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Emergency Medical Dispatcher Certification and License Renewal Information Revised July 30, 2014

Purpose

This document was created by Maine EMS and the ESCB to assist Maine licensed emergency medical dispatchers in the license renewal process. Maine Emergency Medical Services (Maine EMS) is the Bureau within the Maine Department of Public Safety that licenses emergency medical dispatchers. The Emergency Services Communications Bureau (ESCB) is responsible for emergency medical dispatcher training.

License Required

Maine EMS law (32 M.R.S.A. §85-A) requires that any person engaged in providing emergency medical dispatch (EMD) services be licensed by the State.

Emergency Medical Dispatcher licenses are issued for a two year period, with the exception that Maine EMS may adjust the length of a license for up to twenty-seven months to provide a three month period between International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) certification expiration and Maine EMS license expiration. Other licensing periods may apply based upon the emergency medical dispatcher's certification date.

There is no "grace period" following the expiration of an EMD license. Once an emergency medical dispatcher's EMD license has expired, the dispatcher may not legally provide emergency medical dispatch services until the license has been renewed by Maine EMS.

Certification vs. Licensure

To prevent confusion and possible unlicensed practice, the emergency medical dispatcher needs to know the definition of *certification* and *licensure* as the terms apply to the dispatcher's ability and authorization to practice emergency medical dispatch service in Maine.

Several years ago, the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) produced a document that helps define the difference between certification and licensure. NREMT defines *Certification* as

1. A voluntary process;
2. By a private organization;
3. For the purpose of providing the public information on those individuals who have successfully completed the certification process (usually entailing successful completion of educational and testing requirements) and demonstrated their ability to perform their profession competently.

NREMT defines *licensure* as the state's grant of legal authority, pursuant to the state's police powers, to practice a profession within a designated scope of practice. Under the licensure system, states define, by statute, the tasks and function or scope of practice of a profession and provide that these tasks may be legally performed only by those who are licensed. As such, licensure prohibits anyone from practicing the profession who is not licensed, regardless of whether or not the individual has been certified by a private organization.

For the emergency medical dispatcher in Maine, certification is obtained and maintained through the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED). Your IAED Advanced EMD certificate is evidence that you have completed an initial course and testing in emergency medical dispatch *and* that you maintain your certification through continuing education as required by IAED.

However, IAED certification alone does not authorize you to practice EMD in Maine; you must hold a current Maine EMD license to practice in the State, except as provided in Chapter 3-A §6 of the Maine EMS System Rules (dated May 1, 2013).

Training Required for EMD License Renewal

Every two years, emergency medical dispatchers must submit twenty –four (24) hours continuing education - and CPR certification - to IAED in order to renew IAED certification. The number and types of hours accepted for IAED recertification may be found on the IAED web site at:

<http://emergencydispatch.org/Recertification>

EMD Quality Assurance case reviewers (ED-Qs) must submit a total of thirty (30) hours of continuing education - and CPR certification - in order to recertify with IAED.

An important note: CDE hour totals do not include CPR certification required for EMD & EMD-Q. In other words an EMD will need to submit twenty-four hours of continuing education plus a current CPR card in order to renew IAED certification.

The CPR certification must include Adult, Child and Infant CPR, and automatic external defibrillation (AED).

Dispatchers need to complete recertification with IAED well prior to their certification expiration in order to prevent lapsed certification and to ensure that a current certification may be submitted with the license renewal form that is submitted to Maine EMS.

EMD center directors & supervisors can track their agency's EMD certifications online at the IAED's website in the "Members Area." EMD-Q certification tracking will soon be available as well.

To set-up certification tracking, go to: <http://members.emergencydispatch.org/> The link brings the user to a window that asks for a user name and password. The site then asks if the person is a supervisor. If the answer is "Yes", that ends the process, and the IAED will confirm the person's supervisory status by phone. Once confirmed by IAED, the supervisor will be given the links to track all of their employees. Otherwise, an individual is permitted to see their own progress once a password is created

IAED Recertification Information

Currently, for any agency with expiring EMD's or EMD-Q's, the IAED will send out a courtesy notification to agencies informing them of EMDs and EMD-Qs whose licenses expire in the next three month period

Recertifications to IAED may be submitted up to six months in advance. Do not wait for the IAED courtesy notification mailing to begin the process. As soon as the EMD has completed the minimum necessary CDE hours (within the six months prior to certification expiration), start the process.

EMD recertification may be completed online. This is the quickest way to receive an IAED reply, rather than utilizing the mail to receive and send a hard-copy exam and recertification application.

Experience has shown that EMD centers who allow EMDs to take the recertification exam OFF-duty, rather than while staffing a console have a more positive outcome (i.e., less chance of the test "timing-out" and the ability of the dispatcher to concentrate on successfully completing the test).

