"Star of Life"

®

Emergency Medical Care Symbol

Background, Specifications, and Criteria

U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Office of Traffic Injury Control, Washington, D.C. 20590

Preface

This brochure has been prepared for both administrative application and general public information relative to the blue "Star of Life" Emergency Medical Care symbol. Since congressional enactment of the Highway Safety Act of 1966 and its approval of the Highway Safety Guideline on "Emergency Medical Services," the Department of Transportation has vigorously pursued the implementation of a comprehensive Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system nationwide. The objectives of this program have been to reduce mortality and morbidity among the sick and injured through prevention efforts, effective medical intervention and care at the scene of medical emergency onset, during transit to definitive care within the hospital or acute care facility and through rehabilitation. It is appropriate that EMS be distinctively identified for the benefit of not only those working in this vital service area but also the victims and the general public.

DOT/NHTSA Authority

The blue "Star of Life" was adopted and registered as a certification mark applied for in accordance with the Office of the Secretary of Transportation's Memorandum of September 26, 1972, re: Service Marks and Trade Marks. The Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks registered the "Star of Life" symbol in the name of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration on February 1, 1977, under provision of the Trademark Act of 1946. This registration shall remain in force for an initial term of twenty years unless sooner terminated as provided by law.

By Memorandum, dated November 18, 1976, the Office of the Secretary of Transportation approved the "Star of Life" as an exception to DOT Order 1000.3A, Official Seal and Insignia of the Department of Transportation, "to use a symbol known as the blue "Star of Life" as a Departmental program symbol."

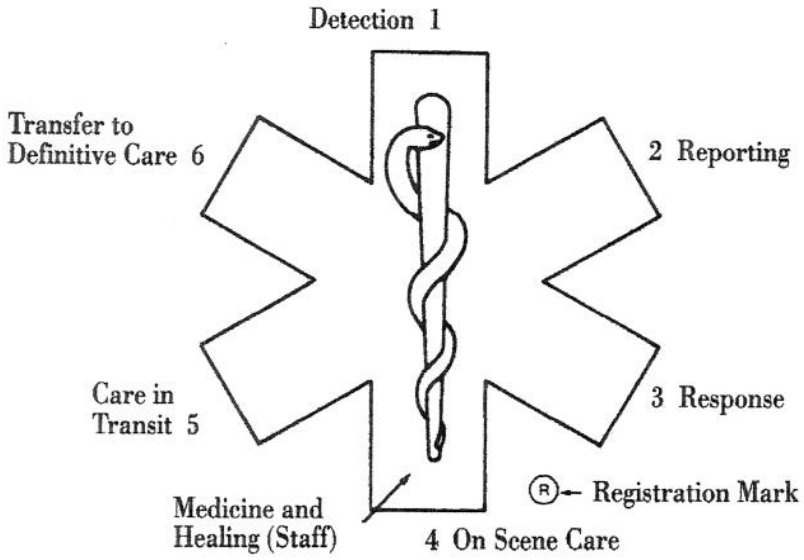
On September 14, 1977, the Administrator, NHTSA, published a memorandum containing authorizations and criteria relative to the use of the symbol for implementation of Standard 11, statewide system development and achievement of a nationally recognized level of prehospital emergency medical care. Hospital emergency department personnel are included in that category. The States (as defined in the Highway Safety Act of 1966 - Amended) and Federal agencies with emergency medical services (EMS) involvement are authorized as agents of the Administrator to permit and exercise supervisory control over use of the symbol. Such control shall be in accordance with the purpose and criteria set forth by the Administrator. These are included herein under "Authorization and Criteria" and "Specifications." In the exercise of this authority, violations should be brought to the attention of the Federal District Attorney.

On August 3, 1993, NHTSA published a notice in the Federal Register (58 F.R. 41316) announcing that it was considering whether to expand the purposes for which the blue "Star of Life" could be used and whether other changes to the guidelines for the authorized use of the symbol would be appropriate.

