

POLICY # 343: FIELD TRAINING OFFICER (FTO) PROGRAM

I. PURPOSE

- A. To establish and implement criteria, ongoing requirements, and the designation of authorized Field Training Officers (FTO I) / Preceptors (FTO II) for the training of standardized Advanced Life Support (ALS), and overall field quality improvement (QI) phases of the EMS System in the County of San Luis Obispo (SLO).

II. SCOPE

- A. This applies to all ALS Providers in the County of San Luis Obispo, who are interested in, or are designated as an FTO I / FTO II for their agency.

III. DEFINITIONS

- Field Training Officer I (FTO I): A SLO County accredited paramedic designated to conduct pre-accreditation field evaluations and QI activities as assigned by their ALS employer with oversight by San Luis Obispo County Emergency Medical Services Agency (SLOEMSA). An FTO I shall be a paramedic actively working full-time in the field.
- A Field Training Officer II (FTO II): A SLO County accredited paramedic designated to conduct pre-accreditation field evaluations, paramedic student internships, and QI activities as assigned by their ALS employer with oversight by SLOEMSA. An FTO II shall be a paramedic actively working full-time in the field.
- Preceptor: Another term used to define an FTO II. FTO II and Preceptor can be used interchangeably, referencing the same job title and responsibilities.
- Full-time field employment: A routinely scheduled paramedic working in a 911 EMS system equal to or greater than 40 hours a week. Per diem and or part-time status working 40+ hours does not meet this requirement. Full-time field employment shall also be defined as working on an ALS fire apparatus or transport-capable ALS ambulance. An exception can be made upon approval of SLOEMSA.
- Yearly EMS Update Class: An update class hosted by the SLOEMSA that is made mandatory for all paramedics accredited in SLO County to continue their accreditation status.
- FTO Liaison: An agency designee, taking on a leadership/training officer role representing their agency at FTO meetings and acting as a point of contact to SLOEMSA for FTO-related matters, unless otherwise designated by SLOEMSA.
- Paramedic skill evaluator: a SLOEMSA approved paramedic evaluator who may sign off paramedic skill annual verification tracking sheets. This evaluator does not need to be an FTO. Reference SLOEMSA Policy #342: Emergency Medical Technician Paramedic Reaccreditation.

IV. POLICY

- A. Paramedic skill evaluator is a SLOEMSA approved paramedic who may sign off paramedic skill annual verification tracking sheets. This evaluator does not need to be an FTO. Shall an agency have the need for additional paramedic skill evaluators, the agency shall forward the names of the selected evaluators to SLOEMSA for approval. Reference SLOEMSA Policy #342: Emergency Medical Technician Paramedic Reaccreditation.
- B. Any FTOs in SLO County are under direct supervision from the SLOEMSA's Medical Director for maintenance and implementation of all current field policies/procedures. All policies/procedures or Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) criteria that are under maintenance or being evaluated are to be kept confidential unless specified otherwise by SLOEMSA's Medical Director.
- C. Any prospective FTO shall have:
 1. A current and valid California Paramedic License.
 2. A minimum of two years full-time 911 EMS system field experience.
 3. A minimum of one year full-time in SLO County.
 4. A current and valid SLO County Accreditation.
 5. Letter from their primary ALS provider stating full-time field employment status.
 6. Letter of support from their primary ALS employer to apply for the position of FTO.
 7. Letter of Recommendation from a Mobile Intensive Care Nurse (MICN) from any SLO County Base Hospital, a local Emergency Department Physician not directly affiliated with that applicant's agency, SLOEMSA Medical Director, or an agency EMS Coordinator.
- D. An FTO I is responsible for the following duties and requirements:
 1. Assisting accreditation candidates in the testing and completion of County requirements. The FTO I is to assure that all candidates are educated and maintain current policies/procedures for ALS field operations in the county of San Luis Obispo. Any instances of non-compliance with County policies and procedures shall be documented on an OFI form (Policy 100 Attachment C) and forwarded to SLOEMSA for review.
 2. The FTO I shall also be responsible for assisting accredited paramedics with remediation set by either SLOEMSA or their agency. Time requirements for this remediation shall be set up and followed upon approval of SLOEMSA.
 3. The FTO I shall attend a yearly FTO Update Class. This class shall be hosted during the first two classes of the yearly EMS update class. This class will satisfy their requirements for attending their yearly EMS update class along

