



COUNTY OF VENTURA HEALTH CARE AGENCY		EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	
Policy Title: Air Unit Staffing Requirements		Policy Number 1201	
APPROVED: Administration:	 Steven L. Carroll, Paramedic	Date: July 1, 2026	
APPROVED: Medical Director:	 Daniel Shepherd, MD	Date: July 1, 2026	
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- I. PURPOSE: To provide guidelines for classification and staffing level for air unit(s) authorized or licensed to operate in Ventura County as a part of the Emergency Medical Services system.
- II. AUTHORITY: Health and Safety Code: 1797.103, 1797.206, 1797.218, 1797.220, 1797.252, 1798.2 and 1798.102. California Code of Regulations, Title 22, Division 9, Chapter 7
- III. POLICY: Agencies authorized by VCEMS to provide EMS services in the County of Ventura will be classified and staffed with medical personnel appropriate to the needs of the patient, according to this policy.
- IV. PROCEDURE
 - A. Aircraft Staffing Requirements
 1. Air Ambulance: The medical flight crew has at a minimum two (2) attendants certified or licensed in advanced life support.
 2. Advanced Life Support (ALS) Rescue Aircraft: The medical flight crew has at a minimum one attendant who is an authorized Independent Practice Paramedic, a Registered Nurse, Advanced Practice Provider or Physician who has also obtained training and experience in flight rescue operations.
 3. Basic Life Support (BLS) Rescue Aircraft: The medical flight crew has at a minimum one attendant certified as an EMT who is trained and experienced in rescue flight operations.
 4. Auxiliary Aircraft: An aircraft that does not have a medical flight crew.
 - B. Criteria for EMS Personnel to Staff Air Unit
 1. Paramedic
 - a. When staffing an aircraft based in Ventura County, a paramedic shall be:
 - 1) Accredited in Ventura County in accordance with VCEMS Policy 315, and
 - 2) Authorized as an Independent Practice Paramedic, in accordance with VCEMS Policy 318.
 - b. A Paramedic who meets the requirements of IV.B.1.a.1-2 and is selected to staff a rescue aircraft may work with an EMT.

2. Emergency Medical Technician
 - a. While assigned to work with a paramedic on a Ventura County-based rescue aircraft, an EMT shall:
 - 1) Complete mandatory training requirements outlined in VCEMS Policy 334.
 - 2) Perform duties as described below.
 - b. EMT Duties and Responsibilities
 - 1) Those functions within the EMT Scope of Practice.
 - 2) May transmit information to a Base Hospital regarding paramedic activity and transport information, but may not ask for, receive, or pass on ALS orders.
3. Registered Nurses
 - a. RN with a minimum of two (2) years of experience in a critical care or emergency department setting area within the previous three (3) years, prior to employment with the provider agency.
 - b. Current BLS and ACLS certification from the American Heart Association or equivalent course that meets/exceeds all current minimum ECC/ILCOR guidelines. Nurses staffing the air unit shall also be required to complete the VCEMS Cardiac Arrest Management training course.
 - d. Successful completion of an in-house orientation program provided by the Ventura County Aviation Unit
 - f. Advanced airway training (Endotracheal and Supraglottic Airway Device), as approved by the VCEMS Medical Director.
 - h. Certification in any of the following: Certified Emergency Nurse (CEN); Critical Care Registered Nurse (CCRN); Mobile Intensive Care Nurse (MICN); Certified Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA); Certified Flight Registered Nurse (CFRN); Certified or Transport Nurse (CTRN); Certified Trauma Nurse (TCRN)
 - i. Additional training/certifications as deemed appropriate by Ventura County Aviation Unit leadership, to include Prehospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS), Trauma Nurse Core Course (TNCC)
 - j. Successful completion of competency assessments
 - 1) Scenario based psychomotor skills assessment conducted by Ventura County Aviation Unit Medical Director or designee
 - 2) Demonstrated proficiency in VCEMS policies and procedures through successful passing of the VCEMS Independent Practice

Paramedic Examination (policy and ECG). The minimum passing score is 80%. Candidates who do not successfully complete either examination with at least an 80% score may reattempt test one additional time. This requirement will be waived for MICNs currently authorized by the Ventura County EMS Agency.

4. Advance Practice Providers (Nurse Practitioner, Physician Assistant)
 - a. Current California License
 - b. Minimum two years' experience in a critical care or emergency department setting
 - c. Successful completion of an in-house orientation program administered by the Ventura County Aviation Unit
 - d. Orientation to the Ventura County Prehospital Care System – including all applicable policies and procedures
 - e. Advanced airway training (Endotracheal and Supraglottic airway device), as approved by the VCEMS Medical Director.
 - f. Additional training/certifications as deemed appropriate by Ventura County Aviation Unit leadership, to include Prehospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS), Trauma Nurse Core Course (TNCC)
 - g. Demonstrated proficiency in VCEMS policies and procedures through successful passing of the VCEMS Independent Practice Paramedic Examination (policy and ECG). The minimum passing score is 80%. Candidates who do not successfully complete either examination with at least an 80% score may reattempt test one additional time.
 5. Physicians
 - a. Current California Medical License
 - b. Actively practicing Emergency Medicine at a Ventura County hospital
 - c. Successful completion of an in-house orientation program administered by the Ventura County Aviation Unit.
 - d. Orientation to the Ventura County Prehospital Care system – including all applicable policies and procedures
 - e. Physician staffing for the Ventura County Sheriff's Medical Team will be considered at the discretion of the team's medical director.
- D. Training Requirements
1. Initial Education for Medical Flight Crews

All medical flight crew personnel shall receive training in methods of air transportation, including but not limited to the following:

- a. General patient care in-flight.
 - b. Changes in barometric pressure, and pressure related maladies.
 - c. Changes in partial pressure of oxygen.
 - d. Other environmental factors affecting patient care.
 - e. Aircraft operational systems.
 - f. Aircraft emergencies and safety.
 - g. Care of patients requiring special consideration in the airborne environment.
 - h. EMS system and communications procedures.
 - i. Orientation to the Ventura County Prehospital Care system – including all applicable policies and procedures.
 - j. Use of onboard medical equipment.
2. Air Unit service providers will provide documentation of training to VC EMS.
 3. All medical flight crews shall participate in mandatory continuing education requirements as required by their licensure or certification and as defined in VC EMS Policy 334.
 - a. All air unit providers, regardless of the certification which qualifies them to serve on air unit within Ventura County, must attend EMS updates twice yearly.