

New York State Department of Health  
Bureau of Emergency Medical Services

# Pilot EMS Recertification Program



*Renewal of EMS Certification  
through Continuing Education*

**3 Year Certification**  
Revised 11/ 2001





# Pilot EMS Recertification Program

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**This Manual and all Related Forms are available in electronic format on the EMS Website. The forms can be downloaded, filled in, and printed for submission. The Web Address is:**

**<http://www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/ems/main.htm>**

# Pilot EMS Recertification Program

## *Renewal of EMS Certification through Continuing Education*

### **What is the Pilot Recertification Program?**

*The Pilot Recertification Program allows an EMT, EMT-Intermediate, EMT-Critical Care or Paramedic, who is in continuous practice, demonstrates competency and completes appropriate continuing education, to renew their certification without taking a certification exam.*

On August 17, 2001, Governor Pataki signed into law Chapter 190 of the Laws of 2001. This extended the law calling for the Commissioner of Health to develop a pilot program in at least six regions to allow an EMT/AEMT who is in "continuous practice," who has "demonstrated competence in applicable behavioral and performance objectives," and who has "demonstrated completion of appropriate continuing education," to renew their certification "without requiring the completion of a written examination."

The law prohibits the participation of any employee of a municipal ambulance service in cities with a population over one million.

The law has a "sunset clause" and will be repealed July 1<sup>st</sup> 2006. As of June 30, 2006 we will not accept any further applications to participate in the pilot program. Participants already registered in the program will be allowed to complete the requirements and renew their current certification.

### **What are the Benefits of Renewing through Continuing Education?**

**1. Retention of members/employees.**

It is hoped that participants will find it easier and more convenient to renew their certification by participating in on-going continuing education activities. Providers, who might not renew their certification if they are required to take a written certification exam, may decide to maintain their certification through continuing education.

**2. Variety of learning experiences**

Refresher courses are designed to review the core content of the original training program. Although it is essential to review the core material, the refresher course does not expand on the core knowledge, nor does it introduce new or updated material.

A well balanced continuing education program will not only periodically review the core content, it allows participants to take part in a variety of learning activities which expand on the original core material, provides updates and introduces new material. It allows participants to use a variety of learning experiences such as seminars, workshops, journal clubs, interactive CD's, web-based programs and other learning activities.

**3. Its more interesting**

After taking the same refresher course for the third or fourth time its difficult to find interest or enthusiasm in actively participating in another one. It can be much more interesting if you can vary your activities and are able to tailor your learning experience to your interest and needs. If you're interested you participate more actively and gain more from the experience.

**4. Greater choices and options**

Having the choice of when, where and what kind of learning activities you participate in may make it easier to arrange these activities around your schedule and life style. With the option of so many types and variety of continuing education activities you can design a program that meets your specific needs.

**5. Designed to meet individual/agency needs**

Continuing education programs can be developed to meet the specific needs of the agency and its members. They can be designed to reflect the needs identified through quality assurance/quality improvement programs. Needs-assessments can identify specific performance areas (clinical and non-clinical) that could be improved with training. Participants can identify what topics they are interested in.

## How does an Agency apply?

*Agencies interested in participating in the Pilot Recertification Program need to file an “Agency*

The Agency must make a commitment to support the program. It must agree to assist its members to achieve success by providing opportunities for in-service training, drills, audiovisuals, magazines, books, journal clubs, and/or other continuing education activities. **The Agency must agree to maintain records of the continuing education activities of its members.**

Agencies may wish to work together and consolidate their efforts to provide a quality continuing education program. They may wish to affiliate with a local college, course sponsor or their county EMS coordinator’s office. These efforts are encouraged. If this option is chosen a written agreement between the agencies must be filed with the Bureau of EMS outlining specific details on who will be responsible for each piece of the program and where the records will be kept. Each agency must maintain its own "agency" file with a listing of the agency's participants and their progress in the program. Individual participant files may be kept at a central location when multiple agencies collaborate.

The Agency’s Medical Director must agree to support the pilot program. The Medical Director should assist with in-service training and other continuing education activities. For ALS providers, the Medical Director must verify that they have maintained appropriate skill proficiency. They may do this by direct observation, through quality improvement activities, or formal skills evaluation.

## Who can participate?

*EMTs, EMT-Intermediates, EMT-Critical Care Technicians and Paramedics may participate in the Pilot Program if they are **currently certified, actively providing prehospital care and members of a participating Agency.***

Participation is voluntary. An EMS Agency may not require a member/employee to participate in the pilot program. Participants may withdraw from the program at any time.

Participants must be “in continuous practice.” To participate in the pilot program the EMT/AEMT must be currently certified and actively providing prehospital care. Their application to renew their certification must be postmarked 45 days before their current certification expires. **Participants cannot allow their certification to expire during the program. Expired certifications are not eligible for renewal in this program.**

Each participant must complete a “Participant Registration Form” (DOH-4226).

