

COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION OF MEDICAL TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

SUBJECT: Listing of Accredited Programs on the CAMTS website

POLICY: Accredited programs and/or programs in the process of a change in accreditation will be listed on the website according to the following guidelines.

GUIDELINES:

1. All programs listed on the website will be listed with the expiration date of the most current certification period.
2. The program's corporate office is listed by city under the appropriate state. Individual satellite bases are not listed by city but satellite bases in other states are listed by the program name in parenthesis.
3. A program that is in the appeal process of a withdraw or intent to suspend decision or preliminary denial of accreditation will be designated as "Action pending". This designation may also be applied to a program under special review.
4. A program in a Preliminary Denial (90 days) will be designated as "Preliminary denial".
5. A program under an approved extension (past the certification date) will be designated as "Approved extension".
6. A currently accredited program that has a pending accreditation decision in which there is a major dispute will be designated as "In dispute".

CAMTS/PPM

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COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION OF MEDICAL TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

SUBJECT: Accreditation Awards and Board Actions

POLICY: The Board of Directors of the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems will make decisions regarding accreditation awards or board actions according to the following guidelines:

GUIDELINES:

Medical transport services may apply for accreditation by CAMTS at any time. A PIF will not be accepted from programs that have not been in operation for one year at a minimum or are delinquent in payment of fees or have an outstanding debt with the Commission.

ACCREDITATION AWARDS *A program may advertise as "being accredited" and enjoy the privileges of accreditation if one of the two following accreditations is awarded.*

A. Full Accreditation

The Commission shall grant full accreditation only in the following circumstances:

1. When a program is in operation for one year (and able to submit one full year of statistics) and applying for accreditation for the first time, demonstrates substantial compliance* with the accreditation standards and has achieved stability such that the program is no longer considered to be in a developmental stage.
 1. When a program that is currently holding full accreditation has demonstrated upon review that they continue to be in substantial compliance with the accreditation standards.
 3. When a program holding probational accreditation has demonstrated that they have changed such that they are in substantial compliance with the accreditation standards. The maximum interval between reviews of programs holding full accreditation is three years.

Progress reports addressing concerns of the Commission will be submitted by the program at a time specified by the Commission. If there are persistent deficiencies with a fully accredited program that are not appropriately addressed in the progress reports, the Commission may specify a review prior to the three-year cycle. * *Substantial compliance - "A medical transport service demonstrates overall quality of service consistent with the essential elements of the Accreditation Standards in the professional judgment of the Board. The service demonstrates a steady balance in all dynamic components which comprise their specific program."*

B. Probational Accreditation

The Commission shall grant probational accreditation when a program has held full accreditation, but upon a scheduled review for reaccreditation has more concerns and or deficiencies than cited during the previous tenure of accreditation or has unresolved concerns or deficiencies from the previous tenure of accreditation.

The maximal interval between reviews of programs holding probational accreditation is two years. A program will not hold probational accreditation for more than four consecutive years.

The Commission will monitor the progress of a probational accredited program. Progress reports addressing concerns of the Commission will be submitted by the program by the specified deadline date of the probational accreditation decision. If there are persistent deficiencies with a program on probation, that are not appropriately addressed in progress reports, the Commission may require additional progress reports or specify a review prior to the two year cycle or accreditation may be suspended or withdrawn. (If the Commission initiates a review prior to the two year cycle due to persistent deficiencies not appropriately addressed in progress reports, the program will be responsible for site surveyor expenses plus a \$2000 administrative fee.) A program may request a review prior to the two- year cycle at the regular fee of a site survey.

In the review for reaccreditation of a program holding probational accreditation, the Commission may make the following accreditation decisions:

1. Grant full accreditation
2. Withdraw accreditation
3. Repeat probational accreditation (no more than 2 consecutive probational accreditations)

C. Preliminary Denial of Accreditation

The Commission shall grant preliminary denial of accreditation when a program has held full or probational accreditation, but upon a scheduled review for reaccreditation has concerns and or deficiencies that are not in substantial compliance with the accreditation standards.

