



Department
of Health

Bureau of Emergency Medical Services
And Trauma Systems

POLICY STATEMENT

Supercedes/Updates: New

No. 20-07

Date: August 24, 2020

Re: Interim Guidance for
EMS Education Courses

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I. PURPOSE:

On March 22, 2020, Governor Cuomo issued an executive order closing all non-essential businesses statewide in response to the continued and rapidly expanding spread of COVID-19. Since then, social distancing measures have resulted in modifications of content delivery, scheduling, and student progression through EMS education system.

On April 26, 2020, Governor Cuomo announced a phased approach to reopen industries and business in New York based upon a data-driven regional analysis. Additionally, the Empire State Development Corporation has determined that Emergency Medical Training programs are essential to the extent they are required, at times, to be conducted in person with appropriate precautions in place.

The purpose of this policy is to provide interim guidance for the continuation of EMS education courses in New York State with a focus on necessary precautions to help protect against the spread of COVID-19.

II. EXTENSION OF CERTIFICATION

Pursuant to Executive Order Number 202.10, issued on March 7, 2020, the following provisions were applied:

A. Persons Currently Certified as EMS Providers

On April 1, 2020, EMS provider certifications were extended for one (1) year from the expiration date listed on the instructor certificate. The extension was automatically applied to all EMS providers who held a current New York State EMS provider certification on March 30, 2020.

B. Persons Previously Certified as EMS Providers

1. On April 1, 2020, EMS providers whose certification had expired between September 1, 2019 and March 30, 2020 were automatically recertified, at their previous level of certification. An additional one (1) year has been added to their original expiration date.
2. Any person whose certification expired between January 1, 2019 and August 31, 2019, and who completed an online application form before June 1, 2020, was issued provisional certification, at the last level of certification held. All provisional certifications expire on December 31, 2020.
3. Any person whose certification expired between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2018, and who completed an online application form before June 1, 2020, was issued provisional certification at the EMT-Basic level,

regardless of any higher level of certification previously held, except that those persons previously certified as CFRs, shall be issued provisional certification at the CFR level only. All provisional certifications expire on December 31, 2020.

C. Persons Currently Certified as EMS Instructors

On April 1, 2020, EMS instructor certifications were extended for one (1) year from the expiration date listed on the provider certification. The extension was automatically applied to all EMS instructors who held a current New York State EMS instructor certification on March 30, 2020.

D. Course Sponsor Agreements

All course sponsor agreements have been extended through December 31, 2020. Course sponsor renewal agreements must be received on or before December 31st, 2020.

E. Certification Verification

EMS providers who were extended in accordance with this section have not been issued a paper copy of their provider certification card containing the updated expiration date. EMS provider certification status, including updated expiration dates, can be verified in the Department's online Health Commerce System (HCS) utilizing the EMT Certification Search tool.

1. The HCS online portal can be accessed by Course Sponsors, EMS Agencies, and Regional Program Agencies, utilizing their verified account credentials, to verify the current status, level of certification, and expiration date of EMS providers.
2. Course sponsors shall verify the certification of all EMS providers enrolling in an advanced certification course. In addition to the copy of the student certification card, course instructors shall include a printout of the verification search results in the student course file.
3. EMS agencies must include a printout of the EMT Certification search results in their EMS agency personnel file.
4. EMS Instructor certifications cannot be verified through the HCS portal. Instructors who were issued an extension under this section will receive a new certificate at a future date. Instructors or Course Sponsors needing to verify an instructor certification may submit a verification request to the Department. This form can be accessed at:
<https://apps.health.ny.gov/pubpal/builder/EMSForms>

III. COURSE SPONSOR ADMINISTRATION

A. Course Operations

1. EMS Course Sponsors should be prepared for COVID-19 outbreaks in their local communities and for individual exposure events to occur in facilities, regardless of the level of community transmission.

2. EMS courses shall continue to utilize distance learning for the delivery of EMS course content whenever possible.
3. Practical skills sessions are a key component to training EMS providers who are essential workers to Emergency Response and the greater healthcare system. When students must be brought into a classroom setting, EMS Course Sponsors shall adhere to the [Interim Guidance for Higher Education During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#). This guidance is intended to address all types of in-person higher education institutions, including but not limited to, community and junior colleges, universities, graduate and professional schools, medical schools, and technical schools.
4. In addition to the guidance referenced above, Course Sponsors must comply with all other applicable guidance issued by the [Empire State Development, Department of Health](#) (the Department), and [CDC](#) requirements and guidelines.