## What does a participant have to do to renew their certification?

*To renew certification, an EMT/AEMT must complete at least 72 hours of " appropriate continuing*

1. *Refresher Training (review of core content)*
2. *CPR Certification*
3. *ACLS Certification for paramedics*
4. *Additional EMS related continuing education*
5. *Verification of skill maintenance*

Refresher Training is a review of the core content of the initial training program. While it is ideal for the purpose of remediation, it is not intended to expand on knowledge or skills beyond entry-level training. For each level of provider there are specific minimum requirements for refresher training. A New York State Certified Instructor Coordinator (CIC) must oversee all "Core Refresher Training" activity. The CIC bears sole responsibility for the content of these sessions.

CPR certification must be at the professional provider level and must be current. It should be equivalent to the American Heart Association's Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers or the American Red Cross: CPR for the Professional Rescuer. It must include:

- Adult 1 & 2 Rescuer CPR
- Adult Obstructed Airway
- Child 1 & 2 Rescuer CPR
- Child Obstructed Airway
- Infant CPR
- Infant Obstructed Airway

Paramedics must provide verification of current Advanced Cardiac Life Support certification.

Additional continuing education in varying EMS related topics provides the opportunity to keep up with the ever-changing field of emergency medicine and prehospital care. Attending lectures, EMS conferences, nationally recognized continuing education courses, approved self-study, journal clubs, call audits/case reviews, "grand rounds," and other directed studies allows the participant to keep up with these rapid changes.

Verification of proficiency in skills must be achieved by direct observation, quality assurance and quality improvement programs, or practical skills examination. This could be accomplished as part of the "Core Refresher Training" module(s) utilizing DOH Practical Skill Evaluation forms.

## What are the different continuing education requirements for each provider level?

*The EMT, EMT-I, EMT-CC and Paramedic each have specific requirements for completing the 72 hours of continuing education.*

### **EMT-Basic**

- 24 hours of Refresher Training (review of core content)
  - Preparatory (1)
  - Airway (2)
  - Patient Assessment (3)
  - Medical/Behavioral (4)
  - Trauma (4)
  - OB, Infants and Children (2)
  - Elective (8)
- 48 hours of additional continuing education requirements

### **EMT-Intermediate**

- 36 hours of Refresher Training (review of core content)
  - 24 hours of EMT-Basic Refresher Training
  - 12 hours of EMT-Intermediate Refresher Training
    - Roles & Responsibilities
    - EMS System
    - Medical/Legal, Terminology
    - EMS Communications
    - Patient Assessment
    - Advanced Airway Management (ET)
    - Shock Management (IV)
- 36 hours of additional continuing education

### **EMT-Critical Care Technician**

- 36 hours of Refresher Training (review of core content)
  - Preparatory (5)
    - Foundation of the EMT-Critical Care Technician
    - Overview of Human System
    - Emergency Pharmacology
    - Medication Administration
  - Airway Management (5)
  - Medical (12)
    - Respiratory Emergencies
    - Cardiac Emergencies
    - Diabetic Emergencies
    - Allergic Reaction

- Poisoning and Overdose Emergencies
- Neurological Emergencies
- Abdominal Emergencies
- Environmental Emergencies
- Behavioral Emergencies
- Gynecological Emergencies
- Trauma (8)
  - Trauma Systems/Mechanism of Injury
  - Hemorrhage and Shock
  - Burns
  - Head, Thoracic, Spinal and Abdominal Trauma
- Special Considerations (4)
  - Obstetric Emergencies
  - Neonatal Resuscitation
  - Pediatrics
  - Geriatrics
- Ambulance Operations (2)
- 36 hours of additional continuing education

**Paramedic**

- 48 hours of Refresher Training (review of core content)
  - Preparatory (6)
    - EMS Systems and Roles and Responsibilities
    - The Well-Being of the Paramedic
    - Illness and Injury Prevention
    - Medical/Legal Issues
    - Ethics
    - General Principles of Pathophysiology
    - Pharmacology
    - Venous Access and Medical Administration
    - Therapeutic Communications
    - Life Span Development
  - Airway Management & Ventilation (6)
  - Trauma (10)
    - Trauma Systems/Mechanism of Injury
    - Hemorrhage and Shock
    - Soft Tissue Trauma
    - Burns
    - Head and Facial Trauma
    - Spinal Trauma
    - Thoracic Trauma
    - Abdominal Trauma
    - Musculoskeletal Trauma
  - Medical (18)
    - Pulmonary
    - Cardiology
    - Neurology
    - Endocrinology
    - Allergies and Anaphylaxis
    - Gastroenterology
    - Renal/Urology