The program's accreditation is not withdrawn but is designated on the website with a symbol indicating Preliminary Denial. The program has up to 90 days to make corrective actions or demonstrate corrective plans that meet the expectations as outlined by the Board. A progress report and/or a supplemental or monitoring visit will be required during the Preliminary Denial of Accreditation.

In the review for reaccreditation of a program holding Preliminary Denial of Accreditation, the Commission may make the following accreditation decisions:

1. Grant Probational accreditation
2. Grant Full accreditation
3. Withdraw accreditation

D. Conditional Accreditation

A medical transport service may submit a PIF after it has been in operation for 4 months. A preliminary site visit, by at least one site surveyor, will be scheduled to verify that the program has developing policies and processes that are in compliance with the accreditation standards. Site surveyor findings will be submitted to the Board of Directors for an accreditation action. The Commission may make the following accreditation decisions.

1. Conditional accreditation - a one-year accreditation.
2. Non accreditation with the option to resubmit a PIF and reschedule a full site visit after the service has been operational for one year.

*A service receiving Conditional Accreditation is not permitted to advertise as accredited but will receive a letter of conditional status which can be provided to local and state regulators and to manage care companies who require CAMTS accreditation.

The program may submit a PIF for full accreditation at its one-year anniversary or when the Conditional Accreditation expires.

OTHER ACCREDITATION DECISIONS - A program may not advertise as "being accredited" nor enjoy the privileges of accreditation if any of the following decisions is received.

A. Withhold Accreditation

Accreditation will be withheld when the Commission determines that a program applying for accreditation for the first time does not substantially comply with the accreditation standards. The Commission will cite those standards with which the program does not comply. The program may not submit a PIF for six months following withhold accreditation unless the program was withheld due to falsifying or omitting information. In that case the program is not eligible to submit a PIF for accreditation for a minimum of 1 year from the date of withdrawal to a maximum of five years at the sole discretion of the Board.

The effective date of the withhold decision shall be thirty (30) days from the date of notification to the program by the Commission.

A program may also receive a withhold accreditation under the following conditions:

1. Non-compliance with accreditation actions and procedures - A program may be in non-compliance with accreditation actions and procedures. The Commission may take appropriate actions to withhold accreditation if the program does not comply with the following actions and procedures:

- To undergo a site visit (to include a monitoring or supplemental visit) and program review.

 - To follow directives associated with the accreditation process.

 - Supply the Commission with information needed to appropriately assess compliance with the accreditation standards.
2. Falsification of application information - If after a thorough investigation, it is the opinion of the board of directors that an applicant falsified and/or omitted information with intent or materials presented in the application (during the site visit or in any follow-up communications between the medical transport service and CAMTS) accreditation will be withheld. CAMTS will withhold the program's accreditation and initiate an investigation relative to falsifying documents when:
- Written allegations are received which provide enough credible information to warrant investigation; or

 - Other causes as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors
3. Violations of law that could impact a program's ability to meet the accreditation standards - Conviction, finding of fault or uncontested settlement on the part of the service for any violation of local, state, or federal law or regulation may result in immediate suspension, withholding or withdrawing accreditation. The accredited service is required to report any such circumstance to CAMTS so that the issues can be reviewed. Failure to report within 30 days of conviction, finding of fault or settlement may result in suspension, withholding accreditation or withdrawal of accreditation as well. A plea of *nolo contendere* shall be considered the same as finding of fault for the purposes of this policy.
4. Delinquent in payment of fees. - Programs that are delinquent in payment of fees or have an outstanding debt with the Commission are not eligible for review.

B. Withdrawal of Accreditation

The effective date of the withdrawal decision shall be thirty (30) days from the date of notification to the program by the Commission. However, in the event the program was under suspension at the time of the withdrawal decision, the Effective Date of the withdrawal of accreditation will be the date the decision was rendered by the Commission. (See **Due Process Procedures 04.02.00**)

The program may not submit a PIF for accreditation for six months following withdrawal of accreditation unless the program was withheld due to falsifying or omitting information. In that case the program is not eligible to submit a PIF for accreditation for a minimum of 1 year from the date of withdrawal to a maximum of five years at the sole discretion of the Board.

