

1006 LEMSA SYSTEM OBSERVATION POLICY

I. Purpose

- A. System Oversight: LEMSA uses the ride-along program to ensure that the EMS system is operating in accordance with established protocols and standards.
- B. Quality Assurance and Improvement: LEMSA representatives can observe real-world interactions with patients, ensuring that the system is delivering safe, effective, and compassionate care.
- C. Education and Training: The program provides valuable insight into the operational realities of EMS work and provides an educational opportunity for field providers and LEMSA personnel.
- D. Regulatory Compliance: By monitoring field practices, LEMSA ensures compliance with state and local regulations and the standards set by the state EMS authority.

II. Program Structure and Participation

- A. Eligibility: Ride-along participants will be limited to LEMSA staff.
- B. Accountability: LEMSA staff will be clearly identifiable as LEMSA personnel including field-appropriate agency clothing while in the field.
- C. Field Operations: LEMSA may assign staff to accompany field personnel during their shifts, observing emergency calls, patient assessments, treatments, and transports.
- D. Supervision: LEMSA staff may not directly intervene in patient care unless there is an immediate risk to public safety and health.

III. Key Areas of Review

- A. Clinical Competence: Assessing whether personnel are correctly applying medical procedures, diagnosing conditions, and performing advanced life support.
- B. Communication Skills: Reviewing abilities to communicate clearly with patients, family members, and other healthcare providers (e.g., during hand-offs to the hospital).
- C. Adherence to Protocols: Ensuring that personnel follow LEMSA treatment guidelines and administrative policies for medical treatment, transport, and documentation.
- D. Decision-Making: Reviewing the decision-making processes for on-scene assessments, determining the level of care required, and evaluating the appropriateness of transports or interventions.

IV. Feedback and Continuous Improvement

- A. Performance Feedback: After the ride-along, LEMSA provides feedback to the EMS provider agencies helping them identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- B. Incident Review: If any concerns arise during a ride-along (e.g., deviation from protocols or patient care issues), the LEMSA team may review specific cases and recommend corrective actions.
- C. Educational Enhancements: Based on observations, LEMSA may suggest targeted training or professional development for personnel to improve care quality.

V. Benefits of the Program

- A. For Personnel: Opportunity to interact with their LEMSA.

- B. For LEMSA: It helps the agency maintain a high standard of care and ensures that EMS agencies are compliant with regulations and guidelines.
- C. For Patients: Ultimately, the ride-along program ensures that patients receive the best possible care in emergency situations.