

Land Ambulance Service Certification Standards

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Emergency Health Services Branch
June 2008

I Application Content:

An application to be certified or re-certified to operate a land ambulance service shall contain:

- (a) the identity of the person or persons who will be directly responsible for the operation of the land ambulance service;
- (b) the mailing address and telephone number(s) of the business office of the ambulance service;
- (c) written evidence of the applicant's compliance or ability to comply with the certification criteria set out in this standard; and
- (d) such other information as the certifying authority may request in writing.

II Certification Process:

NEW AMBULANCE SERVICE OPERATOR CERTIFICATION PROCESS

1. The applicant requests an application form from the Certifying Authority.
2. The applicant submits the application to the Certifying Authority (along with a fee of four hundred and sixty dollars (\$460.00) to cover the cost of the application package and a site operational review of the applicant's service).
3. The certification criteria and process information package will be sent to the applicant within 7 days of receipt of the application.
4. The applicant submits documentary evidence of being able to meet the planning and administrative components of the criteria for certification to the Certifying Authority.
5. Within 20 business days of receipt of the documentary evidence provided in #4, the Certifying Authority will provide a written evaluation to the applicant containing an assessment of the applicant's compliance or ability to comply with the criteria.
6. Where the applicant is successful in meeting the documentary requirements provided in #4, the Certifying Authority will establish a mutually agreeable date and time for an operational evaluation interview to be conducted.
7. The interview panel will be convened and scheduled within 15 business days of notification of the applicant that the documentary evidence meets the criteria for that part of the certification process. The interview will measure the applicant's understanding of and preparations for dealing with day-to-day operational issues and challenges of operating a land ambulance service.

8. Upon successful completion of the written and the interview components of the evaluation process, the Certifying Authority will issue a certificate for a term of 1 year from the date of issuance being given by the Authority.
9. An ambulance service review site visit will be scheduled and completed by the Ambulance Service Review Team within 180 days of the date of issuance of the certificate issued under #8.
10. The applicant will be provided with a written report within 60 days of the last day of the visit that sets out the findings of the site visit, including any areas where improvements are suggested or required.
11. Where the ambulance service review determines that the service provider has met the requirements for certification, the review team leader will make a recommendation to the Certifying Authority regarding the findings of the review.
12. Upon the acceptance of the findings of the review that the applicant has met the requirements for certification the Certifying Authority will issue a certificate to the applicant which has a term of 3 years from the expiry date of the current certificate.

OPERATOR RECERTIFICATION PROCESS - Subsection 4(b) of Regulation

1. Each certified operator of service will be notified that an ambulance service review will be conducted on the service and each station and vehicle of the service at a time that is not less than 90 days following the date of notification.
2. An ambulance service review site visit will be completed by the Ambulance Service Review Team to determine the operator's compliance with the legislation and standards.
3. The provider of service will be provided with a written report of the findings of the site visit within 60 days of the last day of the site visit and the report will include any areas or activities of the service where improvements are suggested or required to comply with the legislation or standards.
4. Where the ambulance service review determines that the service provider has met the requirements for certification, the review team leader will make a recommendation to the Certifying Authority regarding the findings of the review team.
5. Upon acceptance of the findings of the review, that the operator has met the requirements for certification, the Certifying Authority will issue a certificate to the provider that has a term of 3 years.

OPERATOR RECERTIFICATION PROCESS - Clause 11(1)(b) of the Ambulance Act.

1. Where the Director makes an order under clause 11(1)(b) of the Ambulance Act that a certified operator of ambulance service must complete the certification process described in that clause, the Director will advise the Certifying Authority within 5 business days of the order and of the specified timeframe for the certified provider of service to comply with the order.
2. The certification criteria and process information package that the certified operator will require to comply with the order will be sent to the provider within 7 days of the Certifying Authority being notified of the order by the Director.
3. Within 20 business days of being notified of the order, the Certifying Authority will establish a timeframe when the certified operator will be evaluated as to his or her compliance with the certification criteria.
4. Where the Certifying Authority determines that the service provider has met the criteria for certification, the Certifying Authority will issue a certificate that has a term of 1 year.
5. The Certifying Authority will inform the Director regarding compliance of the provider of service with the order and where a certificate is issued, the date on which the certificate expires.
6. A provider of service who receives a 1 year certificate subsequent to an order made under Clause 11(1)(b) of the Act will receive an ambulance service review within 180 days of the date the certificate is issued under this provision.

III Operational Certification Criteria:

For the purpose of this Part, the term "employee" includes a volunteer.

In addition to the requirements of Part I, a person seeking to be certified or re-certified to operate an ambulance service shall provide the Certifying Authority with evidence that:

- (a) As a condition of employment, each employee and volunteer in the applicant/operator's service, who is required to provide patient care, will provide such patient care in accordance with the standards set out in the Basic Life Support Patient Care Standards (version 1.0) dated October 1995, and where applicable, the Advanced Life Support Patient Care Standards published by the Ministry as those documents may be amended from time to time.

