

Guidelines for Special Purpose Providers & EMTs

The following information contains definitions and guidelines for establishing a “Special Purpose Ambulance” staffed with “Special Purpose Emergency Medical Technicians.”

SC EMS Regulations 61-7:

Section II

- D. **Special Purpose Ambulance:** Means an ambulance equipped and designated to transport ONLY patients in need of specialized types of care. Examples include neonatal ambulances, cardiac-care ambulance, etc.

Section III **Licensing Procedures**

Section 307 **Criteria for License Category – Special Purpose Ambulance Provider:**

- A. Have an approved vehicle that is in compliance with **Section II (D)** of these regulations and meets minimum equipment requirements, as noted in **Section 605**.
- B. Have a medical control physician as delineated in **Section 302** of these regulations
- C. Provide the Department (SC DHEC Division of EMS) with copies of policy and procedure for the operation of the special purpose ambulance
- D. Provide a list of special purpose equipment that is carried on the special purpose ambulance and is approved by the medical control physician for review and approval by the Department.
- E. Provide other license information delineated in **Section 301** of these regulations
- F. Except during extenuating circumstances, special purpose ambulances shall be used for interfacility transports only.

Section VI **Equipment**

Section 605 **Special Purpose Ambulance Equipment:**

- A. All special purpose ambulances will be equipped with at least the following items from **Section 601** of these regulations: A-1, B, C (appropriate size), D, F, G, U, V, W, X, Y, in addition to special purpose equipment that is documented to the Department per **Section 307**. Item A-1 can be replaced by a specialized patient transfer device so long as there is a provision to safely secure the device in the special purpose ambulance.

- B. Special purpose equipment as documented to the Department per **Section 307** of these regulations must be on the special purpose ambulance when it is in use and is subject to inventory and inspection by the Department as provided for in **Section 307** of these regulations.

Section VIII: **Training and Certification**
Section 801 E: **Criteria for Special Purpose EMT**

In order to be issued a valid special purpose EMT certificate, one must meet ALL of the following criteria:

1. The special purpose EMT must be a (current) registered nurse.
2. The special purpose EMT must have completed an acceptable training program for delivery of the special area or possess experience in that special care area satisfactory to the Department
3. The special purpose EMT must be employed by the medical service (SC Licensed EMS Provider) which utilizes the special purpose ambulance and recommended by the (administrative) director of the medical service which utilizes a special purpose ambulance.
4. The medical service by which the special purpose EMT is employed must have operational procedures and medical protocols directing the daily operations of the special purpose EMT and special purpose ambulance. These medical protocols must be in written form, approved and signed by the director of the medical service in order for the special purpose EMT to administer medical treatment required by the protocols. These protocols must be reviewed and signed annually by the director of the medical service.

Section 802: Certification
Section 802 Item A-4: **Special Purpose EMT Qualifications**

- A. Effective September 1, 1975, no persons shall act or serve in the capacity of attending a patient in an ambulance without first completing, minimally, an approved (SC) Emergency Medical Technician – Basic Training Program and holding a South Carolina certificate as an emergency medical technician – Basic. Emergency Medical Technician – Basic certificates are in force for three years and are subject to renewal before expiration date if the certificate continues to meet state (SC) qualification. Certified (SC) emergency medical technician – Basic may perform those functions taught in the approved (SC) EMT Basic curriculum. Emergency medical technician – Basic (SC) certificates may be issued to eligible personnel, 18 years of age or older, upon the satisfactory completion of any of the following requirements:

4. Special Purpose Qualifications: DHEC may issue a valid special purpose EMT certificate to those registered nurses who are both extensively trained in a particular special area of care and approved by the Department to attend patients needing that particular care while being transported in special purpose ambulances. These special purpose EMTs may be assisted by other health professionals who are determined qualified and approved by the Department to assist in attendance of the patient during transportation in a special purpose ambulance.

Section XI **Air Ambulances**
Section 1101 A-3: **Special Purpose Ambulance.**

Air ambulances that meet the special purpose ambulance requirements.

Section 1103: **Interfacility and Special Purpose Air Ambulances**

All interfacility and special purpose air ambulances must be equipped with at least the following items from **Section 1102**: A, B, C, D, F, G, U, V, W, X, and Y.

*For a complete copy of EMS Regulation 61-7, log onto our website:
www.scdhec.net/hr/ems or contact the EMS Manager for Compliance at (803) 545-4204.*

To apply for a SC Special Purpose Ambulance License, contact the SC DHEC EMS Manager for Compliance at (803) 545-4204.

Certification / Re-certification of the Special Purpose EMT

All individuals interested in becoming a *Special Purpose EMT*, must submit the following documentation to the SC DHEC Division of EMS:

1. Documentation of a minimum of nine (9) months experience in an area relating to the transport speciality (NICU, CCU, etc).
2. Documentation of completion of a course developed specifically for transport teams by the unit Medical Director. This course should be designed around the unit transportation protocols and approved by SC DHEC Division of EMS.
3. The course must require successful completion of a **written** and **practical** (skills) examination administered under the direction of the unit Medical Control Physician.

4. The course outline should include protocols and must be submitted to SC DHEC Division of EMS for approval. Any changes in the program must be submitted as they are made.
5. A copy of the course completion certificate or letter from the unit Medical Director to verify course completion.
6. A current copy of each individual's registered nurse license.
7. Endorsement for certification signed by the Unit Director of Nursing and their Medical Director.
8. A completed and signed "*Certificate Application (White) Card.*"

All Individuals applying for re-certification as a "*Special Purpose EMT*" must submit the following documentation to SC DHEC Division of EMS:

1. A copy of the individual's current registered nurse license.
2. Verification of employment in the unit and endorsement for re-certification signed by the Unit Administrative Director of Nursing and the Medical Director.
3. Documentation of a minimum of thirty-six (36) hours of continuing education in the area relating to the transport speciality (NICU, CCU, etc).
4. A completed and signed "*Certificate Application (White) Card.*"

Mail all documentation to SC DHEC EMS, 2600 Bull Street, Columbia, SC 29201

Summary:

A Special Purpose EMT is only permitted to function on a SC Licensed Special Purpose Ambulance, which is licensed for the same special purpose as the special certification of the Special Purpose EMT.

In other words, a currently certified SC Special Purpose (CCU) EMT may only attend patients on a SC Licensed Special Purpose (CCU) Ambulance. A currently certified SC Special Purpose (NICU) EMT may only attend patients on a SC Licensed Special Purpose (NICU) Ambulance.

SC EMS Law & Regulations require the Special Purpose EMT to retain a SC Special Purpose EMT certificate and requires that EMT to keep a copy of their SC Special Purpose EMT Pocket Card on their person at all times while attending a patient on an ambulance.