



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

**This is an official  
MS Health Alert Network (HAN) Alert**

**MESSAGE ID:** MSHAN-20220204-00557-ALT (Health Alert)  
**RECIPIENTS:** All Physicians, Hospitals, ERs, ICPs, NPs, and  
Healthcare Providers – Statewide  
Friday, February 4, 2022  
**SUBJECT:** EMS Tiered Response

**STATE HEALTH OFFICER'S ORDER**

Pursuant to Mississippi Code Ann. § 41-3-15 et. seq.; Mississippi Code Ann § 41-23-1; Mississippi Code Ann § 41-59-1 et seq; and the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) COVID System of Care Plan, I, Thomas Dobbs, MD, MPH, State Health Officer, Executive Director of the Mississippi State Department of Health, hereby issue this statewide Order allowing participation in the Mississippi COVID System of Care Plan for any Mississippi licensed ambulance services that apply to and are approved by the Mississippi State Bureau of Emergency Medical Services in Mississippi effective **from 12:00 noon, February 5, 2022 until 11:59 p.m. on March 31, 2022**, unless revoked prior to that time, as follows:

Due to the current wave of COVID-19 Mississippi has reached a point where some ambulance services are having extreme difficulty responding to the need for pre-hospital emergency medical services. To address this limited availability of Emergency Medical Services capacity the Mississippi State Department of Health is authorizing Mississippi licensed ambulance services to operate in a tiered response manner under the Mississippi COVID-19 System of Care Plan to allow the flexibility to respond to the need for pre-hospital emergency medical services and allow the most critically ill patients to be transferred in the most appropriate manner while accommodating the need for other emergent transport operations.

**Implementation of EMS Tiered Emergency Response:**

Any Mississippi licensed ambulance service who needs to implement a Tiered Emergency Response must notify the Mississippi State Department of Health Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (BEMS) and provide the following to BEMS prior to implementation:

- A copy of the ambulance services' tiered response protocol with a letter from the ambulance services' off-line medical director verifying his/her approval of said protocol
  - The protocol shall allow for Mississippi certified paramedics, AEMTs or EMTs to respond to emergency calls, care for patients experiencing emergency conditions, transport patients experiencing emergency conditions, and transfer the care of patients experiencing said conditions to providers in the clinical setting
  - Protocol minimum elements include:

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- Services utilizing this option shall utilize computerized dispatch resources, specifically for the purpose of prioritizing calls and assigning the proper level of care for response
  - Services which do not possess this resource may partner with a third-party vendor for dispatch resources to meet this requirement
  - All calls must be screened by staff trained in tier response at dispatch and assigned the most appropriate level of care response
- Services shall provide for on-line medical control to provide guidance to field crews as needed during response and operations
- Services shall provide one (1) paramedic sprint vehicle for every five (5) tiered response units in the event advanced life support proves necessary
  - If paramedic level of care is warranted and initiated the Mississippi certified paramedic must continue care until care is turned over to clinical staff of equal or greater level of training/education in the emergency department as required by regulation and local protocol
- Services utilizing a tiered response shall provide specific performance improvement data requested from BEMS relevant to tiered response

This Order is not intended to and does not alter any contractual agreement for the provision of Emergency Medical Services between any Mississippi licensed ambulance service and any county government, municipal government, or fire district. To ensure compliance with contractual obligations ambulance services should consult with their respective contractors. Additionally, ambulance service providers should take care to consult with any insurance payor (CMS or private) to ensure that implementation of any tiered response will not affect reimbursement for the provision of emergency services.

This the 4 day of February 2022.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Thomas Dobbs".

Thomas Dobbs, MD, MPH  
State Health Officer



***Alerting Message Specification Settings***

<b>Originating Agency:</b>	Mississippi State Department of Health
<b>Alerting Program:</b>	MS Health Alert Network (MS HAN)
<b>Message Identifier:</b>	MSHAN-20220204-00557-ALT
<b>Program (HAN) Type:</b>	Health Alert
<b>Status (Type):</b>	Actual ( )
<b>Message Type:</b>	Alert
<b>Reference:</b>	MSHAN-00557
<b>Severity:</b>	Unknown
<b>Acknowledgement:</b>	No
<b>Sensitive:</b>	Not Sensitive
<b>Message Expiration:</b>	Undetermined
<b>Urgency:</b>	Undetermined
<b>Delivery Time:</b>	600 minutes

**Definition of Alerting Vocabulary and Message Specification Settings**

<b>Originating Agency:</b>	A unique identifier for the agency originating the alert.
<b>Alerting Program:</b>	The program sending the alert or engaging in alerts and communications using PHIN Communication and Alerting (PCA) as a vehicle for their delivery.
<b>Message Identifier:</b>	A unique alert identifier that is generated upon alert activation (MSHAN-yyymmdd-hhmm-TTT ( <b>ALT=Health Alert</b> , <b>ADV=Health Advisory</b> , <b>UPD=Health Update</b> , <b>MSG/INFO=Message/Info Service</b> )).
<b>Program (HAN) Type:</b>	Categories of Health Alert Messages.
<b>Health Alert:</b>	Conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
<b>Health Advisory:</b>	Provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
<b>Health Update:</b>	Provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; unlikely to require immediate action.
<b>Health Info Service:</b>	Provides Message / Notification of general public health information; unlikely to require immediate action.
<b>Status (Type):</b>	
Actual:	Communication or alert refers to a live event
Exercise:	Designated recipients must respond to the communication or alert
Test:	Communication or alert is related to a technical, system test and should be disregarded
<b>Message Type:</b>	
Alert:	Indicates an original Alert
Update:	Indicates prior alert has been Updated and/or superseded



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Cancel: Indicates prior alert has been cancelled  
Error: Indicates prior alert has been retracted

**Reference:** For a communication or alert with a Message Type of “Update” or “Cancel”, this attribute contains the unique Message Identifier of the original communication or alert being updated or cancelled. “n/a” = Not Applicable.

**Severity:**

Extreme:	Extraordinary threat to life or property
Severe:	Significant threat to life or property
Moderate:	Possible threat to life or property
Minor:	Minimal threat to life or property
Unknown:	Unknown threat to life or property

**Acknowledgement:** Indicates whether an acknowledgement on the part of the recipient is required to confirm that the alert was received, and the timeframe in which a response is required (Yes or No).

**Sensitive:**

Sensitive:	Indicates the alert contains sensitive content
Not Sensitive:	Indicates non-sensitive content

**Message Expiration:** Undetermined.

**Urgency:** Undetermined. Responsive action should be taken immediately.

**Delivery Time:** Indicates the timeframe for delivery of the alert (15, 60, 1440, 4320 minutes (.25, 1, 24, 72 hours)).