

**[ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2018-0001,
January 31, 2018]**

**REVISED RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE
LICENSURE OF LAND AMBULANCES AND AMBULANCE SERVICE
PROVIDERS**

*Adopted: 26 January 2018
Date Filed: 31 January 2018*

I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

On July 12, 2016, the Department of Health (DOH) through the Health Facilities and Services Regulatory Bureau (formerly Bureau of Health Facilities and Services) published Administrative Order (A.O.) No. 2016-0029 titled "Rules and Regulations Governing the Licensure of Ambulances and Ambulance Service Providers" dated June 29, 2016.

The aforementioned A.O. was drafted in line with Section VI. A. 4. of A.O. No. 2010- 0003 titled "National Policy on Ambulance Use and Services" which stated that the "Bureau of Health Facilities and Services shall establish licensing standards for ambulance services and ensures their implementation through regulation. The license of hospital-based ambulance service shall be part of the hospital license. All other ambulance services shall require a separate license" The policy was envisioned to remedy the issue on the misuse of ambulance vehicles and the mislabeling of other vehicles as ambulances in the country. Moreover, it seeks to establish that ambulances operate with competent personnel and appropriate equipment in order to respond to medical emergencies, provide quality care and ensure patient safety.

However, in consideration of the plight of stakeholders who could not readily comply with the standards and requirements prescribed in the policy, the DOH decided to issue out Department Circular (DC) No. 2016-0357 titled Extension of Moratorium Period for Compliance for All Ambulance and Ambulance Service Providers. The DC. provided a moratorium for all ambulance service providers to comply until December 31, 2017 while the AD. underwent policy review.

After the conduct of several consultative meetings with stakeholders and considering the context in which ambulance service providers currently operate, this Order hereby provides the revised mandatory minimum standards and requirements for the licensure of land ambulances and ambulance service providers.

II. OBJECTIVE

These rules and regulations are promulgated to protect the public and ensure the

safety of patients and personnel by setting the minimum standards and requirements for land ambulances and ambulance service providers.

III. SCOPE AND COVERAGE

These rules and regulations shall apply to all government and private land ambulances and ambulance service providers.

IV. DEFINITION OF TERMS

For purposes of this Order, the following terms, abbreviations and definitions apply:

1. Ambulance — a vehicle designed and equipped for transporting sick or injured patients to, from, and between places of treatment by land, water or air, affording safety and comfort to the patients and avoiding aggravation of illness or injury.
2. Ambulance Service Provider (ASP) - a health facility, institution or entity whether government or privately owned providing ambulance services.
3. Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) — a group of interventions used to treat and stabilize adult victims of life-threatening cardiorespiratory emergencies and to resuscitate victims of cardiac arrest. These interventions include CardioPulmonary Resuscitation, basic and advanced airway management, tracheal intubation, medications, electrical therapy and intravenous (IV) access.
4. Advance Life Support (ALS) - a set of life saving protocols and skills that extend BLS to further support the circulation and provide an open airway and adequate ventilation.
5. Basic Life Support (BLS) — a group of actions and interventions used to resuscitate and stabilize victims of cardiac or respiratory arrest. These BLS actions and interventions include recognition of a cardiac or a respiratory emergency or stroke, activation of the emergency response system, CPR and relief of foreign body airway obstruction.
6. Department of Health — License to Operate (DOH-LTO) — a formal authority issued by DOH to an individual, agency, partnership or corporation to operate an ambulance.
7. Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) - trained professional who provide out of hospital emergency medical care and transportation for critical and emergent patients who access the emergency medical services (EMS) system. (Ohio National Registry of Medical Technicians, 2017)
8. First Aid —is the immediate assistance provided to a sick or injured person until professional help arrives. Referred to as Standard First Aid (SFA) in this Order. (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2016)
9. HFSRB—Health Facilities and Services Regulatory Bureau
10. Land Ambulance- a vehicle designed and equipped with basic or advance life

support transporting patients to, from, and between places of treatment by land

11. Medical Direction— allows a paramedic or EMT to contact a physician from the field via radio or other means to obtain instruction on further care of a patient

12. Medical emergencies - any acute or life-threatening condition that requires immediate intervention by a competent personnel

13. Patient Transport Vehicle (PTV) - any form of land vehicle designed to transport patients whose condition is of a non-life threatening nature.

14. RO-RLED- Regional Office— Regulation Licensing and Enforcement Division.

V. GENERAL GUIDELINES

1. All vehicles shall be duly registered with the Land Transportation Office under the name of the ambulance service provider prior to application for DOH-License to Operate.

2. Licensed land ambulance vehicles shall only be used for the purpose by which it was granted a license to operate.

3. No land vehicle of any kind shall bear on its body the label or marking of the word "AMBULANCE" unless it has been duly licensed and categorized as a land ambulance by the Department of Health.

