
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO EMERGENCY MEDICAL SYSTEMS OF CARE.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the State's current
2 emergency medical services laws were designed for an earlier era
3 and do not reflect the complexities of modern time-sensitive
4 emergency medical systems of care. Recent emergency events
5 across the State have exposed significant gaps in coordination,
6 integration, and resource deployment across emergency medical
7 services, acute care facilities, and the trauma system. These
8 events underscored the vulnerability of Hawaii's geographically
9 isolated rural communities and highlighted the urgent need for
10 modernization.

11 The legislature further finds that contemporary models of
12 emergency and acute care prioritize integrated systems that
13 address time-sensitive emergencies such as trauma, heart
14 attacks, strokes, sepsis, and burns with the same urgency and
15 structure as traditional emergency response. By adopting a
16 time-sensitive emergency medical systems of care model, Hawaii
17 can improve patient survival, reduce long-term disability, and



1 strengthen statewide resilience in times of disaster or public
2 health crisis.

3 Aligning Hawaii's emergency medical services laws with
4 national best practices in systems integration will:

- 5 (1) Ensure coordinated, evidence-based care for time-
6 sensitive emergencies across all islands;
- 7 (2) Modernize emergency medical services and trauma
8 systems to meet current and future challenges;
- 9 (3) Improve patient outcomes through standardized,
10 statewide protocols; and
- 11 (4) Enhance preparedness for future natural disasters,
12 mass casualty incidents, and public health threats.

13 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to update Hawaii's
14 emergency medical services laws to establish a comprehensive,
15 time-sensitive emergency medical systems of care model that
16 strengthens the State's capacity to respond effectively to
17 emergencies and safeguard the health of our residents, living on
18 all islands.

19 SECTION 2. Chapter 321, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
20 amended by amending the title of part XVIII to read as follows;



1 "PART XVIII. STATE EMERGENCY MEDICAL [~~SERVICES SYSTEM~~] SYSTEMS
2 OF CARE"

3 SECTION 3. Section 321-221, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
4 amended to read as follows:

5 "§321-221 Findings and purpose. The legislature finds
6 that the establishment of [a] state emergency medical [~~services~~
7 ~~system,~~] systems of care, including emergency medical services,
8 emergency medical services for children, and trauma and critical
9 care services is a matter of compelling state interest and
10 necessary to protect and preserve public health. [~~A system~~] The
11 legislature further finds that state emergency medical systems
12 of care designed to reduce medical emergency deaths, injuries,
13 and permanent long-term disability through the implementation of
14 a fully integrated, cohesive network of components[~~, the~~
15 ~~legislature further finds,~~] will best serve public health needs.
16 Accordingly, the purpose of this part is to establish and
17 maintain [a] state emergency medical [~~services system~~] systems
18 of care in communities that can be most effectively served by
19 the State[~~,~~] and [~~to~~] fix the responsibility for the
20 administration of [~~this~~] state [~~system,~~] emergency medical
21 systems of care, which shall provide for the arrangement of

1 personnel, facilities, and equipment for the effective and
2 coordinated delivery of health care services under emergency
3 conditions, whether occurring as the result of a patient's
4 condition, from natural disasters, or from other causes. The
5 ~~[system]~~ emergency medical systems of care shall provide for
6 personnel, personnel training, communications, emergency
7 transportation, facilities, coordination with emergency medical
8 and critical care services, coordination and use of available
9 public safety agencies, promotion of consumer participation,
10 accessibility to care, mandatory standard medical recordkeeping,
11 consumer information and education, independent review and
12 evaluation, disaster linkage, mutual aid agreements, and other
13 components necessary to meet the purposes of this part."

14 SECTION 4. Section 321-222, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended to read as follows:

16 "**§321-222 Definitions.** As used in this part, unless the
17 context clearly requires otherwise:

18 "Advanced emergency medical technician" means a health care
19 professional who holds a current certificate from the National
20 Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians and is licensed
21 pursuant to section 453-34 as an advanced emergency medical



1 technician to provide basic and limited advanced emergency
2 medical care and transportation for critical and emergency
3 patients to access the emergency medical systems of care.

4 "Advanced life support" means initiating all basic life
5 support care as well as invasive patient care designed to
6 stabilize and support a patient's condition due to sudden
7 illness or injury. The care rendered, excluding basic life
8 support, constitutes the practice of medicine.

