

Emergency Medical Service Agency Trauma Verification Process

Purpose

Agency verification is the process in which the Washington State Department of Health (department) identifies those basic, intermediate, and advanced life support aid and ambulance services authorized to respond to trauma calls and/or to provide ambulance services in a specific area. Agency verification ensures an efficient and well-coordinated statewide trauma care system (RCW 70.168.010). The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and Trauma System Section (EMS office) administers the department's EMS verification application process.

General application information

- **Before starting the agency verification application, we strongly encourage applicants to contact the EMS office at 360-236-2800 to get guidance on the process and for technical assistance.**
- Agency verification applications must include all documentation required under [WAC 246-976-260](#), [WAC 246-976-390](#), and [WAC 246-976-395](#) or we'll consider the application incomplete. We'll return incomplete applications to the applicant.
- New applicants for agency verification must provide all of the documentation described below.
- Agencies now verified may be eligible to file an amended application. Contact the EMS office to determine if the proposed change qualifies for an amended application.

Completing the Application Process

1. Applications are available online. You may download them from the [EMS office website](#). Please contact the department's Office of Customer Service at 360-236-4700 if you need assistance.
2. To ensure your agency verification application proposal is consistent with your regional EMS and trauma care plan, contact your [regional EMS and trauma council](#) (regional EMSTC council).
3. We require the following documentation:
 - a. A completed agency verification application;
 - b. A detailed narrative on each of the following:
 - i. Dispatch plan;
 - ii. Response plan (include station locations and system status management, if used);
 - iii. Level of service;
 - iv. Type of transport (if seeking verification as a transport agency);
 - v. Tiered response and rendezvous plan;
 - vi. Back-up plan to respond;
 - vii. Interagency relations;
 - viii. A detailed explanation how the applicant's proposal avoids unnecessary duplication of resources and services as outlined in the approved regional EMSTC plan "Needs and Distribution of Services" provisions;

- ix. A detailed explanation of how the applicant agency will meet the specific needs as outlined in the approved regional plan;
- x. Consistency with the approved regional plan and patient care procedures;
- xi. Vehicles and equipment;
- xii. Sufficient staffing levels;
- xiii. Trauma training program:
 - 1. How the applicant agency's current certified EMS personnel have been, or will be, trained to have the required competency in applying department-approved medical program director (MPD) protocols;
 - 2. How the applicant agency provides formalized education through ongoing training (OTEP) or continuing medical education (CME).
 - 3. How the applicant agency trains personnel on their obligation to maintain competency and currency of knowledge regarding MPD protocols, OTEP, and CME.
 - 4. How the applicant agency will ensure that all personnel, including new personnel, attain and maintain competency and currency of knowledge as join the organization: and
- xiv. Participation and compliance with regional quality improvement program.
- c. Evidence of current liability insurance coverage; specifically a copy of the liability insurance coverage policy, an ACCORD certificate of insurance, or a letter from a licensed insurer verifying the required insurance will be in place for the applicant agency when verification goes into effect.

Submitting the Application

1. Send the original application with supporting documentation to:
 - Department of Health
 - Office of Community Health Systems
 - EMS and Trauma Section
 - P.O. Box 47877
 - Olympia, Washington, 98504-7877
2. Keep a copy of the application and all documents submitted.

Evaluation Process

1. The department's Office of Customer Service (CSO) will review the applicant's submitted materials to ensure application is complete. If documentation is missing, CSO staff members will contact the applicant. All necessary information must be on hand to start the review process.
2. The CSO will forward the complete application to the EMS office for initial review to ensure the documentation addresses relevant regulatory requirements, including consistency with the regional EMSTC plan. At a minimum, the initial review will evaluate:
 - a. Whether the maximum number of verified services already exists in the region;
 - b. Whether the applicant proposes to respond to an underserved and available area;
 - c. Whether the service's description of compliance with regional MPD protocols and regional quality assurance plan is adequate; and
 - d. Whether a service is purchased or absorbed, the replacement service must meet the response times required in rule and maintains the level of service currently provided.

