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DATE: APRIL 1, 2026

TO: BASE HOSPITAL COORDINATORS
ERC MEDICAL DIRECTORS
911 PROVIDER EMS COORDINATORS/MANAGERS
IFT-ALS NURSE COORDINATORS
PARAMEDIC TRAINING CENTERS
BLS AMBULANCE PROVIDERS

FROM: ALMAAS A. SHAIKH, MD, MPH, FACS
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SUBJECT: NEW AND UPDATED EMS POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND STANDING ORDERS

Typically, the Orange County EMS Agency reviews, updates, and edits its policies, procedures, and standing orders on a biannual basis. New policies may also be added. It is now time to publish our next scheduled update. I am listing, immediately below, the documents that will be added to the Upcoming section of our website (<https://www.ochcahealthinfo.com/ems>) for April 1, 2026. These will be optional until October 1, 2026, when they become mandatory.

From time to time, the agency may also need to issue updates on an impromptu basis or implement a policy without the typical 6 month phase-in process, as situations will not permit waiting until the next cycle. The update to Policy 300.31, the OC-MEDS Data Dictionary, falls into this category. The changes in 300.31 and their immediate implementation result from the nationally mandated use of NEMSIS 3.5 as the structure for collecting EMS data that began on January 1, 2024. Given use of NEMSIS 3.5 is now in force, no optional phase-in period can exist for an updated data dictionary. Therefore, the update to Policy 300.31, which reflects the changes due to NEMSIS 3.5, will go into effect immediately.

APRIL 1, ~~2024~~ EMS NEW DOCUMENTS

2026 RC

NONE AT THIS TIME

APRIL 1, ~~2024~~ EMS UPDATES TO EXISTING DOCUMENTS

2026 RC

300.31 OC-MEDS – Data Dictionary: Updates to this large document must go into effect immediately in order for us to be compliant with updated CEMSIS/NEMSIS 3.5.0 standard currently in effect and the new CEMSIS/NEMSIS 3.5.1 data standard required by CEMSIS by November 1, 2026. Policy 300.31 now incorporates all the descriptions and definitions associated with the new requirements from NEMSIS 3.5 related to OC-MEDS. The OC-MEDS Data Dictionary v3.5 Change Log is also now available to assist with identifying the changes.