with their FTO update requirement. If an FTO I is unable to attend their yearly FTO class, they shall notify SLOEMSA in advance to arrange an alternative.

4. To maintain FTO I status, a SLO County FTO I shall have overseen and attended to a minimum of one accredee in the field during a two-year period. This two-year period shall be correlated with the FTO I's accreditation cycle. An exception can be made upon approval of SLOEMSA.

E. An FTO II is responsible for the following duties and requirements:

1. Assisting both interns and accreditation candidates in the testing and completion of County/State requirements. The FTO II assures that all candidates are educated and maintain current policies/procedures for ALS field operations. Any instances of non-compliance with County policies and procedures shall be documented on an OFI form (Policy 100 Attachment C) and forwarded to SLOEMSA for review.
2. SLO County FTO II shall also be responsible for assisting accredited paramedics with remediation set by either SLOEMSA or their agency. Time requirements for this remediation shall be set up and followed upon approval of SLOEMSA.
3. All FTO IIs shall attend a yearly FTO Update Class. This class shall be hosted during the first two classes of the yearly EMS update class. This class will satisfy their requirements for attending their yearly EMS update class along with their FTO update requirement. If an FTO II is unable to attend their yearly FTO class, they shall notify SLOEMSA in advance to arrange an alternative.
4. To maintain SLO County FTO II status, an FTO II shall have overseen and attended to a minimum of one accredee or paramedic intern in the field during a two-year period. This two-year period shall be correlated with the FTO II's accreditation cycle. An exception can be made upon approval of SLOEMSA.

F. Correlating with their two-year accreditation cycle, all San Luis Obispo County FTOs shall re-apply for their FTO status and show proof of which accredees or interns they have overseen (Policy 343 Attachment A). If an FTO has been unable to satisfy the required number of accredees/interns due to a lack of available interns/accredees or any other unforeseen circumstances, an explanation shall be submitted to SLOEMSA for review. Acceptable substitutions for unmet accreditations or internships will include, but not be limited to, any EMS training-related activities the FTO has been involved with within their agency during the FTO's two-year accreditation cycle.

G. Each agency shall designate one FTO Liaison to act as their lead FTO/training officer, unless otherwise stated by SLOEMSA. Their responsibilities are:

1. Attending required FTO meetings set forth by the SLOEMSA. Only the agency's FTO Liaison shall be allowed into these meetings. FTO Liaisons are

- to then relay the details of the meeting to their respective agencies and distribute said information to the other FTOs.
2. Submission of any application for internship or accreditation when starting said internship/accreditation from their ALS provider. Provide recommendation & policies 341 & 342 upon completion.
 3. Maintain a log of all interns and accreditations for their ALS provider that, upon request, can be made available to SLOEMSA.
 4. Attesting FTO applicants took the SLO County Accreditation written test in their presence and passed with a score of 85% or better.
 5. The FTO Liaison shall mentor, guide, and otherwise be responsible for training FTO I applicants upon completing the required steps in obtaining FTO I status.
 6. Communicating with SLOEMSA regarding FTO-related matters.
 7. Coordinating any ride-along SLOEMSA would like to conduct to monitor the performance of the FTO program.
- H. If an FTO Liaison is to vacate their position at their agency, correspondence shall be submitted to SLOEMSA stating that person's removal from the position along with providing their replacement. This is to be submitted to SLOEMSA within 7 days of the FTO Liaison's resignation. The start date for the replacement Liaison shall be considered immediate unless otherwise designated by SLOEMSA.
- I. Any exception to this policy is subject to Medical Director approval.