B. Course Modifications

1. EMS Course Sponsors and Course Administrators may need to consider modifications to traditional didactic teaching methods, clinical rotations and internships, and practical skills labs to achieve course objectives. Where modifications are deemed necessary, Course Sponsors, Course Administrators, and Course Medical Directors shall develop policies and procedures that outline the course modifications, provide justification for the change, and describe the evaluation methodology utilized to ensure minimum competency standards are achieved.
2. Modifications of policies and procedures must be submitted to the Department for approval prior to implementation. These modifications may include, but are not limited to, revised course schedules, course curriculum and delivery methods in order to comply with reopening requirements.
3. Courses Sponsors submitting modifications or revisions must demonstrate how minimum competencies and course objectives will be met, how student progress and evaluations will be documented, and how the program will ensure minimum competencies are achieved for the level of the certification being sought, if the plan is approved.
4. Once approved by the Department, modified course policies and procedures must be provided to the student and included in the course file.
5. Students who successfully meet all the educational objectives of an approved modified educational plan will be eligible to sit for the state exam.

C. Student Travel

Course Sponsors and students enrolled in EMS courses must comply with the requirements of the [New York State COVID-19 Travel Advisory](#).

1. All travelers entering New York who have recently traveled within a state with either a positive test rate higher than 10 per 100,000 residents over a seven-day rolling average; or a testing positivity rate of higher than a 10% over a seven-day rolling average, will be required to quarantine for a period of 14 days consistent with the Department of Health (DOH) regulations for quarantine.

2. The requirements of the travel advisory do not apply to any individual passing through designated states for a limited duration (i.e., less than 24 hours) through the course of travel. Examples of such brief passage include, but are not limited to, stopping at rest stops for vehicles, buses, and/or trains; or layovers for air travel, bus travel, or train travel.
3. For the purpose of participating in EMS courses, the exemption for essential workers does not apply to students or course sponsor employees who travel to a restricted state within the past 14 days (for longer than 24 hours). In these instances, students may continue to participate in distance learning but should refrain from attending in-person classroom sessions while under quarantine.
4. Students must report any travel outside of New York State to their course sponsor.

IV. CLINICAL ROTATIONS / INTERNSHIPS

EMS programs may continue clinical rotations with affiliated facilities/agencies that are allowing students in order to meet course and state clinical requirements in a timely manner. Subject to approval, the Department will permit the use of alternate evaluation methods including scenarios, case studies, or simulation as well as adjustment of minimum rotations required (if competency is shown) to satisfy the requirements of clinical rotations / internships when traditional clinical rotations / internships are not available.

- A. Interim alternatives to national standard clinical experience can be found in Appendix A at the end of this document.
- B. When utilizing simulation exercises in lieu of clinical rotations/internships, the following shall be considered:
 1. Scenarios should be developed utilizing programmed patients or scripted responses to treatments provided by the student that represent “real life” situations and conditions the student would likely encounter during a field internship.
 2. Scenarios should include the use of simulation or real EMS equipment the student would normally use in the performance of EMS activities. The use of “pretend” equipment is discouraged.
 3. Scenarios should include a standardized patient (actors) to package and transfer the “patient” to an ambulance (or chairs set up like an ambulance) including the use of an actual stretcher. Scenarios should include the provider lifting and lowering the stretcher during movement of the “patient”.
- C. Course Records must contain documentation of the date and time the simulation exercise was conducted and an evaluation of the student performance.

V. PRACTICAL SKILLS EXAMS

The New York State psychomotor examination shall continue to be administered in accordance with the New York State Practical Skills Administration Manual with the following modifications:

