

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY**

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**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS  
Tactical Casualty Care Medical Training****August 2012****What are the different medical training levels for casualty care in the tactical environment in California?**

Significant progress has been made in improving the medical care in the tactical environment in California since 2008. As part of this process, EMSA and POST have standardized minimum curriculum and terminology to improve training consistency and public understanding.

Generally, two distinct categories exist. The first is Tactical Medicine, and the second is tactical casualty care which is not considered Tactical medicine. Tactical casualty care can be further subdivided into tactical first aid and tactical lifesaver.

Three different levels of medical training in the tactical environment have been established:

- Tactical Medicine (TM)
- Tactical First Aid (TFA)
- Tactical Lifesaver (TLS)

These three levels are summarized in Table 1 as part of this document.

**INITIAL TACTICAL MEDICINE TRAINING****I am currently teaching a tactical medicine program, do I need to follow the tactical guidelines and regulations?**

Yes. The Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST), in collaboration with the California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA), have established regulations (CCR 1084?) and guidelines concerning the provision of TACTICAL MEDICINE training and operations in California effective May 2010.

Tactical Medicine training programs located in California, or providing training services in California, may not hold themselves out as providing tactical medicine training programs, or any derivation thereof, unless they are approved by POST. All training programs who wish to provide Tactical Medicine programs in California shall comply with the associated curriculum for minimum training of 80 hour tactical medicine guidelines, or a 40 hour alternative program. All training programs must be approved in advance by POST and EMSA prior to advertising a course.

Only courses approved by POST and EMSA may advertise or make claims (either verbally or in writing) that imply that Tactical Medicine Training may be obtained through the completion of a class.

**Section 2.26 of the document reads: "Tactical medical team support personnel shall be deployed and/ or assigned to a SWAT team only after successful completion of POST-certified and EMSA approved Tactical Medicine Course, or its equivalent as determined by the agency. If the TEMS Medical Director has attended and certified at a POST/EMSA approved Tactical Medicine Course, can "or its equivalent" include an agency developed internal training series implemented by the Medical Director to inservice its physician volunteers?"**

The terminology "or its equivalent" was inserted to recognize *retroactive* recognition of training prior to implementation of the *Tactical Medicine Guidelines* in May 2010. It was our goal to allow tactical medicine personnel to receive credit for prior training and not require all existing personnel to go through a mandatory retraining.

However, all training *after* the implementation of the *Tactical Medicine Guidelines* in May 2010 shall be conducted by an approved tactical medicine training program. Training programs to "inservice" physician volunteers would need to be approved as a tactical medicine training program in order to meet the minimum requirement.

**After I complete a tactical medicine course, do I get a special certification or license as a tactical medic (tactical EMT or tactical paramedic)?**

No. At this time, there is no special State specialty certification.

The employer is responsible for ensuring that tactical EMS personnel are currently trained at the appropriate level.

**TACTICAL MEDICINE REFRESHER TRAINING**

**How many hours of refresher training or continuing education are required every 2 years?**

The tactical medicine guidelines recommend 24 hours of approved refresher training or continuing education every 2 years.

**I want to teach tactical medicine refresher courses. What do I need to do?**

Approved tactical medicine training programs, which provide initial and refresher or update tactical medicine training to personnel, shall adhere to the training guidelines and standards. Eligible training presenters may submit a Course Certification Program request for Tactical Medicine course approval to POST pursuant to Regulations 1005 (f), 1051, 1052, 1053, 1054, 1055, 1056, 1057, 1058, 1070, 1084 (b) and (c), and Commission Procedures D-2 and D-6. The Course Certification Package must be submitted electronically using the POST Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) system.

**What is the curriculum requirement for a refresher course?**

There is no specific curriculum required for a Tactical Medicine refresher course. However, review of the Tactical Casualty Care Assessment and Treatment Model, Medical Planning and Threat Assessment, and practice using the Core Competencies found in the Tactical Medicine Guidelines would be strongly recommended. Additionally, scenario practice that combines practical exercises should occur.

**Which students are eligible to enroll in a Tactical Medicine refresher course?**

Only students who have completed a POST/EMSA-approved Initial Tactical medicine training program after May 2010 are eligible for a refresher course. In order to be eligible for the refresher course, an initial training program must have been successfully completed.

