

CONNECTICUT EMS **INITIAL TRAINING, CERTIFICATION** **AND RECERTIFICATION OF EMS PROFESSIONALS**

Public Act No. 19-118, passed during the 2019 legislative session, made changes to statutory language regarding the initial certification and recertification of EMS personnel including EMR, EMT, AEMT and EMS Instructor (EMSI) personnel. Section 57 and 58 of that Public Act made changes to Section 20-206jj and 20-206mm

Please note: Nothing in this notice or recent legislation requires a currently certified EMR, EMT or paramedic who *does not* hold NREMT certification to obtain NREMT certification.

Certification Expiration Time

The recertification intervals for EMR, EMT, AEMT and EMS-I have changed from three years to two years. This will be implemented with any certificate issued or renewed on or after January 1, 2020. All certifications issued prior to January 1, 2020 will remain valid until their respective expiration date. All certifications issued on or after January 1, 2020 will be valid for two years.

Paramedic licensure remains valid for one year, expiring in the month of the licensee's birth.

Initial Certification - Education

All EMR, EMT and AEMT initial certification education programs will follow the current EMS Education Standards for the National Scope of Practice Model. Paramedic training programs will follow EMS Education Standards and must be accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the EMS Professions (CoAEMSP),

Initial certification programs will continue to require medical direction from a sponsor hospital EMS medical director, coordination by a certified EMSI holding provider credentials at or above the level of certification training to be provided, and approval from the Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) subject to the existing process. Effective immediately, the current T-1 Application will now be a single-page T-1 form that will accompany a syllabus and additional documents as needed.

Upon completion of a course of training, the EMSI will submit a "T-4 Report of Course Completion" to OEMS through the eLicense online platform. Candidates will apply for initial certification using the eLicense system. *Paper applications will no longer be accepted.*

Initial Certification – Examinations

Beginning on January 1, 2020, all persons seeking initial EMS certification and licensure in Connecticut will be required to complete the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) cognitive and psychomotor examination for the corresponding level of provider.

- **EMR personnel** will now be required to complete the NREMT cognitive examination (computer based exam by NREMT at Pearson Vue) and complete the EMR psychomotor (practical) exam at one of the OEMS-approved EMS exam sites currently conducting the EMT practical exam. *The current practice of OEMS-administered initial certification exams and classroom based practical exams will cease on January 1, 2020.* The NREMT has no minimum age requirement for certification, however the minimum age requirement in Connecticut remains 14.
- **EMT personnel** have been required to complete the NREMT exams since 1998.
- **AEMT personnel** have been required to complete the NREMT exams since July 1, 2019.
- **Paramedic personnel** have been required to complete the NREMT exams since 1996.

Recertification - Continuing Education

The concept of a stand-alone traditional “refresher” course will be transitioned to a national “continued competency” program that includes a primary core education plan and a flexible continuing education model. This applies to *all certified EMR, EMT and AEMT personnel* in Connecticut, regardless of current NREMT status.

This statutory change authorizes OEMS to adopt the current model for recertification education. Effective January 1, 2020, all certified EMS personnel will be required to complete the NREMT “**National Continued Competency Program (NCCP)**” recertification training prior to applying for renewal of an EMS certificate.

Prior to applying for renewal of an EMS certificate, the holder shall complete the required hours of continuing education in the prescribed categories, complete a skills verification, and enter their continuing education in to the NREMT portal (provided at no cost to the provider or the state by the NREMT). All certified EMS personnel in Connecticut are required to have an account with the NREMT even if they do not hold NREMT certification.

The NCCP: The National Continued Competency Program (NCCP) was constructed using methodology similar to that of the American Board of Medical Specialties requirements, and streamlines the recertification process into three strategic categories of continuing education: National, Local, and Individual. [More information about the NCCP is available on the NREMT website.](#) The NCCP is designed to encourage EMS personnel to pursue life-long education while also providing state and local agencies the freedom to customize education to meet local operational needs.