The Commission may withdraw accreditation from a program under the following conditions:

1. Non-compliance with accreditation standards - The Commission may withdraw accreditation of a program holding full or probational accreditation or has had accreditation suspended for failure to be in substantial compliance with the accreditation standards.
2. Non-compliance with accreditation actions and procedures - A program may be in non-compliance with accreditation actions and procedures. The Commission may take appropriate actions to withdraw accreditation if the program does not comply with the following actions and procedures:
 - To undergo a site visit (to include a monitoring or supplemental site visit) and program review
 - To follow directives associated with an accreditation action.
 - Supply the Commission with information needed to appropriately assess compliance with the accreditation standards.
3. Falsification of application information - If after a reasonable investigation, it is the opinion of the board of directors (or executive board if between meetings) that an applicant falsified and/or omitted information or materials presented in the application with intent (during the site visit or in any follow-up communications between the medical transport service and CAMTS) withdrawal of accreditation may result. CAMTS will initiate an investigation relative to falsifying documents when:
 - Written allegations are received which provide enough credible information to warrant investigation; or
 - Other causes as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors

Programs that are withdrawn due to falsifying and/or omitting information are not eligible to submit a PIF for accreditation for a minimum of 1 year from the date of withdrawal and a maximum of five years at the sole discretion of the board of directors.

4. Violations of law that could impact a program's ability to meet the accreditation standards

- Conviction, finding of fault or uncontested settlement on the part of the service for any violation of local, state, or federal law or regulation may result in the withdrawal of accreditation. The accredited service is required to report any such circumstance to CAMTS so that the issues can be reviewed. Failure to report within 90 days of conviction, finding of fault or settlement may result in withdrawal of accreditation as well. A plea of *nolo contendere* shall be considered the same as finding of fault for the purposes of this policy.

5. Delinquent in payment of fees. - Programs which are delinquent in payment of fees or have an outstanding debt with the Commission, are not eligible for review. They will be notified by certified mail, return receipt requested, of the effective date of withdraw of accreditation.

6. Relevant government agencies will be notified when accreditation is withdrawn.

C. Voluntary surrender of accreditation - A program may voluntarily surrender its accreditation at any time except when the Board notifies the program that there is a decision to withdraw, suspend or intend to suspend accreditation. In these cases, the program would be provided 30 days to appeal the decision but in that 30 days, the program is not eligible to voluntarily withdraw accreditation and is not permitted to advertise that it voluntarily withdrew accreditation. **If a program voluntarily surrenders its accreditation, the program may reapply for accreditation, at the discretion of the Board, at any time.**

D. Significant Changes in the Structure or Operation. Changes in the program's organizational structure or operations that deviate significantly from those present at the time of application must be reported to CAMTS, in writing, within 30 days of the effective date of the change (*reference Policy # 05.12.00*). CAMTS reserves the right to request, receive and review (potentially on-site) information on the impact of these changes in order to determine if the program qualifies for continued accreditation. Significant changes may so alter a program that in the judgment of the board, it is the equivalent of a new program. If this occurs, a program must apply for accreditation.

1. Merging with a non-accredited service(s) - If an accredited program merges with a non accredited program or program(s), the emerging service will be considered an entirely new entity by the Commission and the accreditation certification will be suspended. This action will be effective on the date that the newly merged service officially begins operations.

a. For programs with more than eighteen months remaining in their certification period:

A supplemental survey may be required at the expense of the service to cover the costs of one site surveyor plus the current administrative fee if the service has eighteen months or longer remaining in their accreditation certification period. After the board has deliberated on the information from the supplemental site visit, the appropriate accreditation action will be determined. A new certification period will begin on the date an accreditation action is decided by the board.

