



**AMBULANCE RULES AND REGULATIONS  
AIR RESCUE - BLS AND ALS AIR RESCUE SERVICE PROVIDER CRITERIA**

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I. AUTHORITY:

*California Code of Regulations Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 8. California Health and Safety Code, Division 2.5, Sections 1797.204, 1797.200, & 1798. California Government Code 26614. County of Orange Ambulance Ordinance.*

II. APPLICATION:

This policy defines the role integration of air rescue service as OCEMS authorized BLS and ALS air rescue service providers and establishes policy for Air Rescue EMS aircraft operations, equipment, and personnel responding to incidents within Orange County.

An air ambulance shall have priority assignment for medical incidents. Air rescue may be called for air search and rescue service or if the air ambulance is unavailable. ("Unavailable" means an estimated time of arrival is more than 30 minutes)

III. DEFINITIONS:

"**Air rescue service provider**" means the individual or group that owns and/or operates an air rescue service.

"**Air rescue service**" means air service used for emergencies, including search and rescue.

"**Coordinating Agency**" means the OCEMS approved communication/dispatch center which maintains aircraft availability, notifies appropriate agencies/providers of air ambulance requests, and collects data as required.

"**Emergency medical services aircraft**" or "**EMS aircraft**" means any aircraft utilized for the purpose of prehospital emergency patient response and transport. EMS aircraft includes air ambulances and all categories of rescue aircraft.

"**EMS Aircraft Provider**" means air ambulance and air rescue service ALS service providers and includes any company, lessee, agency (excluding agencies of the federal government), provider, owner, operator who provides or makes available prehospital air transport or medical personnel either directly or indirectly or any hospital where an EMS aircraft is based, housed, or stationed permanently or temporarily.

"**ETA - Estimated time of arrival**" means the response time in minutes which is updated by direct communications between the air ambulance or air rescue pilot and the incident commander once direct communication is established.

"**Incident commander**" means the overall scene manager.

"**Medical flight crew**" means those individuals, excluding the pilot, specifically assigned to care for the patient during aircraft transport and who are at least EMT-I certified.

"**Rescue aircraft**" means an aircraft whose usual function is not prehospital emergency patient transport but which may be utilized, in compliance with local EMS policy, for prehospital emergency patient transport when use of an air or ground ambulance is inappropriate or unavailable. Rescue aircraft includes ALS rescue aircraft, BLS rescue aircraft and Auxiliary rescue aircraft.



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**"Advanced Life Support (ALS) rescue aircraft"** means a rescue aircraft whose medical flight crew has at a minimum one attendant certified or licensed in advanced life support.

**"Basic Life Support (BLS) rescue aircraft"** means a rescue aircraft whose medical flight crew has at a minimum one attendant certified as an EMT.

**"Auxiliary Rescue aircraft"** means a rescue aircraft which does not have a medical flight crew, or whose medical flight crew do not meet the minimum requirements of a Basic Life Support rescue aircraft.

**"Requestor"** means a prehospital care system participant or public safety dispatch agency or coordinating agency authorized to initiate a request for an air ambulance.

**"Stand-by"** means an air ambulance or air rescue is dedicated to the incident and will be prepared for immediate lift-off upon notification of activation.

IV. CRITERIA:

Any EMS Aircraft Provider seeking authorization to provide EMS in Orange County will comply with all applicable Orange County Ordinances and OCEMS Polices, applicable sections of the California Code of Regulations Title 22 and pertinent F.A.A. Regulations. Nothing in this policy supersedes or negates compliance with federal regulations.

A. Operations- Designated Orange County Air Rescue EMS Aircraft shall:

1. Be classified and authorized by the OCEMS in order to provide prehospital patient transport within the jurisdiction of the local EMS agency.
2. Follow activation procedures per Policy #730.20 "Prehospital Air Ambulance and Air Rescue Service Activation Procedure".
3. Establish at least one base of operations within Orange County. All such locations shall comply with applicable zoning, building and occupational health and safety regulations.
  - a. Each base of operations shall be adequate to house the aircraft crew for the aircraft based at that location. Cooking facilities, rest rooms, showers, beds sufficient for all personnel on duty are required of all bases.
4. Meet all county ambulance ordinance licensure requirements.
5. EMS Aircraft provider shall notify OCEMS verbally and in writing any time the EMS Aircraft provider is not in compliance with any applicable federal and/or state laws, and/or OCEMS policies, indicating the reason(s), dates(s), and time(s) for non-compliance and corrective actions that are being taken.
6. Pass an annual OCEMS inspection for all EMS aircraft operating in Orange County.

B. Personnel: The medical flight crew of an EMS aircraft shall:

1. Have training in aeromedical transportation as specified and approved by the authorizing EMS agency including but not limited to:
  - (a) General patient care in-flight.
  - (b) Changes in barometric pressure, and pressure related maladies.
  - (c) Changes in partial pressure of oxygen.