- Toxicology
- Hematology
- Environmental Conditions
- Infectious and Communicable Diseases
- Behavioral and Psychiatric Disorders
- Gynecology
- Obstetrics
- Special Considerations (6)
  - Neonatology
  - Pediatrics
  - Geriatrics
  - Abuse and Assault
  - Patients with Special Challenges
  - Acute Interventions for the Chronic Care Patient
- Operations (2)
  - Ambulance Operations
  - Medical Incident Command
  - Rescue Awareness and Operations
  - Hazardous Materials Incidents
  - Crime Scene Awareness
- 24 hours of additional continuing education activities

### What type of continuing education is accepted?

*Continuing education programs should include many different learning activities. Topics must be relevant to EMS and/or prehospital care. You must be able to document attendance and participation.*

A maximum of 10 hours may be credited for self-study activities through documented continuing education via publications, video and/or internet training.

A maximum of 12 hours may be credited for teaching CPR or EMT/AEMT courses.

A maximum of 16 hours may be credited for national continuing education programs like PHTLS, BTLs, PALS, ACLS, MALS, Auto Extrication courses, etc..

A maximum of 12 hours may be credited for any one specific topic.

Example of Self Study Activities:

- Magazine articles (JEMS, Emergency Medical Services)
- Videos (Pulse/EMU, FETN, etc)
- Interactive CD
- Web-based courses

Example of Other Continuing Education Activities

- Journal Clubs
- Call Review/Audits, Grand Rounds
- Agency Drills or in-service training
- Lectures, Seminars, EMS Conferences
- Nationally recognized continuing education programs

- Pediatric Courses (PALS/APLS, PPCC, TRIPP, PEPP)
- Trauma Courses (PHTLS, BTLs, CTC)
- Adult and Geriatric Medical Emergencies (MALS)
- Ambulance Driving (CEVO, EVOC, Defensive Driving)
- OSHA required training
- HAZMAT
- Directed Studies
  - Literature review
  - Research
- Practicum
  - Hospital Clinical Performance Evaluations
- Skill Workshops

Continuing education credit can only be received for time the candidate actually participates in the activity. As an example if an 8-hour course ends 2 hours early, the participant can only receive credit for 6 hours.

### How will the Pilot Recertification Program be Evaluated?

*As a pilot study, the program must be evaluated on the impact of the program on the quality of patient care, the effectiveness of the program in retaining EMTs/AEMTs.*

- Surveys and Questionnaires
  - Participants
    - Participants will be surveyed to determine how satisfied they are with the program. Was it easier and more convenient than attending traditional refresher programs? Do they feel they learned more/less? Did it effect their decision to renew their certification?
  - Agency Chief Officers
    - The leadership of participating EMS Agencies may also be surveyed to determine how satisfied they are with the program. Do they feel it is helping them to keep more EMT/AEMT on-line? Have they noticed any difference in providers who are participating in the program versus those who are not? Are they having difficulty providing in-service training, drills and other continuing education activities?
  - Agency Medical Directors
    - Medical Directors may be surveyed on how satisfied they are with the program. Do they feel that the continuing education being offered is adequate to maintain or improved the quality of patient care? Have they noticed any difference in the care provided by participants versus non-participants?
  - Receiving Hospitals
    - Emergency Department staff may be interviewed to determine their satisfaction with the program. Are they aware of the program? Is it integrated with their quality improvement activities? Do they provide continuing education for EMS

providers? Have they noticed greater participation at call reviews, EMS grand rounds, lecture series, etc.?

- REMAC  
The Department will work with the local REMAC to determine their satisfaction with the program. Is there an impact on the quality of patient care? Have patient care complaints or protocol violations increased/decreased? Is there greater participation by agencies and providers in quality improvement activities?

- Random Audits

The Department or its designee will conduct audits of randomly selected participants to review and verify their participation in continuing education activities. Attendance records and other documentation will be reviewed for each item listed on the participant's renewal form. Some interviews may be scheduled with participants and/or others involved in the continuing education program.

The Department or its designee may sit-in on (audit) some continuing education programs.

- Random Testing

The Department or its designee may test randomly select participants. Testing may be in the form of quizzes or written examination and/or skills examinations. These tests will be used to compare the knowledge and performance of participants in the pilot program with non-participants. The results of the test for any specific individual will remain confidential and will not effect the certification of the individual.

- Comparison: Participants/Non-Participants

A sample group of Participants versus Non-Participants will be used to compare percentages of patient care complaints, protocol violations and disciplinary actions. All information on specific individuals and agencies will remain confidential.

