

# SENATE HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND SENIOR CITIZENS COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO

### **SENATE, No. 4140**

with committee amendments

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: DECEMBER 6, 2021

The Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 4140 with committee amendments.

As amended by the committee, this bill provides that, until January 1, 2023, basic life support services (BLS) vehicles that are not dispatched in response to a 9-1-1 emergency call, when in service, will be staffed by a minimum of two emergency medical technicians (EMTs) or by a minimum of one EMT and one first responder. The bill defines “first responder” to mean a police officer, firefighter, or other person who has been trained to provide emergency medical first response services. A BLS vehicle dispatched in response to a 9-1-1 emergency call, when in service, will be required to be staffed by a minimum of two EMTs.

As amended, the bill additionally provides that, until January 1, 2023, mobile intensive care units (MICUs), when in service, will be staffed by a minimum of either: two paramedics; two mobile intensive care nurses; one paramedic and one mobile intensive care nurse; or one EMT and one paramedic or mobile intensive care nurse.

As amended, the bill further provides that, until January 1, 2023, specialty care transport units (SCTUs), when in service, will be staffed by a minimum of one specialty care transport nurse and one EMT.

Individuals staffing a MICU, an SCTU, or a non-9-1-1-dispatched BLS vehicle will be authorized to render care within the individual’s scope of practice. In the case of a vehicle staffed by a one EMT and one first responder, the EMT will be required to be present in the patient compartment of the vehicle at all times when a patient is present in the vehicle. In the case of a MICU staffed by one EMT and one paramedic or mobile intensive care nurse, the paramedic or mobile intensive care nurse will be required to provide primary patient care. In the case of an SCTU, the specialty care transport nurse will be required to provide primary patient care.

Each person staffing a MICU, a SCTU, or a non-9-1-1-dispatched BLS vehicle under the bill is to be at least 18 years of age. In addition, a first responder staffing a BLS vehicle will be required to:

(1) be certified to administer cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR);

(2) be able to operate a BLS vehicle; and

(3) have completed a training program that has been approved by the basic life support agency medical director and that includes, at a minimum: safe vehicle operations; patient lifting and moving; safe use of patient restraints; basic first aid; and documentation.

As amended, the bill expressly provides that its provisions are not to be construed to revise the requirements for certification or practice for EMTs, paramedics, mobile intensive care nurses, or specialty care transport nurses in New Jersey, or to revise the equipment standards and requirements for BLS vehicles, MICUs, or SCTUs.

This bill effectively extends waivers from vehicle requirements for BLS vehicles, MICU vehicles, and SCTU vehicles that were authorized by the Commissioner of Health in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Department of Health regulations ordinarily require that a BLS vehicle be staffed by at least two EMTs, that a MICU be staffed by two paramedics, two mobile intensive care nurses, or one paramedic and one mobile intensive care nurse, and that SCTUs be staffed by a specialty care transport nurse and two EMTs, or one EMT if the specialty care transport nurse is also an EMT.

#### COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS:

The committee amendments revise the bill to require that BLS vehicles dispatched in response to a 9-1-1 emergency call be staffed by at least two EMTs. Other BLS vehicles may be staffed by a minimum of two EMTs or one EMT and one first responder.

The committee amendments add a provision allowing MICUs to be staffed by one paramedic or mobile intensive care nurse and one EMT.

The committee amendments add a provision allowing SCTUs to be staffed by one specialty care transport nurse and one EMT.

The committee amendments replace a requirement that first responders possess a certain type of certification with a requirement that first responders have completed a training program that meets certain minimum requirements related to vehicle operations, moving patients, using patient restraints, basic first aid, and documentation.

The committee amendments add language specifying that the provisions of the bill do not revise the requirements for certification or practice by EMTs, paramedics, mobile intensive care nurses, or specialty care transport nurses in New Jersey; revise the authorized scope of practice for EMTs, paramedics, mobile intensive care nurses, or specialty care transport nurses in New Jersey; or revise the standards and requirements for equipment for BLS vehicles, MICUs, or SCTUs.