9 "Advisory [~~committee~~] council" means the Hawaii emergency
10 medical [~~services~~] systems of care advisory [~~committee~~]
11 council.

12 "Air-medical services" means medical care and transport of
13 patients by aircraft provided by a licensed air ambulance
14 operator with qualified medical personnel and regulated as part
15 of the state emergency medical systems of care.

16 "Basic life support" means initiating noninvasive emergency
17 patient care designed to optimize the patient's chances of
18 surviving the emergency situation. The care rendered consists
19 of all first aid procedures needed, but does not include
20 invasive procedures [~~which~~] that constitute the practice of
21 medicine; provided that state-approved basic life support



1 personnel may use fully automatic external defibrillators,
2 initiate intravenous lines, place tourniquets, and perform
3 manual external defibrillation under the direction and personal
4 supervision of a [~~mobile intensive care technician~~] state-
5 licensed clinician and in accordance with rules adopted by the
6 department.

7 "Department" means the department of health.

8 "Emergency [~~aeromedical~~] air-medical services" means a
9 [~~secondary~~] response system that provides immediate critical
10 care and transport [~~by rotary-wing aircraft~~] of a patient by
11 aircraft to a facility that provides specialized medical care.

12 "Emergency medical responder" means a person certified by
13 the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians.

14 "Emergency medical services for children" means emergency
15 medical services, including preventive, pre-hospital, hospital,
16 rehabilitative, and other post-hospital care for children.

17 "Emergency medical services personnel" means any [~~mobile~~
18 ~~intensive care technician or emergency medical technician~~]
19 health care professional who is certified or licensed by the
20 State[-] to provide emergency medical services.



1 "Emergency medical systems of care" means a fully
2 integrated and cohesive statewide network of components that
3 provide timely and effective care to individuals experiencing
4 crisis situations. Components of an emergency medical systems
5 of care include but are not limited to community-based services,
6 pre-hospital care, emergency response, facility-based care,
7 disaster response, and other post-hospital services that support
8 stabilization, treatment, and transport.

9 "Emergency medical technician" means a person who holds a
10 certificate from the National Registry of Emergency Medical
11 Technicians and is licensed pursuant to section 453-34 whose
12 primary focus is to provide immediate lifesaving care to
13 patients while ensuring access to the emergency medical systems
14 of care.

15 "First responder personnel" means a person who [~~has~~
16 ~~successfully completed a United States Department of~~
17 ~~Transportation approved First Responder Course of training in~~
18 ~~emergency basic life support.] provides initial assistance until~~

19 emergency medical services personnel arrive.

20 "Medicom" means the emergency medical systems of care
21 medical communications that monitor statewide resource



1 availability, emergency dispatch, hospital notifications,
2 interfacility transfers, and disaster communications.

3 "Medicom center" means the centralized coordination place
4 for medicom functions.

5 "Paramedic" means a mobile intensive care technician who is
6 an allied health professional certified by the National Registry
7 of Emergency Medical Technicians whose primary focus is to
8 provide advanced emergency medical care for critical and
9 emergent patients who access the emergency medical systems of
10 care.

11 "Service area" means the State, excluding any county having
12 a population of five hundred thousand or more.

13 "State system" means the state [~~pre-hospital~~] emergency
14 medical [~~services system.~~] systems of care.

15 "Statewide" means all counties in the State."

16 SECTION 5. Section 321-223, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
17 amended to read as follows:

18 "**§321-223 State emergency medical [~~services system,~~**
19 **systems of care, establishment.** The department shall establish,
20 administer, and maintain the state emergency medical [~~services~~
21 ~~system]~~ systems of care to serve the emergency health needs of



1 the people in the service area. All emergency medical services
2 or ambulance services contracted by or under the authority of
3 the department or any county within the service area shall be
4 consistent with this part."