Students who have completed an initial Tactical Medicine training program prior to May 2010 may enroll only if those students can produce course completion records of a full tactical medicine training program, meeting the general tactical and medical curriculum found in the Guidelines. It is not the intent of the guidelines and regulations that a refresher course instruction be used in place of full completion of Tactical Medicine initial training.

**NON-TACTICAL MEDICINE COURSES**

**I don't want to teach the full tactical medicine class, are there other options available?**

There are two other options available for training of personnel in medical topics in the tactical environment. The first option is called TACTICAL FIRST AID. The target audience is law enforcement personnel. This course of instruction is for courses that are at least 8 hours of medical instruction.

The second option is TACTICAL LIFE SAVER for courses that are between 16- 24 hours of medical instruction. The target audience is generally for SWAT officers, or others in a high risk environment, but who do not have EMT or other advanced training.

**I am teaching a tactical first aid course or tactical lifesaver course, do I need official approval of my program?**

No. At this time, only the Tactical Medicine training in California, POST requires a training program Request for Approval for in writing with the required documentation in advance. Programs training at the tactical first aid and tactical lifesaver levels do not need to be approved in advance except where funding may be involved.

However, necessary if POST or Homeland Security funding is being used, advance approval is required from either POST or CalEMA.

EMSA is happy to review tactical first aid or tactical lifesaver courses upon request for medical content.

**Do EMSA and POST have recommendations for minimum training topics for the Tactical First Aid and Tactical LifeSaver Programs?**

Yes. EMSA recommends that they follow the minimum training topics and curriculum listed in Table 2 and Table 3 when advertising course and conducting training. The balance between classroom and skills/scenario training should be approximately 50-50.

**Can I teach advanced life support skills to students in a tactical first aid or tactical lifesaver course?**

No. As part of these basic instructional areas, programs are strongly advised that teaching of advanced life support topics may constitute a violation of existing Health and Safety Code statutes concerning scope of practice. These advanced life support topics include, but are not limited to, needle decompression of a tension pneumothorax, use of hemostatic agents for severe bleeding, cricothyroidotomy for airway control, medication administration, or Intravenous Line insertion.

**LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES**

**Are law enforcement agencies, with a SWAT program, required to implement a tactical medicine program?**

No. A law enforcement agency with a SWAT team is not required to have a tactical medicine program. However, the *POST SWAT Operational Guidelines and Standardized Training Program Recommendations (2005)* recommend that this be incorporated into the SWAT program.

If a law enforcement agency elects to have a tactical medicine program, that tactical medical program shall have personnel who are trained as a "TACTICAL EMT", "TACTICAL PARAMEDIC", "TACTICAL PHYSICIAN", and shall have completed an approved tactical medicine class.

**Under whose license/ purview do the tactical medics practice, and under whose general authority (Local EMS Agency Medical Director vs. Provider Medical Director)?**

Tactical paramedics practice under their license as a paramedic in California, and accreditation by the local EMS agency Medical Director consistent with the paramedic regulations. The Medical Director of the local EMS agency may work with the EMS provider agency medical director for collaboration in off-line and on-line medical direction.

**Where Can I Get Further Information?**

Further information can be obtained from the EMSA website  
[http://www.emsa.ca.gov/personnel/tactical\\_medicine/](http://www.emsa.ca.gov/personnel/tactical_medicine/)

or  
the POST website dedicated to Tactical Medicine Training.  
<http://post.ca.gov/tactical-medicine.aspx>

