

Pennsylvania Automated External Defibrillator Requirements and Recommendations for BLS Services

GOAL: To reduce mortality rates from cardiac arrest by implementing an early defibrillation program that fosters collaborative relationships among regional emergency medical services (EMS) councils, local EMS agencies and the PA Department of Health (Department).

AUTHORITY: Prehospital practitioners are currently authorized under regulations promulgated by the Department to use “an automated external defibrillator when approved by a physician who serves as the medical director of the ambulance service with respect to use of automated external defibrillators.” The Department, pursuant to its responsibility under the EMS Act (35 P.S. § 6925(a)) to guide and coordinate the development of EMS programs into a unified system, and recognizing the importance of early defibrillation to an effective EMS system, has drafted this document through the Emergency Medical Services Office to identify requirements and offer recommendations for ambulance and quick response services (QRSs) that wish to carry and use automated external defibrillators (AEDs).

A. BLS SERVICE

1. QRS AND AMBULANCE SERVICES WHO CARRY AEDS

REQUIRED:

- a. Have a medical director who is willing to serve in an oversight capacity for the service’s use of AEDs.
- b. Ensure, through their AED medical directors, that practitioners authorized to use AEDs are properly trained.
- c. Ensure reporting of device usage via the State-approved EMS patient care report (PCR).
- d. Participate in the regional EMS quality improvement program, as defined by the regional EMS council.

RECOMMENDED:

- a. Maintain an inspection and maintenance log for review by the regional EMS council.
- b. Maintain a roster of practitioners authorized to use AEDs.

B. PERSONNEL

1. MEDICAL DIRECTOR

NOTE: BLS services are not required to have a medical director, however any BLS service that wishes to carry and utilize an AED **MUST** have a medical director. BLS services may have one medical director who functions as a BLS service medical director or a physician who serves to provide oversight for the use of AEDs only.

REQUIRED:

- a. Doctor of medicine or osteopathic medicine with currently registered license to practice in Pennsylvania.
- b. Provide medical direction with respect to the service’s use of AEDs.

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RECOMMENDED:

- a. Board certified in emergency medicine or ACLS provider.
- b. Verify that the BLS service meets AED training requirements.
- c. Oversee all quality assurance requirements.
- d. Review the service's roster of authorized practitioners.
- e. Identify skill maintenance requirements.
- f. QA review of **EVERY** case of AED use.

2. AED PRACTITIONER

REQUIRED:

- a. Prehospital practitioner authorized to use AED by the service medical director for AEDs.
- b. Successfully completes a Department approved course that includes instruction on the use of AEDs.
- c. Follows current Statewide BLS treatment protocols in the use of AEDs.
- d. Adheres to any skill maintenance requirements established by the medical director.
- e. Ensures PCR identifies use of AED as indicated.

RECOMMENDED:

- a. Forward completed PCR and event record from AED to the medical director for review.

3. REGIONAL EMS COUNCIL

REQUIRED:

- a. Assist prehospital personnel, ambulance services and QRSs operating in the regional EMS system to implement, maintain and improve AED response programs and training in accordance with the Statewide EMS development plan.

RECOMMENDED:

- a. Ensure that BLS services wishing to carry and use AEDs comply with service and personnel requirements prescribed by the Department.

The EMS Office will not endorse or approve any particular device, manufacturer, or product vendor.