The EMS office may make a request for additional information before deeming the application complete.

3. The department will forward the completed agency verification application to the regional EMSTC council for review and comment within seven days of completing its initial review. The regional EMSTC council will provide detailed information to support its assessment if it finds the application to be inconsistent with the regional EMSTC plan, unnecessarily duplicates existing resources or services, or negatively affects existing verified services or care in the region. The regional EMSTC council will send its signed review and comments to the EMS office.
4. Upon receiving the response from the regional EMSTC council, the EMS office will proceed with a final evaluation process, which will include:
 - a. Scoring of each complete application using objective criteria as identified in WAC 246-976-390, 246-976-395(3) (a) through (p), (4), and (5). When more than one agency is applying for verification in a specific trauma response area, the EMS will select the agency that receives the highest total score;
 - b. Consideration of whether the applicant's proposal is consistent with the approved regional EMSTC plan as well as the state plan;
 - c. Consideration of comments received from the regional EMSTC council(s) as well as comments from affected local EMSTC councils; and
 - d. Completing a pre-verification site visit, if applicable under WAC 246-976-395(1) (b).
5. Provisional verification granted to avoid a loss or interruption of service: The EMS office may withdraw provisional verification status if provisions of the agency's proposal aren't implemented within the provisional time period.
6. The EMS office will provide written notification of its decision. If it grants agency verification, it sends a copy of agency verification to the successful applicant's regional EMSTC council, local EMSTC council, and the county medical program director.
7. If the department denies the agency's verification application, the applicant may request an adjudicative proceeding and settlement conference under the Administrative Procedure Act, 34.05 RCW, and 246-10 WAC.
8. Verification and licensure will run concurrently and will expire, unless renewed, on the date of expiration, but no less than 24 months from the date licensure and trauma verification is granted under WACs 246-976-260 and 246-976-390.

EMS Agency Trauma Verification Process Definitions of Terms

The definitions set forth in chapter 70.168 RCW and chapter 246-976 WAC, as well as the following definitions and application and service requirements, shall apply:

- 1) **Back-up plan to respond.** In the event the applicant agency is unable to respond immediately to a trauma incident, the applicant agency plan should outline any provisions for back-up vehicles or agencies.
- 2) **Consistency with approved regional plan and patient care procedures:** The application should clearly illustrate the applicant agency's knowledge and understanding of the approved regional plan's provisions and patient care procedures, and be consistent with the regional EMSTC plan as documented upon review by the regional EMSTC council and the department.
- 3) **Dispatch plan.** How service requests are received (e.g., 9-1-1, E 9-1-1, seven-digit telephone number, etc.). Additionally, how applicant agency dispatches vehicles to a trauma call and any technological enhancements it may use to facilitate the dispatch and communications process.
- 4) **Interagency relations:** For a trauma care system with multiple providers, collaboration and cooperation are essential to achieve optimum efficiency. Mutual aid agreements, memoranda of understanding, and a description of agreed-upon services, are evidence of the presence of such collaboration and cooperation.
- 5) **Level of service:** The level of verification being sought (i.e., BLS, ILS or ALS) as specified in the approved regional plan.
- 6) **Minimum requirements:** The applicant agency's application for verification must meet all minimum requirements for the level of service as set forth in WAC 246-976-390 and the regional plan, 24 hours per day, seven days per week, and 365 days per year.
- 7) **Response area:** The service coverage zone defined in the approved regional plan.
- 8) **Response plan:** The location and manner with which the applicant agency deploys emergency response vehicles within the defined response area. The plan should clearly illustrate the agency's ability to meet response time criteria as outlined in WAC 246-976-390 and the regional EMSTC plan.
- 9) **Certified EMS personnel:** Certification of the applicant agency's staff is consistent with the level of service.
- 10) **Sufficient staffing levels:** The applicant agency will provide a detailed explanation of the number of vehicles and the hours per day, it will deploy each vehicle within the response area.
- 11) **Tiered response and rendezvous plan:** If the applicant agency's plan incorporates a tiered response system and/or a plan to rendezvous with other EMS provider agencies, the applicant agency will provide a detailed explanation of the proposed response system and identify those agencies with which the agreement will apply.
- 12) **Type of transport:** The applicant agency should clearly define whether its services include interfacility transport services in conjunction with 9-1-1 responses.
- 13) **Underserved area:** Is a response area that has unfilled needs, or no verified service available.
- 14) **Vehicles and equipment:** The applicant agency must provide a detailed list of the vehicles and equipment it uses to provide service under the proposed plan so that it meets minimum requirements. The list must include vehicle type and age as well as a statement affirming that all equipment meets the minimum requirements of WAC 246-976-390.
- 15) **Approved regional plan:** Required by RCW 70.168.100, and approved by the Department of Health.
- 16) **Regional quality improvement program:** The applicant agency agrees to participate in the regional quality assurance and improvement program organized under WAC 246-976-910.

