

Definition of an ALS contact

For purposes of the PCAP program is defined as an incident where the provisional paramedic took the leadership role in the assessment and overall management of a patient requiring advanced life support diagnostics, interventions or procedures. Examples of ALS contacts include the following:

- An incident where active airway management, frequent reassessments and ventilatory support is necessary.
- An incident where cardiopulmonary resuscitation management is necessary.
- Pharmacologic intervention where the provisional paramedic provides justification based on assessment and diagnostic data for administering or withholding a certain medication in accordance with the Seminole County Practice Parameter guidelines.
- An incident where based on the patient's chief complaint requires advanced diagnostics such as active EKG interpretation and reassessments; frequent evaluation of specific signs and symptoms and a concerted diagnostic mental process to identify potential causes of the presenting symptoms.

An incident deemed to be an ALS contact should demonstrate the provisional paramedic's ability to gather a wide range of information from the patient interview, scene size up, physical exam, diagnostic testing (EKG, BGL, Etc.) and develop a differential list of possible diagnoses responsible for the patient's signs and symptoms. Armed with this information, the provisional paramedic then formulates a plan of care to effectively treat the patient.

An ALS contact is not defined merely by the mechanical skills used in patient management such as IV starts, or the mechanical act of administering medications. The ALS contact should also engage the provisional paramedic to explain the thought process and reasons why a particular intervention was performed or withheld.