EMS/Trauma Systems - Designation

The Texas Department of State Health Services, EMS/Trauma Systems Section, has the important mission to protect and promote the health of the people of Texas by designating hospitals for neonatal, maternal, stroke and trauma levels of care. Designation reflects a facility’s documented capabilities and history of providing care to specific patient populations, to ensure the delivery of quality care, and to improve overall outcomes.

NOTICE

Designation expiration dates can be extended for good cause. On March 11, 2020, DSHS EMS/Trauma Systems began receiving information that several independent survey organizations were suspending onsite designation reviews due to precautionary COVID-19 restrictions being implemented. The suspension of these onsite reviews will result in a delay of facilities submitting applications for designation prior to their expiration date.

DSHS supports facilities’ efforts to protect public health and offers the following guidance for designated facilities to ensure continuity of designations during COVID-19-related restrictions.

Upon written request, administrative extensions will be considered for designated facilities to prevent expiration of their designation. Facilities must submit a request for extension before the designation’s expiration date. These extensions are considered as follows for neonatal, stroke, and trauma designations:

- Extensions are temporary.
- Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.
- The circumstances that cause a facility to not meet the deadline for applying for designation are limited to those that are out of the control of the facility. For example, if a facility had a scheduled onsite survey that was cancelled by the survey organization, through no fault of the facility, which then delays the facility’s ability to meet the application requirements, then this circumstance would be considered in determining whether to grant an extension.
- DSHS will provide written notice to the facility of any extension of the designation which includes the duration of the extension.
- DSHS will update the program website with the extended expiration date of any facility given an extension.
Designated facilities should notify the appropriate Designation Coordinator for further information.

Trauma/Stroke Designation Coordinators:
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We would like to affirm that the state and hospitals have a shared responsibility to protect public health, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. We must both ensure that facilities maintain the proper levels of care and safety while being sensitive to the challenges posed by COVID-19. If your facility experiences any operational issues, it is imperative that you document all actions taken to address the issue.

Questions can be sent to DSHS.EMS-TRAUMA@dshs.texas.gov.