V. PROCEDURE

- A. SLOEMSA will open the FTO application/testing process January 1st of each year or when the need exists for additional FTOs throughout the year. Individuals wishing to apply shall present the following documentation to SLOEMSA:
1. A Letter of Intent to apply for the position of SLO County FTO I / II outlining the commitment to perform all FTO duties and keep current on all County requirements outlined within this policy. Within the letter of intent, two questions shall be answered:
 - Why should you be considered for selection as a Field Training Officer?
 - What prior experience do you possess that would be beneficial as a Field Training Officer?
 2. A completed SLO County FTO Application. (Policy 343 Attachment A)
 3. A Letter of Recommendation from a Mobile Intensive Care Nurse (MICN) from any SLO County Base Hospital, a local Emergency Department Physician not directly affiliated with that applicant's agency, SLOEMSA Medical Director, or an agency EMS Coordinator.
 4. A Letter of Support and full-time field employment verification from their primary ALS employer.

- B. Following the submission of their application, applicants shall take the SLO County Accreditation written test with supervision of the agency's FTO Liaison. Applicants must pass with a score of 85% or better. Upon passing said exam, applicants shall be placed on a list of eligible candidates and invited to an oral interview at SLOEMSA. The list shall be valid for one year following testing. Unsuccessful candidates shall wait a minimum of one year before reapplying.
- C. For FTO I, if selected, each candidate shall attend an orientation class put on by the agency's FTO Liaison. This will be the final step in the FTO I selection process. This class shall instruct the FTO I on how to manage, guide, and complete paramedic accreditations for San Luis Obispo County. Upon completion of this class, the FTO Liaison shall contact SLOEMSA to relay said information. This shall be done prior to FTO I receiving paramedics to accredit.
- D. For FTO II, if selected, each candidate shall attend a required Preceptor orientation class as a final step in the FTO II selection process. This class shall instruct them on how to manage, guide, and complete paramedic internship and pre-accreditation field evaluations. This class shall be hosted and taught by the local paramedic training program, either online or in person. Upon completion of this course, a copy of the certificate shall be submitted to SLOEMSA by the FTO Liaison. This shall be done prior to an FTO II receiving paramedic interns.
- E. For those who initially obtained FTO I status and wish to later become an FTO II, they shall notify both SLOEMSA and their agency of their wishes. With approval from their agency and SLOEMSA, the FTO I shall then attend the Preceptor orientation class at the local paramedic training program. Upon completion of this course, the certificate shall be submitted to SLOEMSA by the FTO Liaison affiliated with the agency. This shall be done prior to an FTO I becoming an FTO II and receiving paramedic interns.
- F. All FTOs shall re-apply for FTO status after a two-year period. This two-year period shall correlate with the FTO's accreditation cycle. For FTO reapplication, the FTO shall only need to submit a completed SLO County FTO Application (Policy 343 Attachment A), and proof of one accreditation or internship during their two-year accreditation cycle. This shall be submitted along with the FTO's paramedic application for county reaccreditation (Policy 341 & 342 Attachment A).
- G. Failure to maintain FTO requirements, adhere to county policies, or if support is lost in an FTO by their sponsoring agency, may result in revocation of FTO status. The authority for FTO revocation is vested in the SLOEMSA Medical Director.

VI. ATTACHMENTS

- A. SLOEMSA Field Training Officer (FTO) Application

VII. AUTHORITY

- A. Health and Safety Code 1797.94
- B. Health and Safety Code 1797.202
- C. Health and Safety Code 1797.220
- D. Health and Safety Code 1797.172

- E. Health and Safety Code 1797.173
- F. Health and Safety Code 1797.208

VIII. ATTACHMENTS

- A. Field Training Officer (FTO) Application

Approvals:

EMS Agency, Medical Director	
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