

COUNTY OF VENTURA HEALTH CARE AGENCY		EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Policy Title:  EMT/Paramedic/MICN Decertification and Discipline		Policy Number  330
APPROVED:  Administration:	Steven L. Carroll, Paramedic 	Date: July 1, 2023
APPROVED:  Medical Director:	Daniel Shepherd, M.D. 	Date: July 1, 2023
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- I. PURPOSE: Defines the disciplinary process regarding prehospital emergency care certificates including provision of counseling, placing certificate holder on probation or suspension, revocation of certificate, denial of renewal of certificate, or denial of certification.
- II. AUTHORITY: California Health and Safety Code, Section 1798.200
- III. POLICY: The Ventura County Emergency Medical Services Agency (VCEMS) may provide counseling, place on probation, suspend from practice for a designated time period, deny or revoke certification or deliver reprimands to Ventura County Certified EMT, Paramedic, or MICN if their actions, while providing prehospital care, constitutes a threat to public health and safety upon the finding by VCEMS medical director.

GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION:

- A. Evidence that one or more of the following actions that is substantially related to the qualifications and constitute a threat to public health and safety has/have occurred:
  1. Fraud in the procurement of any certification, license or authorization.
  2. Gross negligence or repeated negligent acts
  3. Incompetence
  4. Commission of any fraudulent, dishonest, or corrupt act, which is substantially related to the qualifications, functions, and duties of prehospital personnel.
  5. Conviction of any crime, which is substantially related to the qualifications, functions, and duties of prehospital personnel. The record of conviction shall be considered conclusive evidence of conviction.
  6. Violation of or an attempt to violate directly or indirectly, or assistance in or abetting the violation of, or conspiring to violate, any provision of Division 2.5 of the Health and Safety Code, or of the regulations promulgated by the California

State Emergency Medical Services Authority, or the County of Ventura pertaining to prehospital care personnel.

7. Violation of or an attempt to violate any federal or state statute or regulation, which regulates narcotics, dangerous drugs or controlled substances.
  8. Addiction to the excessive use of, or the misuse of, alcoholic beverages, narcotics, dangerous drugs or controlled substances.
  9. Functioning as a Ventura County certified EMT, accredited Paramedic, or authorized MICN while under the influence of alcoholic beverages, narcotics, dangerous drugs or controlled substances.
  10. Functioning outside the scope of the held certificate or independent of medical controls in the local prehospital emergency medical care system except as authorized by other license or certification.
  11. Unprofessional conduct exhibited by any of the following:
    - a. The mistreatment or physical abuse of any patient resulting from force in excess of what a reasonable and prudent person trained and acting in a similar capacity while engaged in the performance of his or her duties would use if confronted with a similar circumstance. Nothing in this section shall be deemed to prohibit an EMT or Paramedic from assisting a peace officer, or a peace officer that is acting in the dual capacity of peace officer and EMT or Paramedic, from using that force that is reasonably necessary to affect a lawful arrest or detention.
    - b. The failure to maintain confidentiality of patient medical information, except, as disclosure is otherwise permitted or required by law in Section 56 to 56.6, inclusive, of the California Civil Code.
    - c. The commission of any sexually related offense specified under Section 290 of the California Penal Code.
  12. Demonstration of irrational behavior or occurrence of a physical disability to the extent that a reasonable and prudent person would have reasonable cause to believe that the ability to perform the duties normally expected may be impaired.
- B. Failure to pass a certifying or recertifying examination shall be sufficient grounds for the denial of a certificate or the denial of the renewal of a certificate without a formal appeal process.

**IV. PROCEDURE:**

A. Reporting Process

When any of the grounds for disciplinary action are exhibited by a certificate holder, any individual observing such grounds may submit a written claim relative to the infraction as

well as any other supporting evidence to the VCEMS. Discovery through medical audit shall be considered as a source of information for action.

B. Notification of Claim against Certificate Holder.

Before any formal investigation is undertaken, VCEMS shall evaluate the claim(s) relative to the potential threat to the public health and safety and determine if further action appears to be warranted.

When such a claim is submitted to VCEMS, the PCC and ED medical director at the appropriate base hospital shall be notified, in addition to the ALS provider management (if the certificate holder is an EMT or paramedic) of the claim. Notification of such a claim shall be given verbally within twenty-four (24) hours, or as soon as possible, followed by written notification within ten (10) days. The written notice shall include:

1. A statement of the claim(s) against the certificate holder.
2. A statement which explains that the claim(s), if found to be true, constitute a threat to the public health and safety and are cause for VCEMS to take disciplinary action pursuant to Section 1798.200 of the Health and Safety Code.
3. An explanation of the possible actions, which may be taken if the claims are found to be true.
4. A brief explanation of the formal investigation process.
5. A request for a written response to the claim(s) from the certificate holder.
6. A statement that the certificate holder may submit in writing any information, which she/he feels is pertinent to the investigation, including statements from other individuals, etc.
7. The date by which the information must be submitted.
8. A statement that if she/he so chooses, the certificate holder may designate another person, including legal counsel or the certificate holder's employer, to represent him/her during the investigation.

This notification may be combined with notification of disciplinary action if the certificate holder's certificate is being immediately suspended.

The claim shall be responded to by the appropriate individual(s) and relevant information shall be submitted to VCEMS within fifteen (15) days after receipt of written notification.

C. Review of Submitted Material

VCEMS shall review the submitted material and determine the appropriate disciplinary action.

1. The nature of the disciplinary action shall be related to the severity of the risk to the public health and safety caused by the actions of the certificate holder or applicant for a prehospital care certificate.
2. The types of action, which may be taken prior to or subsequent to formal investigation, include:  

Immediate suspension: VCEMS may immediately suspend a prehospital emergency medical care certificate at any point in the investigative or appeal process if there is evidence which indicates in the expert opinion of the VCEMS Medical Director that a continuing threat to the public health and safety will exist if the certificate is not suspended. The certificate holder's relevant employer shall be notified prior to or concurrent with initiation of the suspension. An expedited appeal hearing shall be convened if the certificate holder requests, in writing, such a hearing. Written notification shall be sent by certified mail.