- A. The number of personnel necessary to conduct the practical skills examination may be reduced in order to limit exposures and ensure appropriate social distancing is in place. Modifications to the required practical skills examination testing stations that are necessary to accomplish this include, but are not limited to:
1. PSE's evaluators may utilize remote live video feed to evaluate students in a practical skills examination setting. Course Sponsors interested in utilizing this method of evaluation must submit policies and procedures to the Department for approval prior to implementation.
 2. Modification to required practical skills examination stations outlined below (Section I.B) **shall** be utilized for any courses beginning after the effective date of this guidance.
 3. Modification to required practical skills examination stations outlined below (Section I.B) **may** be utilized for any courses beginning prior to the effective date of this guidance but must receive approval from the Department prior to utilization.
- B. Modification to required practical skills examination stations utilizing the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technician (NREMT) skills evaluation sheets.
1. CFR
 - a. CFR Out of Hospital Trauma Station incorporates the following skills in one testing station:
 - i. [Patient Assessment / Management Trauma Station](#)
 - b. CFR Out of Hospital Medical Station incorporates the following skills in one testing station:
 - i. [Patient Assessment Management – Medical](#)
 - ii. [Oxygen Administration by Non-Rebreather Mask](#)
 - c. Cardiac Arrest Management incorporates the following skills in one testing station:
 - i. [Cardiac Arrest Management / AED](#)
 - ii. [BVM Ventilation of an Apneic Adult Patient](#)
 2. EMT
 - a. EMT Out of Hospital Trauma Station incorporates the following skills in one testing station:
 - i. [Patient Assessment / Management – Trauma](#)
 - ii. [Bleeding Control / Shock Management](#)
 - iii. One random EMT skill from the following:
 - i. [Joint Immobilization](#)
 - ii. [Long Bone Immobilization](#)
 - b. EMT Out of Hospital Medical Station incorporates the following skills in one testing station:
 - i. [Patient Assessment / Management – Medical](#)
 - ii. [Oxygen Administration by Non-Rebreather Mask](#)
 - c. Cardiac Arrest Management incorporates the following skills in one testing station:
 - i. [Cardiac Arrest Management / AED](#)
 - ii. [BVM Ventilation of an Apneic Adult Patient](#)
 3. AEMT
 - a. AEMT Out of Hospital Trauma Station incorporates the following skills in one testing station:

- i. [Patient Assessment – Trauma](#)
 - ii. [Bleeding Control / Shock Management](#)
 - iii. One random EMT skill from the following:
 - i. [Long Bone Immobilization](#)
 - ii. [Joint Immobilization](#)
 - b. AEMT Out of Hospital Medical Station incorporates the following skills in one testing station:
 - i. [Patient Assessment – Medical](#)
 - ii. [Intravenous Therapy](#)
 - iii. [Intravenous Bolus Medication](#)
 - c. AEMT Pediatric Patient Management Station incorporates the following skills in one testing station:
 - i. [Pediatric Respiratory Compromise](#)
 - ii. [Pediatric Intraosseous Infusion](#)
 - d. Cardiac Arrest Management incorporates the following skills in one testing station:
 - i. [Cardiac Arrest Management / AED](#)
 - ii. [Supraglottic Airway Device](#)
- 4. Paramedic
 - a. [Patient Assessment Trauma](#)
 - b. [Dynamic Cardiology](#)
 - c. [Static Cardiology](#)
 - d. [Oral Station Case A](#)
 - e. [Oral Station Case B](#)
 - f. [Integrated Out-of-Hospital Scenario](#)

VI. COGNITIVE CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION

A. New York State Cognitive Examination

1. As of March 15, 2020, New York State EMS certification exams are only available through Computer Based Examination (CBT) at a PSI testing center. CBT remote proctoring may be available for CFR and EMT certification examinations.
2. Examination fees are paid directly to PSI testing services at the time of registration.
3. Students who pass the certification examination taken at a PSI testing center will receive a temporary certification document. Students who pass the certification examination taken through remote proctoring will not receive a temporary certification document.

B. National Registry Cognitive Examination

1. Under the provision of Executive Order 202.10, providers may take the National Registry certification examination in lieu of the New York State certification examination in order to obtain New York State certification. Students taking the National Registry certification examination must also successfully complete Psychomotor Examination.
2. Those who obtain NREMT certification and seek NYS certification **ARE REQUIRED** to complete the “NREMT Request for NYS Certification” form on

the link below (there is no additional fee as part of this process):
<https://apps.health.ny.gov/pubpal/builder/EMSForms>

VII. RETESTING REQUIREMENTS

A. Practical Skills Examinations

1. CFR and EMT
 - a. One full attempt is defined as completing all three skill stations and up to two retesting opportunities.
 - b. The student is allowed two full attempts to pass the practical skills examination.
 - c. If the student fails two or more stations during the first full attempt, that counts as a failure of one full attempt.
 - d. If the student fails one station, the student may be allowed to retest the skill station up to two times as part of the first full attempt.
2. AEMT
 - a. One full attempt is defined as completing all four skill stations and up to two retesting opportunities.
 - b. The student is allowed two full attempts to pass the practical skills examination.
 - c. If the student fails three or more stations during the first full attempt, that counts as a failure of one full attempt.
 - d. If the student fails up to two stations, the student may be allowed to retest each of those skill stations up to two times as part of the first full attempt.
3. Paramedic
 - a. One full attempt is defined as completing all six skill stations and up to two retesting opportunities.
 - b. The student is allowed two full attempts to pass the practical skills examination.
 - c. If the student fails four or more stations during the first full attempt, that counts as a failure of one full attempt.
 - d. If the student fails up to three skill stations, the student may be allowed to retest each of those skill stations up to two times as part of the first full attempt.