5 SECTION 6. Section 321-224, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
6 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

7 "(a) In addition to other functions and duties assigned
8 under this part, the department shall:

- 9 (1) Regulate ambulances and ambulance services statewide;
- 10 (2) Establish emergency medical services throughout the
11 service area, including emergency [~~aeromedical~~] air-
12 medical services, which shall meet the requirements of
13 this part, subject to section 321-228;
- 14 (3) Review and approve the curricula and syllabi of
15 training courses offered to emergency medical services
16 personnel statewide who provide basic, intermediate,
17 and advanced life support, consult and coordinate with
18 the University of Hawaii, or any other accredited
19 community college, college, or university, or any
20 professional organization that provides emergency
21 medical services training, regarding the training for



- 1 basic, intermediate, and advanced life support
2 personnel, as provided in section 321-229;
- 3 (4) Collect and evaluate data for the continued evaluation
4 of the statewide emergency medical [~~services system,~~]
5 systems of care, subject to section 321-230;
- 6 (5) Coordinate, on a statewide basis, emergency medical
7 resources and the allocation of emergency services and
8 facilities in the event of mass casualties, natural
9 disasters, national emergencies, and other
10 emergencies, ensuring linkage to local, state, and
11 national disaster plans, and participation in
12 exercises to test these plans;
- 13 (6) Establish, administer, and maintain a communication
14 system [~~for the service area;~~] statewide including
15 interoperability with organizations essential to core
16 operations of the state system;
- 17 (7) [~~Assist each county in the service area in the]~~
18 Oversee the development and implementation of a
19 statewide "911" emergency [telephone] dispatch system;



- 1 (8) Secure technical assistance and other assistance and
2 consultation necessary for the implementation of this
3 part, subject to section 321-230;
- 4 (9) Implement public information and education programs to
5 inform the public of the statewide system and its use,
6 and disseminate other emergency medical information,
7 including appropriate methods of medical self-help and
8 first-aid, and the availability of first-aid training
9 programs statewide;
- 10 (10) Establish standards and provide training for
11 dispatchers in the state system, and maintain a
12 program of quality assurance for dispatch equipment
13 and operations; provided that individuals acting as
14 dispatchers in the State as of July 1, 2022, shall
15 obtain emergency medical dispatch certification by
16 July 1, 2026, and shall maintain certification
17 thereafter;
- 18 (11) Establish a program that will enable emergency service
19 personnel statewide to provide early defibrillation;



- 1 (12) Establish [~~within the department the~~] and maintain
2 emergency medical [~~service system~~] services for
3 children statewide;
- 4 (13) Consult with the advisory [~~committee~~] council on
5 matters relating to the implementation of this part;
6 and
- 7 (14) Establish and maintain statewide standards for
8 emergency medical services course instructor
9 qualifications and statewide requirements for
10 emergency medical services training facilities."

11 SECTION 7. Section 321-224.4, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
12 amended by amending subsection (c) to read as follows:

13 "(c) For purposes of this part, "community paramedicine
14 program" means an enhanced and expanded service in the state
15 emergency medical [~~services system~~] systems of care that allows
16 state-licensed health care professionals, and community health
17 workers, to assist with public health, primary care, and
18 prevention services, including services through telehealth."

19 SECTION 8. Section 321-225, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
20 amended to read as follows:



1 "§321-225 The [~~state~~] Hawaii emergency medical [~~services~~]
2 systems advisory [~~committee.~~] council. (a) There is
3 established within the department of health for administrative
4 purposes only the [~~state~~] Hawaii emergency medical [~~services~~]
5 systems advisory [~~committee,~~] council, which shall sit in an
6 advisory capacity to the department of health on all matters
7 relating to the state system. The advisory [~~committee~~] council
8 may advise the department of health upon request of the
9 department or upon its own initiative with regard to the state
10 system. The advisory [~~committee~~] council shall:

- 11 (1) Monitor, review, and evaluate on an ongoing basis the
12 operations, administration, and efficacy of the state
13 system or any components thereof, to determine
14 conformity with and maximum implementation of this
15 part[-];
- 16 (2) Prepare and submit periodic assessments, reports, and
17 other documents relating to the state system to ensure
18 the implementation of this part, as deemed necessary
19 or desirable in the discretion of the advisory
20 [~~committee.~~] council;