The notice requested comments from the public on whether the agency should authorize the use of the "Star of Life" symbol in EMS programs, including its use on personal items such as bracelets or necklaces, to identify individuals who are DNR candidates. The notice also requested comments on whether the agency should make other revisions to its guidelines for the authorized use of the blue "Star of Life." A final rule was established on August 11, 1994 amending the specifications and criteria for using the Star of Life. The U.S. Department of Transportation, NHTSA, is the originator and owner of this symbol and holds priority rights to its use.

Design Origin and Meaning

The blue "Star of Life" symbol was designed for NHTSA in response to the need for a uniform symbol representing the emergency medical services system. The six barred cross was adapted from the personal Medical Identification Symbol of the American Medical Association. For EMS the six bars represent the six systems functions as indicated below.



Staff of Asclepius (Greek)
Aesculapius (Roman)

Asclepius was the Greek god of medicine. In Greek mythology he was the son of Apollo (god of light, truth, and prophecy) and the nymph Coronis. The centaur Chiron taught him the art of healing, but Zeus (the king of gods), afraid that he might render all men immortal, slew him with a thunderbolt. Homer, in the Illiad, mentions him only as the skilled or "peerless physician" and further identifies him as the father of Podaleirus and Machaeon, physicians to the Greeks in the Trojan War. In later times, however, he was honored as a hero and eventually worshipped as a god. The cult of Asclepius began in Thessaly, but spread to many parts of Greece. Since it was supposed that he effected cures or prescribed remedies to the sick in dreams, the practice of sleeping in his temples became common.

Asclepius was frequently represented standing, dressed in a long cloak, with bare breast; his usual attribute was the staff with a serpent coiled around it. The staff is the only true symbol of medicine. The Caduceus with its winged staff and intertwined serpents, used as a medical emblem by the Military Medical Corps and some physicians, is without medical relevance in its origin since it represents the magic wand of Hermes (in Greek mythology a diety; herald and messenger of the gods; gods of roads, commerce, invention, cunning, and theft; patron of traders and rogues; and conductor of the dead to Hades) and Mercury of Roman mythology, often identified with Hermes, who served also as messenger to the other gods and was god of commerce, travel and thievery.

In 293 B.C. because of the plague, the Romans adopted the cult of Aclepius who became known in Roman mythology as Aesculapius.

It is considered most appropriate to call attention to the other significant reference to the serpent on a staff associated with healing as follows:

"Moses accordingly made a bronze serpent and mounted it on a pole and whenever anyone who had been bitten by a serpent looked at the bronze serpent, he recovered." Numbers 21:9

---

*Roman Statue of Aesculapius may be found in the Vatican Museum

Nº 1058022

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION

This is to certify that the records of the Patent and Trademark Office show that an application was filed in said Office for registration of the Mark sown herein, a copy of said Mark and pertinent data from the Application being annexed hereto and made a part hereof,

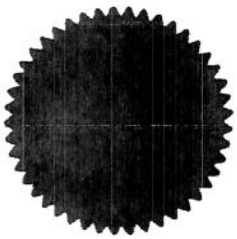
And there having been due compliance with the requirements of the law and with the regulations prescribed by the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks,

Upon examination, it appeared that the applicant was entitled to have said Mark registered under the Trademark Act of 1946, and the said Mark has been duly registered this day in the Patent and Trademark Office on the

PRINCIPAL REGISTER

to the registrant named herein.

This registration shall remain in force for Twenty Years unless sooner terminated as provided by law.



In Testimony Whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the Patent and Trademark Office to be affixed this first day of February, 1977.

C. Marshall Dann

COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS

NOTICE

This Registration will be canceled by the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks at the end of six years following the date of registration unless within one year next preceding the expiration of such six years, the registrant files in the Patent and Trademark Office an affidavid showing that said mark is still in use or showing that its nonuse is due to special circumstances which excuse such nonuse and is not due to any intention to abandon the mark. A fee of $10.00 for each class must accompany the affidavit.