4. Every ambulance service provider shall be organized to provide safe, quality, effective and efficient ambulance services for patients which shall be made available at all times.

5. Ambulance service providers of privately owned ambulances shall be registered with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) or with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), whichever is applicable.

6. For ambulance service providers of government owned ambulances, a local government ordinance/board resolution or its equivalent as proof of ownership of ambulance vehicles shall be required.

7. All ambulance service providers shall have an Operations Control and Dispatch Center of their ambulance/s whether it be a business office or space and shall ensure adequate parking spaces for their ambulance/s.

8. Ambulance service providers shall ensure that they are part of a functional referral network within the area/vicinity where they shall operate.

9. The DOH—LTO of ambulance service providers of institution-based ambulances applying for a DOH-LTO shall be included in the One-Stop Shop (OSS) system for hospitals and other health facilities, and shall be reflected in the health facility DOH-LTO. There shall only be one (1) DOH—LTO for the health facility indicating the number of licensed ambulances.

10. Ambulance service providers of non-institution-based ambulances shall secure a separate DOH-LTO.

11. Ambulance service providers shall strictly comply with the standards, criteria and requirements prescribed in the Assessment Tool for Licensing a Land Ambulance and Ambulance Service Provider (Annex C).

12. Ambulance service providers (ASP) shall subject each of its ambulance vehicles for inspection. Any additional vehicle shall be applied for inspection. Only when found compliant shall the additional vehicle be included in the existing list of approved ambulances of the ASP. Moreover, in cases when a vehicle will no longer be used as an ambulance, the ASP shall inform HFSRB/RO-RLED through a letter indicating the plate or conduction sticker number of the said vehicle for delisting. The delisted vehicle shall then no longer bear the marking "AMBULANCE" and the DOH Ambulance logo should be removed.

13. Vehicles used to transport patients but are not equipped with Basic Life Support (BLS) or Advance Life Support (ALS) shall be categorized as Patient Transport Vehicles.

14. Patient Transport Vehicles shall be used to transport patients whose condition is of a non-life threatening nature such as but not limited to scheduled visits to a physician's office for treatment, routine physical examinations, x-rays or laboratory tests, or upon discharge from a hospital.

15. Patient Transport Vehicles should not bear the marking of the word "AMBULANCE" but shall instead be labeled as "PATIENT TRANSPORT VEHICLE."

16. Patient Transport Vehicles shall not be licensed by the HFSRB but shall be registered with the Bureau using a prescribed form.

VI. SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

A. CLASSIFICATION OF LAND AMBULANCES

1. ACCORDING TO OWNERSHIP

a. Government — owned, managed and operated wholly by government agencies/institutions such as, but not limited to, DOH hospitals, Local Government Units (LGU) and LGU-run hospitals, the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) of the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), the Philippine Coastguard of the Department of Transportation (DOTr), the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) of the Department of National Defense (DND), Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) and others.

b. Private — owned, managed and operated with funds through donation, principal, investment or other means by any individual, corporation, association or organization. Private ownership may be

through single proprietorship, partnership, corporation, cooperative, foundation, religious, non—government organization and others.

2. ACCORDING TO INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTER

a. Institution-based — ambulance that is owned, operated, maintained and used by a health facility (i.e. hospital, infirmary, etc.) regulated by the Department of Health.

b. Non-institution-based/ Free-Standing — ambulance that is operated independently from a health facility but may be used to service a health facility through a notarized Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) /service contract or its equivalent.

B. CATEGORIZATION OF LAND AMBULANCES

1. Type I- ambulance capable of providing Basic Life Support (BLS)

2. Type II- ambulance capable of providing Advance Life Support (ALS) C.

CATEGORY OF AMBULANCES REQUIRED AMONG HEALTH FACILITIES

I. Ambulances are part of the licensing requirements of several types of health facilities. The category of ambulance required from a health facility shall be commensurate to the services provided by the health facility as shown in the table below:

Type of Facility	Category of Ambulance Required	If Outsourced with a DOH Licensed Ambulance Service Provider (ASP)
Specialty and Level 3 Hospitals	Type II (ALS) Ambulance	- The Ambulance servicing the Hospital should be Type II
Level 2 Hospitals		- There should be a MOA between the hospital and the ASP (whether government or privately owned) - The ambulance vehicle should be stationed at the hospital at all times
Level 1 Hospitals	Type I (BLS) Ambulance + MOA with a hospital of higher level .	- The ambulance servicing the Hospital may either be Type I or Type II
Infirmarys	May opt to have a Type II Ambulance	- There should be a MOA between the hospital and the ASP (whether government