

SUBJECT: EMS Aircraft Services
Authorization of EMS Aircraft

Associated Policies:

- I. Authority and Reference (incorporated herein by references)
 - A. Division 2.5 of Health and Safety Code
 - B. California code of Regulations, Title 22
 - C. North Coast EMS Policies and Procedures
 - D. County Ambulance Ordinances

- II. Purpose:
To ensure that the care provided to patients by EMS aircraft services have met established guidelines covering licensing and authorization by North Coast Emergency Medical Services

- III. Authorization of EMS Aircraft:
 - A. All prehospital EMS aircraft service providers providing prehospital patient transport from within or to the NCEMS region (i.e., Del Norte, Humboldt and Lake Counties) must be authorized by NCEMS. Authorization will be confirmed by a written prehospital EMS aircraft agreement between the EMS aircraft service provider and NCEMS.

 - B. Notwithstanding the requirement for a written EMS aircraft agreement set forth above, aircraft operated by CHP, CDF, and USCG may be authorized to operate as a prehospital EMS rescue aircraft service provider by the State EMS Authority.

 - C. Authorization to respond to a medical emergency by an authorized prehospital EMS aircraft service provider is limited to a request by a designated dispatch center.

- IV. Licensing and Certification:
 - A. Each prehospital EMS aircraft must be maintained in compliance with Federal and/or State of California standards and requirements for licensing, airworthiness, or authorization as an aircraft and, where applicable, by special category as an air ambulance.
 1. Each prehospital EMS aircraft shall be staffed and equipped according to local ambulance ordinances in the county of origin, where applicable.
 2. All prehospital EMS aircraft service providers shall submit the initial form and any updates of the EMS Prehospital Aircraft Classification Information form to North Coast EMS, which indicates a description of the service including: the number and type of aircraft utilized within the NCEMS region, level of training of the EMS aircraft crew, BLS and ALS equipment, hours of operation, the estimated or actual number of emergency and non-emergency calls within or into the NCEMS region, pre-designated landing sites within the NCEMS region and area of response. Potential new providers shall submit the

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above information for the proposed service and submit a letter of intent expressing familiarity with and willingness to abide with regional EMS agency policies and procedures. The initial form and updates shall also be provided to each designated dispatch center.

3. All prehospital EMS aircraft service providers shall execute an Air Ambulance Participation Agreement with NCEMS for approval as an EMS helicopter in the region.
4. All prehospital EMS aircraft service providers operating with the NCEMS region shall complete the NCEMS Prehospital Care Report (PCR) or an equivalent form from the county or region of origin. These forms shall be made available to NCEMS on a monthly or quarterly basis.
5. Prehospital EMS aircraft service providers shall submit annual data on prehospital medical patient transport activity within the region by June 30 of each year for the preceding calendar year, or upon written request by NCEMS. This data may be forwarded to the State EMS authority as part of the annual inventory or resources if requested.
6. All aero medical classified helicopter providers stationed within the North Coast EMS Region shall be authorized by North Coast EMS as an ALS Provider and as an Air Ambulance Service Provider.

V. Prehospital EMS Aircraft Personnel and Equipment Standards

A. Personnel Standards

Certified or licensed non-physician medical personnel (EMT-1, EMT-P, MICN, or Flight Nurse) assigned to, or who may be called upon to function as members of a helicopter crew for prehospital care are:

1. Required to be competent in aero medical transportation.
2. Required to be currently certified, authorized or licensed to provide prehospital emergency care in the county or EMS region of origin.
3. Paramedics must operate under approved protocols, policies and procedures of the local EMS agency of aircraft origin pursuant to the reciprocity agreement with NCEMS.
4. MICN's or Flight Nurses must operate under formally approved Standardized Operating Procedures according to the Nurse Practice Act and policies of the local EMS agency of jurisdiction.

B. Equipment Standards

Each prehospital EMS aircraft will have on-board, at a minimum, supplies and equipment which are commensurate with the scope of practice of the flight crew. In recognition of weight and space limitations, the NCEMS Medical Director may waive such requirements, as are deemed inappropriate or unnecessary. Each prehospital EMS aircraft must carry radio equipment which has Med-Net

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communications, CalCord and VTAC capability with local base hospitals, ground ambulances and first responders.

- VI. Continuous Quality Improvement
- A. NCEMS policies and procedures for CQI apply to all patient transports originating within the region, both ground and EMS aircraft. Individual cases, providers and system issues may be audited upon receipt of a Case Review Form or by determination of the NCEMS Medical Director. Any ground ambulance or EMS helicopter transport CQI issues involving units from other jurisdictions will be reviewed in concert with the provider and local EMS agency responsible for that jurisdiction.
 - B. Emergency response flights which exceed the EMS air service provider's initial ETA estimate by more than 25% shall be audited.
- VII. Withdrawal from operations in the NCEMS Region
- A. NCEMS reserves the right to suspend, probate or restrict EMS aircraft services for cause, following an investigation and establishment of a practice pattern that is outside the parameters set in this policy and/or for failure to comply with ALS Provider or Air Ambulance Service Provider contractual requirements. If so authorized by North Coast EMS.
 - B. Either NCEMS or EMS aircraft service providers can terminate services within sixty (60) days written notice.
 - C. The decision of the NCEMS Medical Director and/or Executive Director will be final unless an appeal is presented to the North Coast Joint Powers Governing Board.
 - D. NCEMS will notify the local EMS agency in the county or region of origin, and/or California EMS Authority of actions taken.

Approved:  Date: 9-30-19

Approved as to Form:  Date: 9-19-19