16-82421-2

U.S. Cl: A,B
UNITED STATESPATENT OFFICE

REG. No 1,058,022
Registered Feb. 1, 1977

CERTIFICATION MARK
Principal Register

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
United States Department of Transportation
400 7th Street SW
Washington, D.C. 20590

For: EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE VEHICLES in CLASS A.
For: EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE IN CLASS B.

First use in November, 1973; in commerce December 1973.
The drawing is lined for the color blue.

The certification mark is used by persons authorized by applicant to certify that emergency medical care vehicles meet U.S. Department of Transportation standards (Class A), the emergency medical care personnel operating the vehicle have been trained to meet U.S. Department of Transportation standards (Class B) or both.

Ser.No.33,491,filed Oct. 1, 1974

R.F. CISSEL, Examiner

Criteria and Specifications for the Use of the "Star of Life" Symbol

The "Star of Life" is a certification mark that was issued on February 1, 1977 (Certificate of Registration No. 1,058,022) by the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

The certification mark is to be used on emergency medical care vehicles to certify that they meet Federal standards; by emergency medical care personnel to certify, based on their training and affiliation with a qualified emergency medical care system, that they are authorized to provide emergency medical care; on road maps and highway signs to indicate the location of or access to qualified emergency medical care service; and such other EMS-related uses that the Administrator of NHTSA may authorize. Any other use is prohibited. Unauthorized use shall be reported to the NHTSA Administrator for investigation and legal action as may be required.

NHTSA authorizes the States (as defined in 23 U.S.C. Section 401) and Federal agencies with EMS involvement to permit use of the "Star of Life" symbol for the following purposes:

1. To identify emergency medical care vehicles that meet the Federal Specifications for Ambulances-Emergency Care Vehicles (KKK-C-1822 GSA-FSS) or are authorized by a State or Federal agency involved in the provision of emergency medical care to respond to scenes requiring the provision of emergency medical care.

2. To indicate the location of and access to qualified emergency medical care services.

3. On patches or other apparel or personal items (such as badges, lapel pins, buckles, name plates, plaques, etc.) worn or used by an individual:
   a. who:
      i. has satisfactorily completed any training course that meets or exceeds the U.S. Department of Transportation National Standard Curricula or has been approved by a State or Federal agency involved in the provision of emergency medical care; and
      ii. is authorized by a State or Federal agency involved in the provision of emergency medical care to participate in a qualified emergency medical care systems; or
   b. who by title and function is authorized by a State or Federal agency involved in the provision of emergency medical care to administer, directly supervise, or otherwise participate in all or a specific part of a qualified emergency medical care system.

4. On bracelets or other items of apparel worn by a patient to inform authorized emergency medical care providers to medical conditions or to identify appropriate treatment with regard to that patient, in accordance with programs established by a State or Federal agency involved in the provision of emergency medical care.

5. On training materials that meet or exceed the U.S. Department of Transportation National Standard Curricula or have been approved by a State or Federal agency involved in the provision of emergency medical care.

6. On materials such as books, pamphlets, letterheads, plans, manuals, reports, and publications that either have direct EMS application or were generated by an EMS organization. An EMS organization is an organization that either is involved in the provision of emergency medical care or represents persons or organizations who are so involved.

7. To identify medical equipment and supplies intended for use by authorized emergency medical care providers in the provision of emergency medical care.

8. By entrepreneurs engaged in the production of medical equipment and supplies or the publication of materials described above.

The following restrictions apply to the use of the "Star of Life":

1. As a registered certification mark, the "Star of Life" must always be accompanied by the symbol consisting of a capital letter R surrounded by a circle, i.e. ®. This marking shall appear immediately adjacent to the "Star of Life" on all decals, uni form patches, printed material, plaques, pins, buckles, name plates, etc. Where the item consists solely of the "Star of Life" and does not have an adjacent surface of surrounding area (e.g. a lapel pin), the ® shall appear on the reverse side of the item.