## Is there funding available for the pilot program?

*Currently funding is available for the refresher-training portion of the Pilot Recertification Program. Reimbursement is available to course sponsors or agencies for candidates who renew their certification through the pilot program.*

- Reimbursement Rate

- EMT-Basic \$300.00
- EMT-Intermediate \$375.00
- EMT-Critical Care \$400.00
- Paramedic \$500.00

- Reimbursement paid to Course Sponsor or Agency

Either the Course Sponsor or the EMS Agency can apply for reimbursement. If the candidate enrolls in and attends a refresher course to meet the continuing education requirements the course sponsor can seek state reimbursement. Course Sponsors may offer special refresher courses that cover the specific core-content material required for the pilot program. The candidate can only receive credit for class/lab sessions he/she

attends. No credit can be awarded for challenged or waived sessions. The course sponsor may voucher for state reimbursement upon the candidates completion of the core-content material. The course sponsor may not charge tuition to the student or agency if they plan to receive state reimbursement.

If an Agency pays for the candidate's refresher-continuing education activities, the Agency may voucher the state for reimbursement of those expenses up to the maximum rate listed above. The agency may voucher for reimbursement after the candidate has achieved re-certification through the pilot program

### Other Frequently Asked Questions

#### *Can Instructors participate in the Pilot Program?*

Yes, Certified Instructor Coordinators (CIC) and Certified Lab Instructors (CLI) may participate in the pilot program but they are also required to take the State's written certification examination prior to renewing their CIC/CLI. Certified Instructors must achieve a score of 80% or greater in order to renew their instructor certification. If the CIC/CLI enrolls in a refresher course as part of pilot program they should plan on taking the written examination with the class. Instructors may also enroll in courses that they are teaching, and take the written certification examination with their class.

#### *Does participating in the pilot program mean I never have to take an examination?*

No, there will be examinations, quizzes, and practical evaluations as part of your continuing education activities. Participants in the pilot program must actively participate in all of the continuing education requirements, including any testing activities. The continuing education program may use pre and post quizzes to measure what learning has taken place. Some programs will use examinations at the end of the program to determine if the participants need any further remediation. Some programs may use games like "Jeopardy" or similar activities to "test" what the participants know. Practical evaluation may include the observation of group practice activities or a more formal skill evaluation station.

#### **Participants are not required to take the State written certification examination.**

The biggest difference is that the quizzes, exams and practical evaluation in continuing education programs are designed to let the participant know their strengths and weaknesses.

#### *Do I have to take a Refresher Course to meet the requirements of the "Refresher Training" section?*

No, there are many ways to meet the requirements of Section IA: Refresher Training. The continuing education activities to review the core content material must be coordinated by a Certified Instructor Coordinator (CIC). This can be done through in-service training or drills as long as the sessions are coordinated by a CIC.

Many Course Sponsors are offering special courses just to meet the "refresher training" requirements of the pilot program. Some Sponsors are allowing participants to attend specific sessions of an on-going refresher course.

#### *Does everyone in my agency have to attend the same continuing education activities?*

No, each individual can use a different means of completing the requirements. For example, some may attend a full refresher course, some may take a class here and there, some will have a lot of continuing education activities already and some will be starting from scratch. Each person will

be treated as an individual. The idea is to open up more options and choices in the way your members re-certify.

***National Registry is a two-year certification, is the pilot program only for two-years?***

No, certification in New York is issued for a three-year period.

***I have attended EMS conferences and other continuing education activities already, can any of my previous activities count towards the pilot program?***

Yes, all continuing education activity you have participated in since the last time you certified is eligible credit for the pilot recert program. You must be able to document your attendance and provide information on the topic, date, time and instructor.

***I am already a Nationally Registered EMT/AEMT can I renew my New York State certification at the same time I reregister with NREMT?***

Yes, if you are a registered participant in the pilot program and registered with the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT), you can renew your New York State certification at the same time you reregister with NREMT. Complete the "NREMT Reregistration Report" sent to you by NREMT. Attached the appropriate documents. Make a photocopy of this material; send the originals to the NREMT and copy to the State EMS Office (send NYS paperwork in if you have less than 9 months left on your NYS certification). The candidate is responsible for all applicable NREMT fees.

***Do I get extra time added to my new card if I mail my renewal application in more than nine months before my certification expires?***

NO. If you mail in your recertification packet with nine or less months left on your certification the remaining time will be added to your new card.

***What if I take a challenge exam to waive attendance in some refresher course sessions, do I get credit from them in the pilot program?***

No, you can only receive continuing education/refresher credits for the classes you actually participate in.

***If I take a full refresher course without taking the state exam with the class, will that meet all the requirements for the Pilot Recertification?***

NO. You can take a complete refresher course but you may only use the hours to fulfill the "refresher training" or "Core Content" requirements for the level at which you wish to certify.

*Who should I contact if I have any other questions?*

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