

## PARAMEDIC ACCREDITATION

### General Information

Once a person receives a California State Paramedic license, s/he must next receive LOCAL accreditation in order to practice. Local accreditation is needed because each EMS Agency has a somewhat different scope of practice (SOP) that they permit the paramedics within their jurisdiction to work under. Also, part of the accreditation process is learning the local policies and procedures that a person would be practicing under in that specific jurisdiction, i.e. Riverside County. Local accreditation cannot be obtained without first receiving a State Paramedic license.

Information on applying for / receiving a California State paramedic (EMT-P) license can be obtained by contacting the California State EMS Authority (EMSA) –

10901 Gold Center Drive, Suite 400

Rancho Cordova, CA 95670

Attn: Licensing Division

(916) 323-9875 (Paramedic licensure) or (916) 322 – 4336 (Main line)

[www.emsa.ca.gov](http://www.emsa.ca.gov) -- see the EMS Personnel page

The CA regulations governing EMT-P training, licensing and practice can be found in one of two ways:

1. By going to the State EMSA website listed above, and clicking on “Laws and Policies” listed at the top of the screen, then clicking on “Regulations,” then selecting “(Chapter) 4: Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic

**or**

2. By going directly to the California State website that lists all laws and regulations -- [www.oal.ca.gov](http://www.oal.ca.gov) .

Once there, click on the blue box “California Code of Regulations” (CCR), then scroll down and click on “Title 22. Social Security”, then “DIVISION 9. PREHOSPITAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES”, then “Chapter 4 – Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedic”

In Riverside County, the process and requirements of local accreditation are contained in our policies

[#1207](#)– Paramedic Accreditation, and

[#1208](#) – Paramedic Reverification

A person cannot obtain local accreditation from Riverside County without first being employed as a paramedic by one of our approved ALS providers. This is not the “Catch – 22” it appears to be when applying for a job in our county (I need a job to get accredited, but I can’t get a job without being accredited). Local employers know that paramedics will apply to them without necessarily having a local accreditation. Once a hiring agreement is reached between an employer and paramedic, the paramedic can complete an on-line accreditation application, listing his/her prospective employer. The on-line system will generate a notice to the employer asking for verification of employment and completion of local training. Once hired by an approved ALS provider, state regulations permit paramedics to work up to 30 days without a local accreditation and under certain rules of supervision as they complete their local training. (CCR, Title 22, §100166)

## **Initial Accreditation**

Local accreditation is required of all state licensed paramedics to assure that the paramedic has received training in the (local) policies, procedures and protocols of the jurisdiction within which s/he will practice. It is an opportunity to learn any expanded scope skills/medications utilized in that jurisdiction, verify competency in basic skills, and familiarize oneself with the local system and its operations – location of Base Hospitals, location of specialty centers, what qualifies as a specialty care patient, who can receive an IO, procedures that can be done under “standing orders,” who/when to call for air transport, etc.

The procedure for accreditation is outlined in our policy [#1207](#) – Paramedic Accreditation.

Once a person has been offered and has accepted the job, the BEST thing to do is to wait until the didactic portion of orientation begins before applying for accreditation. Once a person applies for accreditation, s/he is given 30 days to work within the State scope of practice (SOP) and with a partner who is duly accredited. Once that 30 days is up, the paramedic may no longer practice unless s/he has obtained a local accreditation. Therefore, it is BEST to wait until the classroom portion of orientation is almost over before submitting an application. However, one must have applied for local accreditation BEFORE being able to go out on the streets and actually practice, even for that first 30 days with a partner. Since the length of employer orientations vary, the ALS provider’s Orientation Coordinator / Training Director can assist the newly employed paramedic in determining the most appropriate time to begin the accreditation process.

Application is done on-line. There are six steps in the on-line process. One of them requires the upload of certain documents/forms. The required documents are delineated in our paramedic accreditation policy (see link above). Additionally, information on past accreditations in other EMS jurisdictions will be requested. We DO check with the State and other EMS agencies to verify applicants’ practice records. The applicant’s employer will provide documentation that s/he has successfully completed the orientation process and is ready to be certified. It is NOT the responsibility of the employer (and it is not possible for the employer) to upload any of the requested documents. This must be done by the applicant.

Another step requires information on any criminal convictions and any actions taken against a health care provider license. For disciplinary actions taken against a license, a copy of the formal Accusation and the Settlement Agreement must be uploaded. Criminal convictions may require a copy of the court record (a certified “case print”). Criminal records and past disciplinary actions can lengthen the accreditation process, so it is important to have as many of the correct documents as possible when applying.

The final step in the application process is an electronic signature which attests that under penalty of perjury all the information provided is true and correct. After signing, the application system sends the applicant to the payment system. A major credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover) is required for payment. Current initial accreditation fee is \$75.

## **Continuing Accreditation (Reverification of Accreditation)**

State regulations say that accreditation is continuous so long as a paramedic maintains continuous state licensure and meets local requirements for system updates and quality improvement. Because some of the Riverside-mandated training is required every two years, and in order to verify that a person has attended all mandatory trainings and successfully renewed his/her state license, Riverside County requires that a paramedic reverify his/her accreditation information every two years.

If a person has been accredited in another EMS jurisdiction(s), but is now newly working in Riverside County, this is NOT considered a reverification of accreditation, but a new accreditation, because it is the first application for accreditation with Riverside County, and the processes of Initial Accreditation apply (see above). Reverification of accreditation is done through our on-line system. All reverification materials MUST be received prior to the expiration of the current accreditation (expiration of state license). If that does not occur, accreditation is suspended and the paramedic CANNOT practice within Riverside County. Reinstatement to practice may occur once all materials are received and verified. There is an additional fee for reinstating a lapsed or suspended accreditation.

The procedure for reverification of accreditation is outlined in our policy [#1208](#) – Paramedic Reverification. It is similar to initial accreditation in that certain documents must be uploaded. The required documents are delineated in our paramedic reverification policy (see link above). The reverifying applicant’s employer will provide documentation that s/he remains employed in a paramedic capacity and has successfully completed any/all mandatory trainings since the last reverification. It is NOT the responsibility of the employer (and it is not possible for the employer) to upload any of the requested documents. This must be done by the applicant.

Another step requires information on any criminal convictions and any actions taken against a health care provider license. If a felony or misdemeanor conviction was received by the reverifying applicant in the past licensure period OR if past convictions were not listed on the previous application, the applicant will be asked to submit court documents for them. For disciplinary actions taken against a license, a copy of the formal Accusation and the Settlement Agreement must be uploaded.

The final step in the application process is an electronic signature which attests that under penalty of perjury all the information provided is true and correct. After signing, the application system will send the applicant to the payment system. A major credit card (Visa, MasterCard, Discover) is required for payment. Current reverification fee is \$50. If the paramedic fails to validate all information prior to state license expiration, and accreditation is suspended, there is an additional reinstatement (late) fee of \$25, for a total of \$75.

The prudent paramedic will submit reverification materials 1 - 2 months prior to the expiration of his/her current state paramedic license. This is especially important if there are any newly declared or recent criminal convictions, or disciplinary actions, as these things can lengthen the processing time of the reverification application.