2. The specifications below include a sample of the registered blue "Star of Life" symbol, and identify the color of the symbol and its dimensions (for three sizes). Deviations in size may be made, provided they are proportionate. Other deviations may be made, provided they create the same commercial impression created by the registered mark.

3. Some manner of demarcation (such as function-identifying words or letters printed on bars and attached across the bottom separately, and edging of different colors) should be used on patches or other apparel or personal items (such as badges, lapel pins, buckles, name plates, plaques, etc.) worn or used by an individual, to distinguish those worn or used by an individual:

a. who:

i. has satisfactorily completed any training course that meets or exceeds the U.S. Department of Transportation National Standard Curricula or has been approved by a State or Federal agency involved in the provision of emergency medical care; and

ii. is authorized by a State of Federal agency involved in the provision of emergency medical care to participate in a qualified emergency medical care system;

from those worn or used by an individual:

b. who by title and function is authorized by a State or Federal agency involved in the provision of emergency medical care to administer, directly supervise, or otherwise participate in all or a specific part of a qualified emergency medical care system.

Specifications

COLOR: Pure Primary Blue (approximate).
Above print may be used as sample. Detailed color range data will be provided.

DIMENSIONS:

	SIZES		
	A	B	C
Length of bar	3"	12"	16"
Width of bar	3/4"	3"	4"
Length of staff	2 1/2"	9 1/2"	12 1/2"
White background (if required)	4" sq.	14" sq.	18" sq.

All angles 60°. Deviations in size must be proportionate.

The registration mark ® should be centered in the manner indicated above. The diameter of the circle should be 1/4 of the width of the bar. The letter R should not touch the circle.

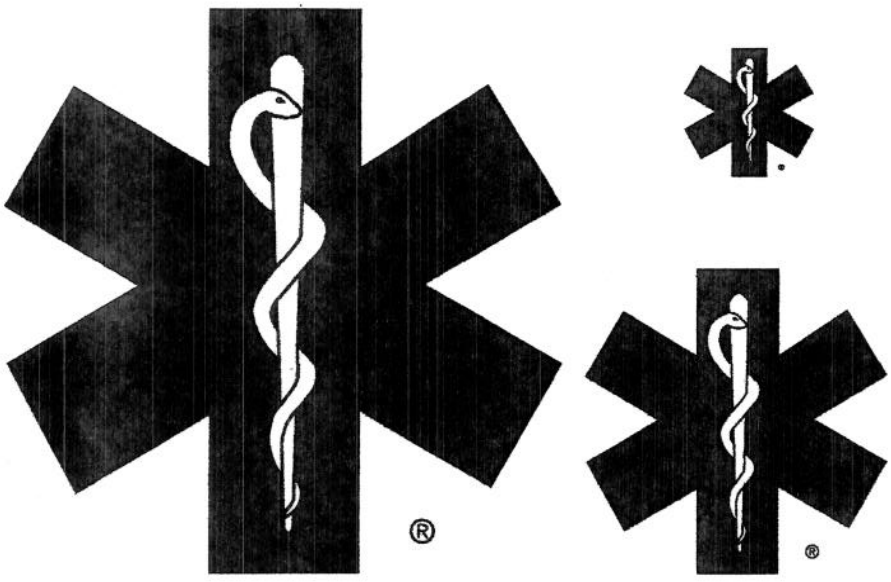
Location: For appropriate location on the ambulance see the Federal Specifications for Ambulance-Emergency Care Vehicle * KKK-C-1822 GSA-FSS.

Note: "Star of Life" symbols are not available from the Department of Transportation. Stencils or decals for applying the symbol must be purchased locally.

---

*Available from: General Services Administration, Automotive Commodity Center, 2611 Jefferson Davis Highway, Airport Plaza 2, Arlington, VA 22202.

Camera Ready Art



DOT HS 808 721
Rev. June 1995

U.S. Department
of Transportation
**National Highway
Traffic Safety
Administration**