- (b.1) The applicant/operator, if selected by a municipality to provide service, will establish and maintain a 90th percentile Response Time Performance Standard for the applicant's land ambulance service for priority four emergency calls, and
- (b.2) Where a response time standard is set under (b.1) that standard will be reported to the Director, Emergency Health Services Branch not less than 30 days prior to commencing the provision of service and subsequently, not less than 30 days prior to the beginning of each calendar year, and
- (b.3) The response time standard set under clause (b.1) and reported under clause (b.2) shall not be of a longer time duration than the 90th percentile response time standard for priority four emergency calls set by the operator who provided land ambulance and emergency response service in the area in 1996.
- (c) Only ambulances and emergency response vehicles that comply with the applicable version at time of manufacture of "Ontario Provincial Ambulance and Emergency Response Vehicle Standards", published by the Ministry as may be amended from time to time, are or will be used in the applicant/operator's ambulance service.
- (d.1) Each vehicle used as an ambulance in the applicant/operator's service shall contain as a minimum the accessory and patient care equipment set out in the document titled "Provincial Equipment Standards for Ontario Ambulance Services", published by the Ministry as may be amended from time to time.
- (d.2) Each land ambulance used in the applicant/operator's service and the patient care and accessory equipment contained therein shall be maintained in a safe operating condition, in a clean and sanitary condition, and in proper working order.
- (e.1) Each vehicle used as an emergency response vehicle in the applicant/operator's service shall contain as a minimum the accessory and patient care equipment set out in the document titled "Provincial Equipment Standards for Ontario Ambulance Services", published by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.
- (e.2) Each emergency response vehicle used in the applicant's service and the patient care and accessory equipment contained therein shall be maintained in a safe operating condition, in a clean and sanitary condition and in proper working order.
- (f) Each land ambulance and emergency response vehicle used in the applicant/operator's service is identified by and has displayed in an obvious, highly visible location on the front and rear exterior of the vehicle, a unique identification number that has been assigned by the Director, Emergency Health Services Branch.
- (g.1) Each emergency medical attendant and paramedic employed by the applicant/operator in his or her ambulance service is assigned a unique identification number issued by the Director.
- (g.2) The unique identification number referenced in clause (g.1) shall appear on a photo identification card that conforms to Schedule 1 of this standard, and the photo identification card shall be on the person of the emergency medical attendant or paramedic while on-duty.
- (h) No employee of the applicant/operator's land ambulance service shall refuse or disregard the direction of a communications officer in regard to any request for ambulance service.

- (i.1) The communication service that normally directs the movement of the ambulances and emergency response vehicles in the applicant/operator's service, will be kept informed by the employees of the applicant/operator at all times as to the availability and location of each employee, ambulance or emergency response vehicle.
- (i.2) The presence and movement of each ambulance and emergency response vehicle in the applicant/operator's service is reported promptly by each applicable employee of the applicant/operator to the communication service in whose geographical area the ambulance or emergency response vehicle is physically located.
- (j.1) Each employee of the applicant/operator who is required to drive an ambulance or emergency response vehicle as part of his or her employment, and does so, shall transport each patient to a facility or other destination as directed by a communications officer.
- (j.2) In the absence of a direction given under (j.1) the driver of an ambulance or emergency response vehicle shall in an emergency situation transport a patient to the closest health care facility that is apparently able to meet the health care needs of the patient.
- (k) All reasonable measures are taken to ensure that each emergency medical attendant and paramedic employed in the applicant/operator's land ambulance service maintain competence in the use of the patient care, accessory and communications equipment required for the proper provision of service in accordance with the Basic Life Support and Advance Life Support Patient Care Standards referred to in clause (a) of this Part.
- (l) A valid agreement is in effect between the applicant/operator and the designated Base Hospital Program, for each area in which the applicant/operator proposes to provide land ambulance service, for the delegation of controlled acts by paramedics employed by the applicant/operator.
- (m) Each emergency medical attendant and paramedic employed in the applicant/operator's service will receive the opportunity to obtain the continuing medical education necessary to maintain the competencies required to provide ambulance service in accordance with the BASIC Life Support Patient Care Standards.
- (n) Each emergency medical attendant and paramedic in the applicant/operator's land ambulance service will receive the opportunity for such remedial training as may be necessary to correct a deficiency in a patient care skill.
- (o) The applicant/operator's service will participate in a Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care service review process to evaluate compliance with the Ambulance Act, Regulations and standards.
- (p) For each vehicle, or item of equipment contained or used in the applicant/operator's service and each item that is owned or funded by the Province of Ontario, the applicant/operator shall ensure that access is provided to such vehicle or item of equipment as requested by the Director.
- (q) A personnel record is maintained for each emergency medical attendant and paramedic employed by the applicant/operator. The record shall include evidence of qualification as described in Part III of the regulation.

- (r) Incident reports, ambulance call reports and collision reports are made in accordance with “Ontario Ambulance Documentation Standards”, published by the Ministry of Health as may be amended from time to time, respecting each incident, complaint, investigation, and collision relating to the applicant/operator's service, employees, agents and to each patient served.
- (s) The driver of a land ambulance or emergency response vehicle, who is an employee or agent of the applicant/operator and who is directly or indirectly involved in a collision or other event that might prevent the response of the vehicle, while in charge of an ambulance or emergency response vehicle, will immediately notify the communications service which normally directs the movements of the ambulance or emergency response vehicle.

Schedule 1.

Identification Card Criteria

For the purpose of this Schedule, the term "employee" includes a volunteer.

- A. An ambulance service identification card shall be a minimum of 8.5 centimeters long and 5.3 centimeters wide with a white background color, and shall contain:
1. The ambulance service employee identification number issued by the Director under this standard;
 2. The surname and initials of the emergency medical attendant or paramedic;
 3. The word 'AMBULANCE' in letters using a font of at least .5 centimeters with a length of 3.2 centimeters, and the word ambulance will be in letters that have a high contrast with the background color of the card;
 4. A color photograph measuring a minimum 3.0 centimeters long and 2.3 centimeters wide of head shot of the emergency medical attendant or paramedic which will be affixed to the left hand side of the card;
 5. An expiry date;
 6. Security measures that will prevent duplication of the card;
 7. Security measures that will prevent tampering with the information or photograph contained on the card.
- B. Ambulance service identification cards issued by the Emergency Health Services Branch are and remain the property of the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (the ministry). Upon release from employment, the identification card must be surrendered to the employer and returned to the Emergency Health Services Branch.