B. Cognitive Examinations

1. The student will have six chances to pass the cognitive certification examination.
2. If the student does not pass the examination, they may apply to retest 15 days after the last examination.
3. If the student fails three times, remedial education must be completed prior to their next three attempts.

VIII. CME RECERTIFICATION

- A. Under the provision of Executive Order 202.10, providers who are not part of an EMS Agency or whose agency does not participate in the CME program, are eligible to apply for recertification through the CME program.
1. The participant must have CME content reviewed by a CIC prior to submitting the application for recertification.
 2. The participant must have a CIC sign off on the CME application prior to submitting the application for recertification.
 3. ALS providers seeking recertification must have an EMS Medical Director sign off where appropriate.
 4. BLS and ALS refresher program content may be used for CME hours. Any content obtained within 36 months prior to your certification expiration date, or within your current period of certification (whichever is greater) is eligible to be used.
 5. CME content can be 100% online regardless of if the agency is enrolled in 100% CME program.
 6. Providers who are not affiliated with an agency or the agency is not a part of the CME program, may not be eligible for reimbursement of training through the EMS training fund.
- B. Continuing Instructor Education that is required for renewal of instructor certification will be offered on Vital Signs Academy.
1. Instructors will be able to obtain all Continuing Instructor Education on Vital Signs Academy.
 2. Classes will be taught live via WebEx and then will be hosted for self-learning on the Learning Management Platform.
- C. All CME applications must be submitted through the online application form. Applicants will enter their basic provider information and then attach a copy of their CME Renewal Application. The online application form may be accessed at <https://apps.health.ny.gov/pubpal/builder/EMSForms>

All requests for course modifications should be submitted via the online portal at:
<https://apps.health.ny.gov/pubpal/builder/EMSForms>

All EMS Provider requests that require an online submission can be submitted via the online portal at:
<https://apps.health.ny.gov/pubpal/builder/EMSForms>

Appendix A: Interim Alternatives to National Standard Clinical Experience

Course	National Standard Clinical Experience	Interim Alternatives to National Standard Clinical Experience
EMR	None required at this level	None required at this level
EMT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student must participate in and document patient contacts in a field experience approved by the medical director and program director. 2. Student must observe emergency department operations for a period of time sufficient to gain an appreciation for the continuum of care. 3. Students must perform ten patient assessments in: an emergency department; ambulance; clinic; nursing home; doctor's office or on standardized patients if clinical settings are not available. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Instructors may consider the use of virtual or video demonstrations of emergency department operations sufficient to allow students to gain an appreciation for the continuum of care. 2. Documentation of successful completion of ten, instructor or preceptor evaluated "BLS Out of Hospital" simulation exercises. Each evaluation must be at least 20 minutes long.
AEMT	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student must participate in and document team leadership in a field experience approved by the medical director and program director. 2. Properly administer medications at least 15 times to a live patient. 3. Successfully access the venous circulation at least 25 times on live patients of various age groups. 4. Effectively ventilate at least 20 live patients of various age groups. 5. Demonstrate the ability to perform an adequate assessment and formulate and implement a treatment plan for patients with respiratory distress; chest pain; and altered mental status. 6. Student must demonstrate the ability to perform an adequate assessment on pediatric, adult and geriatric patients. 	<p>The various clinical/internship experiences need to be achieved with appropriate substitutions. Course Sponsors and course medical directors may develop a plan outlining alternative method to achieve the standard. Plans must be submitted to the Department and will be approved on a case by case basis.</p> <p>NOTE: Course sponsors should review National Registry requirements during plan development if students will be offered the option for National Registry Certification.</p>
Paramedic	Reference Committee on Accreditation for EMS Professions (CoAEMSP).	Reference Committee on Accreditation for EMS Professions (CoAEMSP) COVID-19 Resources website and the Updated Statement Regarding COVID-19 (Coronavirus) . Modifications must be submitted to the Department and will be approved on a case by case basis.