- 1 (3) Seek the input of the public in relation to the state
2 system to ensure adequate fulfillment of the emergency
3 medical services, emergency medical services for
4 children, and trauma and critical care services needs
5 of the State consistent with this part[-];
- 6 (4) Participate in any planning or other policymaking with
7 regard to the state system, and seek the participation
8 of the public, including subarea health planning
9 councils in its consideration of plans and policies
10 relating to the state system[-];
- 11 (5) Perform other functions, and have other duties
12 necessary to ensuring the fullest implementation and
13 maintenance of the state system[-]; and
- 14 (6) Advise the department of health in formulating a
15 master plan for emergency medical [~~services,~~] systems
16 of care, including medicom, the "911" system, and
17 other components necessary to meet the emergency
18 medical needs of the people of the State, which shall
19 be submitted to the legislature.
- 20 (b) The advisory [~~committee~~] council shall be composed of
21 [~~twenty~~] twenty-three members: [~~three~~] four nonvoting ex-officio



1 members, who shall be the director of transportation, the
2 adjutant general, the executive director of the Hawaii 9-1-1
3 board, and the administrator of the state health planning and
4 development agency, or the designated representatives thereof,
5 and [~~seventeen~~] nineteen members representing all counties of
6 the State who shall be appointed by the governor subject to
7 section 26-34 as follows:

- 8 (1) Five members who shall be physicians experienced in
9 the conduct and delivery of emergency medical
10 services; provided that at least two shall be engaged
11 in the practice of emergency medicine and be board-
12 eligible or board-certified by the American Board of
13 Emergency Medicine, and provided further that at least
14 one physician shall be engaged in the practice of
15 pediatrics and be board-eligible or board-certified by
16 the American Board of Pediatrics;
- 17 (2) Four members who shall be consumers of health care and
18 who shall have no connection with or relationship to
19 the health care system of the State and who shall be
20 representative of all counties;



1 (3) Four members of allied health professions related to
2 emergency medical services; [~~and~~]

3 (4) Four members, one from each county, who shall be
4 mobile intensive care technicians or emergency medical
5 technicians engaged in the practice of pre-hospital
6 emergency medical [~~service.~~] services; and

7 (5) Two members who shall be surgeons or clinicians
8 experienced in the conduct and delivery of trauma or
9 acute care services.

10 (c) The members of the advisory [~~committee~~] council shall
11 serve without compensation, but shall be reimbursed for
12 necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties,
13 including travel expenses. The chairperson of the advisory
14 [~~committee~~] council shall be elected by the members from among
15 their numbers. A majority of the members of the advisory
16 [~~committee~~] council shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of
17 business of the advisory [~~committee.~~] council. A majority vote
18 of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is
19 established shall be necessary to validate any action of the
20 [~~committee.~~] council.



1 [~~(e)~~] (d) The advisory [~~committee~~] council may adopt rules
2 for its governance.

3 [~~(d)~~] (e) The department of health shall provide necessary
4 staff and other support required by the advisory [~~committee~~]
5 council for the performance of its duties."

6 SECTION 9. Section 321-228, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
7 amended to read as follows:

8 "**§321-228 Emergency medical services; counties.** The
9 department shall determine, in consultation with the advisory
10 committee under section 321-225, the levels of emergency medical
11 services that shall be implemented in each county within the
12 state service area. The department may contract to provide
13 emergency medical services, including emergency [~~aeromedical~~]
14 air-medical services, or any necessary component of the
15 emergency [~~services system of~~] medical systems of care within a
16 county within the service area in conformance with the state
17 system. If any county within the service area shall apply to
18 the department to operate state emergency medical ambulance
19 services within the respective county, the department may
20 contract with the county for the provision of those services.
21 The department shall operate emergency medical ambulance



1 services or contract with a private agency in those counties
2 within the service area that do not apply to it under this
3 section. Any county or private agency contracting to provide
4 emergency medical ambulance services under this section shall be
5 required by the department to implement those services in a
6 manner and at a level consistent with the levels determined
7 under this section."

8 SECTION 10. Section 321-230, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
9 amended to read as follows:

10 "**§321-230 Technical assistance, data collection,**
11 **evaluation.** (a) The department may contract for technical
12 assistance and consultation, including categorization, data
13 collection, and evaluation appropriate to the needs of the
14 statewide emergency medical [~~services system~~] systems of care.
15 The collection and analysis of statewide emergency medical
16 [~~services~~] systems of care data, including pediatrics, trauma,
17 cardiac, stroke, burn, medical, and behavioral medical
18 emergencies, shall be for the purpose of improving the quality
19 of services provided.