Appendix A

Verification Application Scoring

The EMS office will evaluate all complete applications by employing a scoring system to specific key categories of the verification application. Applicants may propose service, equipment and more that exceed minimum requirements as set forth in WAC 246-976-390 and the approved regional plan. The EMS office will assign points up to the maximum specified below for each category. The EMS office will select the agency that receives the highest total points, up to a maximum of 200 points.

Response Plan - 40 Points Maximum

This section assesses the applicant's ability to provide services as a verified agency.

1. Deployment plan for 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week service coverage: List personnel on the appropriate pages of the application. Also, provide a narrative detailing the number and certification levels of certified EMS personnel. In addition, describe how the applicant agency plans to provide service 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Clearly identify the number of response vehicles and the manner with which the agency staffs and deploys the vehicles.
2. Dispatch plan: Description should include how personnel receive calls and time to second tone.
3. Response time compliance: Proposed response time compliance meets or exceeds minimum requirements as outlined in WAC 246-976-390(7) and the approved regional plan for each geographic category (urban, suburban, rural and wilderness). We encourage agencies to focus on all areas to achieve equitable distribution of resources.
4. Tiered response and rendezvous plan: Description should include when ALS would be dispatched, what are the established rendezvous points, and what the air medical landing zones are.

Clinical Staffing and Equipment Capabilities - 60 Points Maximum

This section assesses the applicant's ability to provide quality equipment and vehicles.

1. Provide detailed information on applicants' proposed formalized education program through ongoing training and evaluation program (OTEP) or continuing medical education (CME) program.
2. Provide detailed information on applicant's proposed trauma training program.
3. Provide the make, model, manufacture date and condition of equipment and vehicles a verified agency uses to provide service. Equipment should be present, clean, function properly, and be calibrated per protocol. Vehicles should be properly identified, clean inside and out, well maintained, and have proof of maintenance.

Impact to Existing System – 100 Points Maximum

This section assesses an applicant's effect on the existing trauma system.

1. Interaction with other service providers demonstrated through documentation of meetings with current trauma verification services in the response area. In addition, provide back-up plans and mutual aid agreements that illustrate a systematic approach to providing trauma care to the community.
2. Demonstrate absence of service duplication through documents submitted by current trauma verification services that the proposed verified service meets unfulfilled needs.
3. Proposed service is consistent with the approved regional plan and patient care procedures as demonstrated by showing how applicant's proposal addresses an underserved area identified in the approved regional plan or recommendation by the regional EMSTC council.

VERIFICATION APPLICATION SCORING MATRIX

A. Response Plan – 40 Points Maximum

1. Deployment plan for 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week coverage 10 points
2. Dispatch plan 10 points
3. Response time compliance plan 10 points
4. Tiered response and rendezvous plan 10 points

C. Staffing and Equipment - 60 Points Maximum

1. Formalized education programs 30 points
2. Equipment 30 points

D. Impact to Existing Trauma System – 100 Points Maximum

1. Interagency relations 35 points
2. Absence of duplication 35 points
3. Consistency with approved regional plan 30 points