

Air Ambulance Service Certification Standards

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

Application Content:

An application to be certified or re-certified to operate an air ambulance service shall contain:

- (a) the identity of the person or persons who will be directly responsible for the operation of the 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 shall request in writing.

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. If the review of the documentary evidence indicates that the applicant is able to meet the criteria for the written portion, the Certifying Authority will establish a mutually agreeable date and time for an operational evaluation interview to be arranged. The interview will be scheduled within 15 business days of notification of the applicant that the documentary evidence meets the criteria for that part of the certification process.
7. An air ambulance service operational review panel will be convened to conduct an interview of the applicant. The interview will measure the applicant's understanding of and preparations for dealing with day-to-day operational issues and challenges of operating an air 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 air 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 air 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 issuance of a certificate.
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 that has a term of 3 years from the expiry date of the previous certificate.

OPERATOR RECERTIFICATION PROCESS - Subsection 4(b) of Regulation

1. Each certified provider of service will be notified that an air 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 provider'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 in order 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 a provider of service is ordered to complete the certification process described in 3(b), the Manager of the Investigation & Licensing Service will inform the Manager, Standards & Quality, within 5 business days of the order and of the specified timeframe for the certified operator to comply with the order.
2. The certification criteria and process information package that the provider of service will require to comply with the order will be sent to the provider within 7 days of receipt of the notification by the Manager of the Investigation & Licensing Service.
3. Within 20 business days of being notified of the order, the Manager, Standards & Quality will establish a timeframe when an Ambulance Service Review Team will visit the service provider.
4. On completion of the visit by the review team, the provider will be provided with a written report within 20 working days, stating the findings of the site visit - including any areas where improvements are required or suggested.
5. Where the ambulance service review team determines that the certified service provider has met the criteria for certification, the findings will be made known to the Director, Emergency Health Services Branch.
6. Upon the Director's approval, a request will be made for the Certifying Authority to issue a certificate with a term of 1 year to the provider.
7. A provider of service who receives a 1 year certificate subsequent to an order made under Clause 11(1)(b) will receive an ambulance service review prior to the expiry of the certificate to confirm compliance with the criteria for renewal of certification.

OPERATIONAL CERTIFICATION:

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

In addition to the requirements of (1), 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 agent of the applicant, who is required to provide patient care, provides such patient care in accordance with the standards set out in the Basic Life Support Patient Care Standards, and where applicable, the Advanced Life Support Patient Care Standards set out in regulation made under the Ambulance Act.
- (b) The operator is a party to an agreement with the Ministry for the provision of air ambulance services.
- (c) The aircraft used as air ambulances in the operation of the air ambulance service are:

- i) aircraft that are identified to the Director based on the registration mark issued by Transport Canada; or
 - ii) aircraft that are approved by the Director for regular use in the operation of the air ambulance service.
- (d) Each air ambulance used in the operator's service is equipped with the patient care and accessory equipment referred to in Part A of the document titled "Provincial Equipment Standards for Ontario Ambulance Services," published by the Ministry.
- (e) The patient care and accessory equipment contained in an air ambulance in accordance with clause (d) meets, where applicable, the standards set out in Part B of the document referred to in clause (d).
- (f) The operator does not carry any other equipment in an air ambulance except as approved by the Director if, in the opinion of the Director, such other equipment is necessary to ensure the proper care of patients, taking into consideration such matters as:
 - i) the health care facilities and resources in the area serviced,
 - ii) the geographic and meteorological characteristics of the area, and
 - iii) the needs of individual patients.
- (g) The patient care and accessory equipment referred to in clauses (d) and (f) are maintained in:
 - i) a safe mechanical condition;
 - ii) a clean and sanitary condition; and
 - iii) proper working order.
- (h) Despite clauses (a), (d) and (e), the operator of an air ambulance service obtains from the Director, for a particular call or purpose, written authorization to use an aircraft that does not contain an item of accessory or patient care equipment otherwise required under this section if:
 - i.) an air ambulance that contains all of the equipment otherwise is not available, or
 - ii.) in the opinion of the Director, the circumstances of the call require the use of a type of aircraft that is different than the air ambulances for which the operator has been certified; and
 - iii.) that the standards for patient care and accessory equipment under this clause are determined by the Director for each such call.
- (i) The operator meets the insurance standards set out in the document titled "The Standards and Requirements for the Government of Ontario Approved Air Operators", published by the Queen's Printer and available from the Ministry of Natural Resources, as may be amended from time to time.
- (j) Each paramedic employed by the applicant/operator in his or her ambulance service is assigned a unique identification number issued by the Director.

- (k) The unique identification number referenced in clause (f.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 paramedic while on-duty.
- (l) The communication service that normally directs the movement of the ambulances and emergency response vehicles in the applicant/operator's service is kept informed on an ongoing basis as to the availability and location of each ambulance and emergency response vehicle.
- (m) The movement of each ambulance and emergency response vehicle in the operator's service is reported promptly to the communication service in whose geographical area the ambulance or emergency response vehicle is located.
- (n) Each paramedic employed by an air ambulance service remains competent in the use of the patient care, accessory and communications equipment necessary for the proper provision of service.
- (o) 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 medical acts by paramedics employed by the applicant/operator.
- (p) Each 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.
- (q) Each 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.
- (r) Each paramedic employed by the operator obtains the remedial training required to correct a deficiency in a patient care skill.
- (s) The applicant/provider'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.
- (t) A personnel record is maintained for each paramedic employed by the applicant/provider. The record shall include evidence of qualification as described in Part III of the regulation.
- (u) 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.

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 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 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.