20 The department may implement and maintain a trauma registry
21 for the collection of information concerning the treatment of



1 critical trauma patients at state designated trauma centers, and
2 carry out a system for the management of that information. The
3 system may provide for the recording of information concerning
4 treatment received before and after a trauma patient's admission
5 to a hospital or medical center. All state designated trauma
6 centers shall submit to the department periodic reports of each
7 patient treated for trauma in the state system in the manner as
8 the department shall specify.

9 For the purposes of this subsection, "categorization" means
10 systematic identification of the readiness and capabilities of
11 hospitals and their staffs to adequately, expeditiously, and
12 efficiently receive and treat emergency patients.

13 (b) The department shall establish, administer, and
14 maintain an [~~aeromedical~~] emergency [~~medical~~] air-medical
15 services system designed to collect and analyze data to measure
16 the efficiency and effectiveness of each phase of the statewide
17 emergency [~~aeromedical~~] air-medical program.

18 The department shall monitor [~~aeromedical~~] air-medical
19 emergency ambulance service flights statewide to include date of
20 service, patient demographics, transport diagnosis, and medical
21 outcomes. The department medicom center shall work with each



1 air-medical service provider and health care facility as the
2 intermediary to arrange emergency transport of [~~bariatric~~]
3 patients by licensed air-medical service providers, or by the
4 United States Coast Guard, and maintain a registry of all
5 emergency transports provided [~~by the United States Coast~~
6 ~~Guard~~]. All statewide [~~aeromedical~~] air-medical providers shall
7 submit their data to the department as specified and requested
8 by the department.

9 The statewide [~~aeromedical~~] emergency [~~medical~~] air-medical
10 services system shall serve the emergency health needs of the
11 people of the State by identifying:

12 (1) The system's strengths and weaknesses;

13 (2) The allocation of resources; and

14 (3) The development of [~~rotary-wing~~] emergency

15 [~~aeromedical~~] air-medical services standards;

16 provided that emergency helicopter use, including triage

17 protocols, shall be based on national [~~aeromedical~~] air-medical

18 triage and transport guidelines established by the Association

19 of Air Medical Services, the American College of Surgeons, the

20 National Association of Emergency Medical Service Physicians, or

21 other department-approved national [~~aeromedical~~] air-medical



1 accreditation agency. The department, in the implementation of
2 this subsection, shall plan, coordinate, and provide assistance
3 to all entities and agencies, public and private, involved in
4 the statewide system.

5 (c) The department shall use an emergency [~~aeromedical~~
6 ~~services~~] air-medical quality improvement committee comprised of
7 representatives of trauma, emergency, and tertiary care
8 physicians and providers to analyze information collected from
9 the [~~aeromedical~~] air-medical quality improvement performance
10 measures as established by the [~~American College of Surgeons,~~]
11 department, and to recommend system standards and resources to
12 maintain and improve [~~the~~] Hawaii emergency [~~aeromedical~~] air-
13 medical services [~~system~~]."

14 SECTION 11. Section 321-532, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
15 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

16 "(a) The department shall participate in a systematic
17 process to evaluate, improve, and sustain stroke care throughout
18 the State to reduce death and disability from stroke. The
19 stroke system of care shall include:



- 1 (1) The requirement that hospitals meet specific stroke
2 patient treatment capabilities that will ensure that
3 stroke patients receive safe and effective care;
- 4 (2) The coordination with the State's emergency medical
5 [~~services system~~] systems of care to ensure that
6 stroke patients are quickly identified, transported
7 to, and treated in facilities that have specialized
8 programs for providing timely and effective treatment
9 for stroke patients to improve outcomes; and
- 10 (3) The continuation of a statewide stroke coalition to
11 provide a mechanism to evaluate and improve stroke
12 care in the State."

13 SECTION 12. Sections 46-191, 46-193, 46-196, and 46-198,
14 Hawaii Revised Statutes, are amended by substituting the word
15 "air-medicine" wherever the word "aeromedical" appears, as the
16 context requires.

17 SECTION 13. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
18 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

19 SECTION 14. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

Department of Health; State Emergency Medical Services System;
Systems of Care

Description:

Modernizes Hawaii's emergency medical services laws to align
with current best practices. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