The service must apply for a supplemental survey at least eighteen months before their certification period runs out in order to be eligible for the supplemental survey. Also, the program must notify the commission within 30 days of the official merger date and complete a PIF within six months of the notification date.

b. For programs with less than eighteen months remaining in the certification period:

The service with less than eighteen months remaining in their certification period is not eligible for a supplemental survey but may reapply for accreditation at any time.

c. Data collection

Since the Commission requires one year of statistics and the newly merged service may not have an entire year of statistics, the following alternatives will be accepted:

- Six months of data from the newly merged service.
- Submitting data from each of the merged services for the year prior to the merger.

2. Merging with another accredited service(s)

The Commission will be notified within 30 days of the effective date of the merger. A questionnaire will be sent to the service and returned to the board to determine a further course of action. The accreditation certification will be placed on On Hold as of the effective date of the merger until the board determines a further course of action which could range from the following depending on the number of changes involved:

- In-depth progress report
- Supplemental survey
- Application for reaccreditation

a. If a progress report is required, the date of the certification period will end half-way between the ending dates of the two merged services.

b. The certification period will also change with a supplemental or reaccreditation site visit. The new certification period will begin on the date an accreditation action is decided by the board.

c. Data submitted for a reaccreditation site visit will be accepted according to the above guidelines in 5. c.

3. Purchase of an accredited service by another entity (not another medical transport service).

a. This would be considered a Class II change (reference policy 05.12.00)

4. Purchase of an accredited service by a non-accredited service.

a. CAMTS accreditation is not transferable. It cannot be sold and cannot be considered part of the purchase. The PIF completed by the previously owned program is not the property of the new company and cannot be duplicated or sent to the new company.

b. If an accredited program is purchased by a nonaccredited service, the emerging service will be withdrawn (reference page 4, section B. of this policy). This action will be effective on the date that the newly formed service officially begins operations.

5. Purchase of a non-accredited service by an accredited service.

The Commission will be notified within 30 days of the effective date of the purchase.

The program will be placed On Hold until the new base or site can be reviewed.

A supplemental survey will be required (after the required portions of the PIF are submitted in no more than a 6-month time frame) The supplemental visit is at the expense of the service to cover the costs of site surveyor(s) plus the current administrative fee if the service has twelve months or longer remaining in their accreditation certification period. If less than 12 months remain in the accreditation certification period, the entire service will undergo a reaccreditation site visit.

After the board has deliberated on the information from the supplemental site visit, the appropriate accreditation action will be determined. If the

program is found to be in substantial compliance with the accreditation standards, the certification period will revert back to the previous tenure of accreditation and will now include the new component.

While the program is On Hold, the accredited portion of the service can continue to advertise as accredited but must make it clear through advertisements and marketing materials that the recently purchased portion is under review by CAMTS and is not accredited. The program will show proof of appropriate advertising to CAMTS. Any false inferences or claims that the newly acquired service is accredited (before official notification of accreditation by the Board) may lead to further action up to and including withdrawal of accreditation.

6. Purchase of an accredited service by another accredited service.

The Commission will be notified within 30 days of the effective date of the purchase. A questionnaire will be sent to the service and returned to the board to determine a further course of action. The accreditation certification will be placed on hold as of the effective date of the purchase until the board determines a further course of action which could range from the following depending on the number of changes involved:

- In-depth progress report
- Supplemental survey
- Application for reaccreditation

a. If a progress report is required, the date of the certification period will end half-way between the ending dates of the two merged services.

b. The certification period will also change with a supplemental or reaccreditation site visit. The new certification period will begin on the date an accreditation action is decided by the board.

7. Opening a new base or adding a new component

a. A service that opens a new base or adds a component such as fixed wing or rotorwing or ground service will notify the Commission within 30 days of the effective date of the change. The board will then determine whether a progress report is sufficient or a supplemental site visit (reference the policy) is required.

b. The service's accreditation will be placed On Hold until the progress report or supplemental visit is completed. (must be submitted or completed within 6 months).

