not been trained and tested.

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1. Orientation program to include:
 - a. OCEMS Treatment Guidelines
 - b. OCEMS Policies and Procedures
 - c. OCEMS paramedic Scope of Practice, including any local optional scope
 - d. Orientation to the OCEMS communication system
 2. Only OCEMS, an OC base hospital coordinator, an OC ALS service provider's EMS coordinator, or a California paramedic training program whose orientation curriculum is approved by OCEMS may provide items V.C.1, a, b, and c above.
 - a. Paramedic training programs must apply to OCEMS for approval of their orientation program curriculum. Contact the OCEMS ALS Coordinator to begin the approval process.
 3. The Orange County Sheriff/Communications division must provide Item V.C.1.d. above.
- D. Complete the appropriate OCEMS paramedic accreditation application online through OC-MEDS.
- E. Pay the established fee. (Reference OCEMS Policy #470.00)

VI. SPECIALTY ENDORSEMENTS:

The following apply after completion of the requirements described in Section V

- A. **Air Medical** – Complete the Air Medical endorsement application which shall include:
1. Employer attestation that the paramedic is employed by an OCEMS-Approved Air Ambulance Company (currently only Mercy Air) and
 2. The paramedic is assigned full-time to an Orange County base
 3. Evidence of completion of an agency-approved Medical Flight Crew Training Program
- B. **Air Rescue** – Complete the Air Rescue endorsement application which shall include:
1. Employer attestation that the paramedic is employed by an OCEMS-Approved Air Rescue agency (currently only Orange County Fire Authority and Orange County Sheriff's Department)
 2. Evidence of completion of an agency-approved Medical Flight Crew Training Program
- C. **IFT-ALS** – Complete the IFT-ALS endorsement application which shall include:
1. Employer attestation that the paramedic is employed by an OCEMS-Approved IFT-ALS Provider
 2. Evidence of completion of the OCEMS IFT-ALS Orientation (upload signed form)

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3. Evidence of 10 IFT-ALS patient contacts. This must be submitted within forty-five (45) days of receipt of OCEMS accreditation. Failure to do so will result in OCEMS accreditation being revoked.

D. Tactical EMS – Complete the Tactical EMS endorsement application which shall include;

1. Attestation from the paramedics' OCEMS-approved Advanced Life Support Provider Agency that when the paramedics are functioning as members of a TEMS team, they shall be on duty and sponsored by that approved ALS provider.
2. Evidence of completion of either a POST-certified or an OCEMS-Approved tactical medicine training program.
3. Verification that the paramedic is sponsored by a law enforcement agency.

VII. MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION:

- A. The OCEMS Paramedic Accreditation shall expire on the same date as that of the applicant's California Paramedic License or sooner if requested by applicant.

NOTE: There is no grace period for renewal of local accreditation

- B. In order to maintain local accreditation to practice, the **paramedic** shall submit evidence of the following within OC-MEDS:

1. Copy of valid State of California Paramedic license.
2. Agency attestation of sufficient patient contact experience as evidenced by PCR documentation review based on agency standards and CQI plan as submitted to OCEMS.
3. Agency attestation that the paramedic has completed a minimum of one advanced airway review session per year.

NOTE: The OCEMS medical director and/or the base hospital physician director may require additional airway review for any paramedic at any time if deemed necessary (e.g., undetected or uncorrected esophageal intubation, dislodgement, other).

4. Agency verification that the paramedic has completed a minimum of one OCEMS approved mandatory EMS system updates and in-services per year.
5. Complete the OCEMS online application for paramedic accreditation verification through OC-MEDS.
6. If specialty endorsement is ongoing, complete the appropriate specialty endorsement application.

VIII. INACTIVE STATUS:

1. A paramedic shall be considered INACTIVE if any conditions listed in Section VII.B are not satisfied.

IX. ACCREDITED PARAMEDIC RESPONSIBILITIES:

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The OCEMS accredited paramedic is responsible for all of the following:

- A. Notification of OCEMS at any point accreditation or licensure criteria are not being met.
- B. Compliance with OCEMS Policies/Procedures, Standing Orders and Treatment Guidelines.
- C. Notifying OCEMS of any and all changes in name, employer, email, and/or mailing address within 30 calendar days of change.

X. PROVIDER AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES:

The provider agency shall be responsible for all of the following:

- A. Ensuring the paramedic is not precluded from practice for reasons defined in Section 1798.200 of the Health and Safety Code.
- B. Reporting to OCEMS any situations as mandated by statute.
- C. Assuring the paramedic meets performance standards as outlined in the sponsoring agencies quality assurance/improvement program to provide prehospital emergency medical care safely.
- D. Assuring the paramedic is current in all accreditation and licensure requirements including skills training and mandatory in-services.
- E. Advising OCEMS within thirty (30) days when a paramedic changes status (ACTIVE to INACTIVE). Notification shall include the name and OCEMS accreditation number of the paramedic and the reason for the change in status.

XI. EMS AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

- A) OCEMS shall review paramedic applications submitted by the paramedic and his/her sponsoring agency for completeness and determine if the individual meets all local accreditation requirements.
- B) Successful applicants and his/her sponsoring agency shall be notified regarding local accreditation within thirty (30) days of documentation of all accreditation requirements and payment of the established fee.

Note: A state licensed paramedic who is applying for accreditation may practice as a second paramedic in Orange County within the limitations of the State basic scope of practice until he or she is accredited. The accreditation applicant may only perform the local optional scope of practice while in the presence of a field evaluator who is ultimately responsible for patient care. If the paramedic accreditation applicant does not complete accreditation requirements within thirty (30) calendar days, the applicant may be required to complete a new application and pay a new fee to begin another thirty (30) day period.

- C) OCEMS shall submit to the EMS Authority the names and dates of accreditation for those individuals it accredits within twenty (20) working days of accreditation.
- D) Licensed paramedics continuously employed by OCEMS are accredited to practice as a paramedic in Orange County and are exempt from the authorization / reauthorization process.



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Note: Individuals who are accredited as a paramedic in Orange County shall utilize the Orange County Scope of Practice when responding out-of-county (e.g., inter-county transport of patients, mutual or automatic aid, on a strike team) or during a disaster.

Approved:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Carl H. Schultz, MD".

Carl H. Schultz, MD
OCEMS Medical Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tammi McConnell".

Tammi McConnell
OCEMS Administrator

Original Date:	10/01/1989
Reviewed Date(s):	4/1/2014; 4/1/2015; 5/1/2016, 3/28/2017; 4/1/2017; 6/15/2019; 10/13/2022
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