EMD recertification is available at the IAED's website at:

<http://www.emergencydispatch.org/recertification/index.php>

Although the Advanced EMD recertification test is available online, the EMD-Q recertification exam is available only in paper form.

IAED will send hard copies of the EMD and EMD-Q recertification exams to the EMD Center director, upon request. Center directors may request exam copies by calling the Academy Member Service Department at 800-960-6236 or by emailing them at: Info@emergencydispatch.org

Having exam copies on-hand at the EMD Center allows center directors to begin the recertification process well before the recertification notice is received by the individual dispatcher, thereby helping to avoid the "crunch" of an EMD license that cannot be renewed because the dispatcher's IAED recertification has not been processed.

Recertification Fees

1. **PSAP Employees** – The IAED recertification fee for dispatchers who are employed by one of Maine PSAPs is paid for by the Maine Emergency Services Communications Bureau (ESCB). When filling out your application for recertification, enter "Maine ESCB" in the "PO Enclosed" section of the form to alert IAED personnel that the ESCB will be paying for the recertification. Note: The ESCB will pay the initial recertification fee; if additional fees are required because of required re-testing, the costs are the responsibility of the emergency medical dispatcher and/or the EMD Center.
2. **Non PSAP Employees** – The dispatcher must enclose the appropriate fee, or a PO number from the dispatch center with whom the dispatcher is employed. A complete listing of recertification fees may be found on the IAED web site at: <http://emergencydispatch.org/Recertification>

Emergency Medical Dispatcher Quality Assurance EMD-Q Certifications

A person who has completed Emergency Medical Dispatch Quality Assurance Case Reviewer (EMD-Q) certification through the IAED may submit that certification as part of an emergency medical dispatcher license renewal application.

EMD-Q certification supersedes EMD certification. Once certified as an EMD-Q, a person does not need to maintain both an advanced EMD certification and an EMD-Q certification.

A certified EMD-Q will recertify with IAED and may use the EMD-Q certification to fulfill all training requirements needed to renew an EMD license in Maine

EMD-Q recertification hours and information may be found at:

<http://emergencydispatch.org/Recertification>

Emergency Medical Dispatch Quality Assurance and Improvement case reviewers (EMD-Qs) must possess current EMD-Q certification in order to perform EMD quality assurance case reviews.

As previously mentioned, EMD-Q recertification exams are currently not available in an online format. IAED has informed Maine EMS that EMD-Q online recertification testing will be available late 2014/early 2015.

License Renewal

In order to receive an initial or renewal license to practice EMD in Maine, a dispatcher applies for renewal online at: <http://www.maine.gov/ems/providers/licensing/eLicense.html>

Online licensing is the fastest, easiest way to obtain a new or renewed EMD license.

Maine EMS continues to accept paper applications. In order to apply for a Maine EMD license using a paper application, the dispatcher must submit:

- A photocopy of a current IAED certification card or certification verification letter from IAED; and,
- A Maine EMS license renewal application form. License renewal forms may be downloaded from the Maine EMS web site's *Applications and Forms* web page:

<http://www.maine.gov/ems/documents/MEMSLicenseRenewal.pdf>

Emergency Medical Dispatchers and EMD Center Directors are encouraged to submit license renewal applications up to ninety days prior to license expiration. Early application submission helps ensure that there's adequate time for us to review the applications and get back to the EMD and EMD Center Director in case there's a problem with the application.

EMDs must hold a valid Maine license in order to practice in the State. As previously mentioned, there is no grace period; if an EMD's license expires, he or she cannot legally practice EMD until a renewal license has been issued.

EMD center directors are responsible to ensure that no 9-1-1 dispatcher processes emergency medical calls unless they are licensed.

Practice of emergency medical dispatch without a valid license is a violation of Maine law and Rules, and subjects the emergency medical dispatcher and the EMD Center to disciplinary action.

More Information

Questions concerning EMD training should be directed to David Culp, ESCB Operations Manager, at Tel. 207-287-1598, or by email at david.a.culp@maine.gov

If you have information or questions about EMD licensing or license renewal, please contact Drexell White, Maine EMS EMD Program Manager at Tel. 207-626-3864, or by email at drexell.r.white@maine.gov

For more information about the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch certification and recertification, go to the IAED's web site at www.emergencydispatch.org

Center directors may request EMD and EMD-Q recertification exams by calling Adam Hinckley at Priority Dispatch at 1-800-363-9127 ext 132.

If centers would like to go directly to the recertification source, Arabella VanBeuge oversees the IAED's certification/recertification processing division. She may be reached at 800-960-6236.

You may also want to visit Priority Dispatch Inc's website at www.PriorityDispatch.net for additional information about protocols and courses.