**TABLE 1**

**Tactical Casualty Care Training Levels in California**

|   | <b>Course Title</b>          | <b>Target Audience</b>   | <b>Hours of Training</b>                                 | <b>Training Topics</b>  | <b>Scope of Practice</b>   |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|---|--|
| 1 | <b>Tactical First Aid**</b>  | Law Enforcement Officer  | 8  | “Care Under Fire” Principles<br>Basic Hemorrhage Control<br>Basic Airway Management<br>Extraction and Movement of Patients  | Tourniquet<br>Emerg Trauma Dressing<br>Extraction<br>Basic Airway<br>Treat for Shock   |
| 2 | <b>Tactical Life-Saver**</b> | SWAT team member or other specialty team member in high risk environment (non-EMT)                       | 16-24  | As above <u>plus</u> ,<br>Tactical Casualty Care Model,<br>Basic “Tactical Field Care” Principles<br>--Naso-Pharyngeal Airway (NPA)<br>--Sucking Chest Wound<br>Medical Planning and Threat Assessment<br>Basic Team Movement Scenarios | As above <u>plus</u> ,<br>Tactical Casualty Care Assessment,<br>Airway plus NPA Occlusive Dressings                          |
| 3 | <b>Tactical Medicine</b>     | Medical Component as part of SWAT team at BLS or ALS level<br>-Cert. EMT,<br>-Lic. Paramedic<br>-Lic. MD | 80 hours, or 40 hours if EMT and prior SWAT Basic school | As indicated in POST and EMSA approved <i>Tactical Medicine Guidelines</i> .  | As indicated in <i>Guidelines</i> , plus; Current certification or licensure, Approved EMS provider, and Local Accreditation |

\*\*No ALS procedures allowed (i.e. Hemostatic Agents for Hemorrhage Control, Needle Decompression for Tension Pneumothorax, Needle Cricothroidotomy for Airway, etc.) pursuant to Health and Safety Code 1797.178.

**TABLE 2**

**Tactical First Aid (TFA) Course  
8 Hour**

**Minimum Curriculum and Course Flow**

| <b>DAY</b>   | <b>TOPIC</b>  | <b>TIME<br/>in Hours</b> |  |
|--------------|---|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Day 1</b> | Introduction to Tactical First Aid (TFA)  | 1                        |  |
|              | TFA Equipment and Use   | 1                        |  |
|              | Care Under Fire Principles, using tactical casualty care assessment and treatment model | 1                        |  |
|              | Basic Tactical Field Care Principles, including airway/shock                            | 1                        |  |
|              | Bleeding Control and Tourniquet Skills  | 1                        |  |
|              | Rescue and Extrication Techniques Skills  | 1                        |  |
|              | Scenarios   | 2                        |  |
|              |   | <b>8 Hours</b>           |  |

**TABLE 3**

**Tactical Lifesaver (TLS) Course  
16-24 Hour**

**Minimum Curriculum and Course Flow**

| <b>DAY</b>   | <b>TOPIC</b>  | <b>TIME<br/>in Hours</b> |  |
|--------------|---|--------------------------|--|
| <b>Day 1</b> | Introduction to Tactical LifeSaver (TLS)  | 1                        |  |
|              | TLS Equipment and Use   | 1                        |  |
|              | Care Under Fire Principles, using tactical casualty care assessment and treatment model | 1                        |  |
|              | Basic Tactical Field Care Principles, including airway/shock                            | 1                        |  |
|              | Bleeding Control, and Tourniquets Skills  | 1                        |  |
|              | Rescue and Extrication Techniques Skills  | 1                        |  |
|              | Scenarios   | 2                        |  |
| <b>Day 2</b> | Medical Planning and Threat Assessment Principles                                       | 1                        |  |
|              | Assessment of Serious Injuries, Airway and Breathing for the TLS provider               | 1                        |  |
|              | Assessment of Serious Injuries and Shock  | 1                        |  |
|              | Vital Signs   | 1                        |  |
|              | Tactical Casualty Care Assessment and Treatment Model                                   |                          |  |
|              | Skills Workshop   | 1                        |  |
|              | Airway, Breathing, and Shock Workshop   | 1                        |  |
| Scenarios    | 2   |                          |  |
| <b>Day 3</b> | Penetrating Trauma: Ballistics and Trauma   | 1                        |  |
|              | Environmental, Burns, Soft Tissue, Eye Injuries   | 1                        |  |
|              | Extremity Trauma  | 1                        |  |
|              | Burn, Extremity, and AED Lab  | 1                        |  |
|              | Triage and Multi-Casualty Management  | 1                        |  |
|              | Scenarios   | 2                        |  |
|              | Testing   | 1                        |  |
|              |   | <b>24 Hours</b>          |  |