

# ARIZONA'S AMBULANCE SYSTEM

*Imagine someone you love is in a medical emergency. You reach for the phone to dial 9-1-1. In that moment you aren't thinking about money, budgets, infrastructure, or cost - you are thinking about getting your loved one the help they so desperately need. Thanks to Arizona's Certificate of Necessity system, every Arizonan has access to highly trained medical personnel, fast response times, and costs controls in case emergencies strike.*

## Arizona's Certificate of Necessity System Ensures:

- ✓ Ground ambulance services that cover Arizona's population.  
\*with the exception of Tribal Authorities
- ✓ Quality medical transport and fast response times.
- ✓ Rates that maintain quality ambulance service while preventing unnecessary cost increases.
- ✓ A role for local elected officials to address their community needs.



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Ensuring quality medical transportation for all Arizonans through the

## CERTIFICATE OF NECESSITY SYSTEM

- ✓ Fast Response
- ✓ Quality Patient Care
- ✓ Ambulance Coverage
- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Cost Control

# Working for Arizona: The Certificate of Necessity System

You shouldn't have to worry about who will be there to help you in an emergency. That's why Arizona established the Certificate of Necessity system.

In response to the dangerous chaos and substandard service that followed ambulance deregulation in the 1980's, the people of Arizona voted to amend the Arizona Constitution to create a market-based ambulance regulatory system to ensure high-quality emergency ambulance service for all Arizonans.

This market-based regulatory plan created defined geographic service areas for ambulance providers. In order to serve an area, a provider must be granted a **Certificate of Necessity** by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), which certifies that they meet all the required standards to provide quality medical care. Failing to meet the set standards results in penalties and potentially loss of the provider's Certificate of Necessity.

## Ensuring Medical Quality

The Certificate of Necessity system ensures high quality emergency medical services:

- ✓ All ambulances must be staffed with appropriately certified pre-hospital personnel.
- ✓ Emergency medical care technicians and paramedics must complete state-approved training, continuing education, and pass rigorous state-sanctioned testing.
- ✓ Medical oversight by a medical director is required for every paramedic and EMCT.
- ✓ In addition, the ADHS continues to define and require state of the art pre-hospital care. Certificate of Necessity holders must meet these requirements or risk the loss of their certificate.

## Ensuring Statewide Response

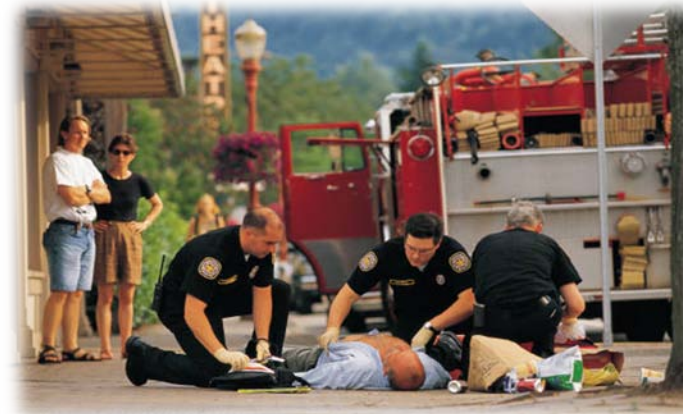
The Certificate of Necessity system ensures ground ambulance coverage that reaches vast areas of rural Arizona.

- ✓ The ADHS considers the qualifications of an ambulance provider, the need for service, and geographic coverage before awarding a Certificate of Necessity. If a request to provide service in a given area excludes regions for which the ADHS determines coverage is merited, it can require expanded coverage as a condition for issuing a certificate.
- ✓ Response areas of a Certificate of Necessity do not necessarily follow political boundaries, but extend across them to ensure Arizona citizens receive high-quality medical service no matter where they live.

## Ensuring Cost Controls

The Certificate of Necessity system effectively restrains costs while ensuring high-quality emergency services.

- ✓ The ADHS establishes rates for transports only after conducting a hearing and analyzing detailed cost data required by ambulance providers.
- ✓ Ambulance providers must submit updated detailed cost data to the ADHS each year to remain compliant.



## Ensuring a Role for Local Governments

The Certificate of Necessity system allows local governments to address their needs while containing costs.

- ✓ Local governments have a significant impact on the development of ambulance systems in their communities. An ambulance provider that holds a Certificate of Necessity works hand-in-hand with local first response agencies to provide seamless EMS care and transportation to the community.
- ✓ In most cities and towns it is the fire agencies that provide first response emergency medical services, then rely on either a private provider or their own ambulance (fire agencies that have a CON) for patient transportation. At times, this partnership becomes more formal when local governments and private providers enter into a contract for service. These contracts may require better response standards than ADHS or additional EMS-related services from the ambulance provider. ADHS must approve these contracts to ensure all additional costs are appropriate.
- ✓ If an ambulance provider fails to meet its Certificate of Necessity requirements, a local government can contact the ADHS to seek an emergency Certificate of Necessity to ensure quality service is maintained. A local government may also apply for a Certificate of Necessity by following the procedures established by the ADHS for all ambulance service providers.

