

# COUNTY OF SUFFOLK



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## **Suffolk County EMS System Entry Requirements for Regional Emergency Medical Advisory Committee (REMAC) ALS Provider Credentialing and Authorization and Re-Credentialing / Re-Authorization**

The Suffolk County Department of Health Services, Division of EMS, is the region's designated Program Agency, and serves as the Suffolk County EMS System Administrator, under the general supervision of Dr. Linda Mermelstein, Interim EMS Medical Director. Among its administrative responsibilities is managing the Regional Emergency Medical Advisory' Committee (REMAC) credentialing and authorization process for ALS providers upon initial entry into the regional EMS System and re-credentialing and re-authorization of ALS providers on an as needed basis to maintain credentialing and authorization, as policies and protocols are modified.

In order for a NY State certified EMT-Critical Care or EMT-Paramedic to function at the ALS level, and/or to perform any advanced, diagnostic, or therapeutic procedures in Suffolk County, he/she must be CREDENTIALLED AND AUTHORIZED.

There are several issues to address. The first is achieving entry into the ALS System through separate CREDENTIALING and AUTHORIZATION processes, typically used for currently certified individuals from another region seeking membership or employment in a Suffolk County-approved agency, or providers in a Suffolk County-approved agency that attain certification as an EMT-Critical Care or EMT-Paramedic through an NY State-approved Course Sponsorship. The second is maintaining ALS System authorization to function as an ALS Provider through periodic re-credentialing and re-authorization processes.

CREDENTIALLED is defined as meeting minimum standard pre-requisite eligibility criteria for ALS authorization, completing a protocol in-service session with an EMS Division staff member, and passing a qualifying protocol exam. Pre-requisite Eligibility Criteria are:

- Current NY State EMT-Critical Care or EMT-Paramedic Certification;
- Current AHA Advanced Cardiac Life Support Certification; and
- Obtain and become thoroughly familiar with the current edition of the Suffolk County EMS ALS Policies and Protocols Manual.



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Once the pre-requisite eligibility requirements are satisfied, the candidate must then:

- Attend an ALS Policies and Protocol classroom session conducted by the EMS Division, and then;
- Sit for the Suffolk County ALS Protocol Exam, at the appropriate certification level. This is a minimum of fifty question exam based on current ALS Policies/Protocols and Suffolk County EMS System Standard Operating Procedures contained in the ALS Policies and Protocols Manual. A minimum of 80% is needed to pass. For initial system entry, the candidate may not use any resources during the exam. EMS Division staff reserve the right to add additional questions to ensure competency in the subject material. Depending on the actual score, EMS Division staff provides remedial services to ensure appropriate knowledge of the subject material and administer an alternate written exam, under the same rules as the original exam.

Once the candidate successfully completes the exam, they are considered CREDENTIALLED. This status alone does not allow an ALS provider to perform at the ALS level.

AUTHORIZATION is defined as the ability to provide ALS care under the delegated practice of the Interim EMS Medical Director. In order to receive authorization to perform ALS, the provider must be a member or employee of an agency that has an agreement with the Suffolk County Department of Health Services to provide 911 emergency response. He/she may only operate in the system when acting as an agent of his/her agency or when specifically requested to assist another agency that has an agreement with the Suffolk County Department of Health Services in accordance with the Suffolk County Interagency Utilization of ALS Personnel Policy.

**NOTE:** Commercial and hospital-based ambulance services operating in the Suffolk Region providing routine inter-facility transportation or specialty care transportation are responsible for developing their own agency-specific credentialing and authorization requirements and are outside the scope of the Suffolk County EMS System.

Generally speaking, CREDENTIALING AND AUTHORIZATION occurs simultaneously, but may occur independently. From time to time, providers seek to become credentialed prior to admission into an agency in the Suffolk County EMS System. This is acceptable, and the candidate may complete the credentialing process. Authorization will occur after documentation of membership in a Suffolk County-approved agency is provided. Once the process is complete, the EMS Division issues a picture identification card documenting regional authorization. The EMS Division passes this information along to Suffolk County Medical Control, responsible for maintaining the credentialed and authorized technician data base and ensuring the medical control orders are forwarded to properly identified, credentialed and authorized ALS providers.

Credentialed and authorized EMT-Critical Care technicians that upgrade to EMT-Paramedic are required to complete the Suffolk County ALS Protocol Exam at the EMT-Paramedic level, administered by the EMS Division, in accordance with the testing and remediation practices previously described. The candidate will receive an updated regional authorization card at the higher level upon return of the previously issued card.

An EMT-CC or EMT-P that is NO LONGER a member of a recognized agency loses his/her AUTHORIZATION and MAY NOT continue to function as an advanced provider in the system. The provider is responsible for returning the regional authorization picture ID card to the EMS Division upon separation of service. The EMS Division notifies Suffolk County Medical Control and the provider's name is purged from the database. Should the provider seek reinstatement by way of membership or employment with a new Suffolk County-approved agency, the EMS Division will determine the pathway to re-authorization based on length of absence, quality improvement reviews, and other factors deemed necessary.

RE-CREDENTIALING/RE-AUTHORIZATION is defined as the periodic refreshing of a provider's ALS status. Generally speaking, re-credentialing/re-authorization is required whenever there are substantive changes to medical protocol, introduction of new medications and / or introduction of new practical skills/therapeutic modalities. In order to maintain operating privileges, an EMT-CC or EMT-P must complete all EMS System protocol or policy updates in the prescribed format and time frame established by the Interim EMS Medical Director, which is based on the relative complexities of the changes being introduced.

**NOTE:** The Suffolk County EMS System does not recognize the NY State EMT-Intermediate level of ALS care as a sole ALS provider and does not maintain EMT-Intermediate protocols. An individual that is certified to the EMT-Intermediate level, upon successful completion of the credentialing and authorization procedures previously described, commensurate with this level of certification, must pass a practical skills review administered by the EMS Division. Upon successful completion, the EMT-Intermediate may perform advanced airway maneuvers, initiate IV therapy, and communicate with Medical Control **ONLY IN THE PRESENCE OF AN EMT-CC or EMT-P** in any applicable ALS protocol.

The Interim EMS Medical Director has the responsibility of ensuring appropriate prehospital medical care, and with the EMS Division and Suffolk County Medical Control, manages a comprehensive countywide Quality Improvement Program. EMS System authorization may be restricted, suspended pending successful remediation, or revoked, per the progressive remedial and disciplinary actions documented in the Quality Improvement Plan.

Suffolk County EMS offers protocol in-service sessions and administers exams on a monthly basis. The schedule can be found on the web site [www.suffolkremsco.com](http://www.suffolkremsco.com) or by calling the EMS Division Offices at 631-853-5800.

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