While the program is On Hold, the accredited portion of the service can continue to advertise as accredited but must make it clear through advertisements and marketing materials that the new component is under review by CAMTS and is not accredited. The program will show proof of appropriate advertising to CAMTS. Any false inferences or claims that the newly acquired component is accredited (before official notification of accreditation by the Board) may lead to a suspended accreditation.

c. Additional progress reports may be required if the board decides that the new component is in substantial compliance with the accreditation standards but further follow-up is needed.

d. If the board decides that the new component is not in substantial compliance with the accreditation standards accreditation may be suspended (reference D. in this policy) or withdrawn (in which case the service will be required to reapply for accreditation no sooner than six months from the withdrawal decision).

E. On Hold Accreditation

A service that is accredited may be placed "On Hold" until a course of action is determined by the board of directors. On Hold accreditation may occur when the service has legitimate reasons for delaying a site visit for reaccreditation (such as waiting for a new aircraft, changing vendors) or when encompassing a base or another program that will operate under the same policies and procedures of the accredited service. A service under "On Hold Accreditation" may continue to advertise as accredited (for the bases included its current certification) while it is on hold and until the board makes a further determination.

F. Suspended Accreditation

A service that is accredited or in the process of accreditation decision making can be placed on suspension for no more than six months until a further course of action is determined by the board of directors. Suspended accreditation means that there is action pending. The service will be notified immediately of the board's intention to suspend. Within 10 business days the service will be provided with a list of concerns/allegations. The program will then have 10 business days to respond to the issues involved in an impending suspension. Within 10 business days of the program's response, the Executive Board will make a decision regarding an accreditation action.

Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this Section 04.01.00, the Commission expressly reserves the right to immediately suspend a program where, in the Commission's reasonable belief, there exists an imminent safety issue involving patient safety and/or care, pilot and/or crew safety, public safety or safety issues involving the operation and/or maintenance of the aircraft. The service will be notified immediately of the board's decision to suspend. Within 5 business days the service will be provided with a list of concerns/allegations. The program will then have 5 business days to respond to issues involved in the suspension decision. Within 10 business days of the program's response, the Executive Board will make a decision regarding an accreditation action. The Executive Board's decision may include (a) reinstatement of accreditation. (b) continuation of suspension for up to the six month period as set forth in this section or (c) withdrawal of accreditation. **(See Due Process Procedures 04.02.00)**

An accredited service may NOT advertise as accredited while it is on suspension.

1. A service that is notified of the intent to suspend due to serious issues that if true would impact public safety and patient care as reported in credible allegations, information or complaints will have five business days to respond to the complaints before suspension is enacted. Depending on the nature of the response, the Board may decide to:
 - a. Not suspend.
 - b. Enact suspension and require a progress report, a supplemental visit or both or conduct a monitoring visit within the 6 month time frame.
 - c. Withdraw accreditation.

2. A service can also be suspended for:
 - a. Unsatisfactory progress report
 - b. Unfavorable supplemental site visit, monitoring visit or reaccreditation visit,
 - c. Other issues as determined by the Board

Depending on the outcome of the progress report or site visit or other pertinent information, the Board may decide to:

- (1). Not suspend.
 - (2). Enact suspension and require a progress report, a supplemental visit (or both) or conduct a monitoring visit within the 6 month time frame.
 - (3). Withdraw accreditation.
3. Relevant government agencies will be notified when accreditation is suspended.

BOARD ACTIONS *A program may not advertise as "being accredited" nor enjoy privileges of accreditation if a Board Action is received.*

A. Provisional Action

The Commission shall grant a provisional action when a program has applied for the first time and has deficiencies which are, in the judgment of the Board, correctable within a six month time frame but prevent the service from being in substantial compliance.

