



Memorandum

Date: October 25, 2022

To: Ambulance Vehicle Manufacturers and Oregon Ambulance Services.

From: Oregon Health Authority, Emergency Medical Service and Trauma Systems Program (OHA-EMS)

Subject: Ground Ambulance Construction Criteria

This Memo clarifies OHA regulations relating to ground ambulance construction criteria.

The safety of patients and EMS providers riding in ambulances is the primary focus for enforcement of ambulance vehicle construction criteria. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's data, ground ambulance vehicle crashes occur at higher rates than ordinary passenger vehicles, and injuries are more likely to occur to occupants of the patient compartment.

Acknowledging common causes of injuries during an ambulance crash and the increased occupational hazards of providing care in an ambulance, highlight the need for revised vehicle construction criteria. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS), National Association of State EMS Officials (NASEMSO), and many others continue to study, recommend, and implement new standards, working to reduce injury and death in ambulance vehicles.

The Authority, working with the State EMS Committee and an Ambulance Vehicle Rules Advisory Committee, updated Oregon ambulance vehicle rules aligning with national standards. The rules were reviewed in 2015-2016 and adopted in June 2018. To allow services and ambulance manufacturers time to adjust their ambulance purchase and licensing plans, the Authority incrementally phased in new rules over a 4-year period with the latest updates going into effect on July 1, 2022.

The Authority is committed to improving safety for the public and our EMS providers. The regulations for newly constructed ground ambulance vehicles and those with remounted patient compartments require them to meet or exceed the standards in OAR 333-255-0060 prior to any license being issued.

If an ambulance service contracts with a manufacturer to build, purchases, or remounts an ambulance that does not meet the minimum standards, the Authority may reject or deny the license application.

An applicant may request a waiver to the minimum vehicle construction criteria standards in rare instances where the construction criteria cannot be met. However, waiver requests must be reviewed and approved prior to any build-out, purchase, or remount of an ambulance. Deferring waiver requests until post-build may require expensive retrofitting and delayed licensure.

The safety of the public and EMS providers is the highest priority when making any compliance or enforcement decision relating to ambulance vehicle construction criteria standards.

Thank you,

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Ground Ambulance Vehicle Construction Criteria for Initial Licensure, OAR [333-255-0060](#)

Waiver or Variance from Standards [OAR 333-250-0340](#), For questions or to request an application please contact the Ambulance Service Coordinator: Veronica Seymour at veronica.seymour@dhsaha.state.or.us