1. Programs that have major gaps in meeting the accreditation standards or demonstrate an imbalance in major components, such as in safety or patient care, would not be eligible for a provisional action.
2. The board of directors will outline the areas of concern and deficiency and require one of the two following courses of action:
 - a. Submit a progress report addressing the areas of concern and deficiency as instructed in the certified letter from the board. This progress report is due within 6 months of the provisional action.
 - b. Address the areas of concern and deficiency in a progress report which is then followed-up by a supplemental site visit. The progress report must be submitted within 3 - 6 months of the provisional action. A supplemental visit will be scheduled within 30 days of receiving the progress report.
3. A provisional action is temporary and for a maximum of six months. Only two further accreditation decisions can result after the board reviews the progress report and the site surveyor's report if a supplemental visit is required.
 - a. Full accreditation will be awarded if concerns and deficiencies are addressed to the board's satisfaction.
 - b. A withhold action will result if concerns and deficiencies are not corrected within the six months
 - c. A program that has been withheld and reapplies for accreditation is eligible for Provisional Action since it is starting over with a new PIF.

B. Deferral Action

The Commission may defer a decision on accreditation status of an medical transport program. Lack of sufficient information about specific issues may preclude an informed and reasonable decision. If action is deferred on a program submitting for reaccreditation, the program retains its current accreditation status until a final decision is made.

PROGRESS REPORT

The Commission may request a progress report from the program as a result of a review of that program **or as a response to a complaint**. Progress reports may be reviewed by one or two board members.

The Commission will specify the exact information to be provided and include a specific due date when the progress report should be submitted to the Commission. **If a progress report is not submitted by the due date, a fine of up to \$1000.00 may be levied at the discretion of the Board. A progress report that is past due more than 30 days may result in one of the following actions:**

- Intent to Suspend
- Suspend Accreditation
- Preliminary Denial
- Deferred Accreditation
- Withdraw Accreditation

REQUESTS FOR EXTENSIONS

A medical transport service with an initial application may request an extension at the end of one year or an accredited service with an accreditation certification about to expire may request an extension according to the following guidelines:

1. All requests for extensions must be in writing and must be received by CAMTS prior to the expiration date.
2. The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors will consider an extension as follows:
 - Based on the reasons for the request
 - For a period to be determined by the Board not to exceed 6 months.
3. If an accredited service is granted an extension, it may continue to advertise as accredited as determined by the Executive Board.
 - The certification date will revert back to the ending of the previous certification period regardless of the date the Board awards reaccreditation.

COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION OF MEDICAL TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

SUBJECT: Due Process Procedures (Appealing an Accreditation Decision)

POLICY: Accreditation awards and board actions can be appealed under the following guidelines.

GUIDELINES:

A. A program is entitled to appeal an accreditation decision when the program feels there were errors in interpretation during the site survey or board decision making process. This appeal will follow the procedures as listed:

1. The program will request an appeal of the accreditation outcome in writing within thirty (30) days of being informed of the accreditation decision unless it is a suspended accreditation – then the time frame for appeal is as outlined on page 10 of policy 04.01.00 section D. **During the appeal process, programs receiving a Preliminary Denial decision or a Withdraw accreditation or Suspend or Intent to Suspend action (during the 30 day appeal process) will be listed on the CAMTS website with an asterisk. The asterisk will be defined as outlined in Policy 03.12.00**
2. In the written request for appeal, the program must identify the specific reason it is questioning the board decision.
3. The Executive Committee of the Board of Directors will review the request to appeal and decide whether a repeat review by the board is warranted. If the appeal is found to have merit, a request for additional information may be necessary with or without a follow-up site visit. If a site visit is required, every effort will be made by the Commission to reschedule the visit within sixty (60) days of the request to appeal.
4. This repeat visit will be conducted by different site surveyor(s) than the visit being appealed.
5. Following the repeat visit, the findings of the site surveyors will be submitted to the Board of Directors for reconsideration.
6. The program will be informed of the decision of the Board of Directors following the next appropriate Board of Directors formal meeting, audio and/or video conference call.
7. Regardless of the outcome, the Effective Date of the original notification will remain as the basis for the tenure of the accreditation.