1. The **national component (NCCR)** of the NCCP constitutes 50% of the total recertification requirements. Topics included in the national requirement reflect current trends in evidence-based medicine, scope of practice changes and position papers from numerous

associations involved with EMS research. There is an additional focus on those patient presentations that are low frequency but high criticality. **Each course must follow the outline provided by the NREMT which may be downloaded as a PDF from the NREMT site.** Instructors are free to implement these outlines in a learner-centered fashion, they need not be entirely lecture.

2. The **local component (LCCR)** of the NCCP constitutes 25% of the total recertification requirements. Specific topic requirements may be decided by your specific state, region or local agency. Examples of local content topics typically include state or local protocols, areas of specialization, or tasks that require additional focus based on QA/QI. The local component allows national recertification requirements to be adapted to the needs of the state and local agencies. **At this time, the Department of Public Health defers the local component to the local sponsor hospital medical director or EMS service, however reserves the right to modify this at any time.**
3. The **individual component (ICCR)** of the NCCP constitutes 25% of the recertification requirements. EMS personnel are free to take any EMS-related education that is approved by the Commission on Approval of Prehospital Continuing Education (CAPCE) or by the Connecticut Department of Public Health, or by any other state health or EMS agency. Examples of continuing education in this category may include EMS conference sessions, in-house training or college courses relevant to EMS.
4. A skills verification must be completed prior to application for recertification. This may be completed as part of a continuing education program or may be documented by any current EMS instructor.

In accordance with NREMT standards, the following table outlines how much content may be obtained through distributive learning:

Component level	Distributive learning allowed
National Component	Up to one-third (1/3)
Local Component	Up to two-thirds (2/3)
Individual Component	Up to 100%

Continuing education may be completed in Connecticut or in another state. Education earned in another state will be authorized by Connecticut if it is approved by CAPCE or by the local authority having jurisdiction over EMS education.

	EMR	EMT	AEMT	Paramedic
National	8	20	25	30
Local	4	10	12.5	15
Individual	4	10	12.5	15
Total Hours	16	40	50	60

Recertification - Examination

Effective January 1, 2020, the OEMS administered recertification exam for EMR and EMT personnel will be discontinued. In keeping with current national trends, no written examination will be required for recertification provided all continuing education has been completed. The current EMR, EMR-R and EMT-R exams will be recalled by the OEMS, and the system of proctor assignments will be concluded on December 31, 2019. There will no longer be a requirement for EMS Instructor applicants to take an EMT exam.

Implementation Timeline

All persons seeking initial certification as an EMR, EMT or AEMT on **or after January 1, 2020** must complete the NREMT cognitive and psychomotor exams.

Certified EMS Instructors may continue to submit requests for approval of **traditional refresher training** for any course that starts prior to December 31, 2019. Such refresher training may follow the current (pre-2020) model of training. If an applicant, holding a certificate expiring after January 1, 2020, takes such a course, such course hours will be counted towards the requirement of the NCCP model of education. *For example, an EMT whose certification expires June 20, 2020 attends a 30 hour refresher in November, 2019, they may apply 30 hours from the refresher towards the 40 hours required of the NCCP.* This transition period of accepting either traditional or continuing education will end on December 31, 2020.

Certified EMS Instructors may begin submitting requests for approval of **continuing education** on **September 1, 2019** and may begin implementing such education upon receiving approval from OEMS. A new single-page T-2 form for continuing education approval will be provided and will replace the current “T-1” form for refreshers. Continuing education approval will no longer be restricted to date and location; programs will be approved for a period of one (1) year.

Certified EMS Instructors may apply for a full NCCR module or continuing education units in any appropriate number. Once approved, such programs may be provided as needed to satisfy the needs of the EMS community. For example, a four-hour CME on neonatal care may be offered every month as needed, and divided in to two-hour modules.

Standardized courses, such as those from the American Heart Association (AHA), National Association of EMTs (NAEMT), the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) and others **may** be used to fulfill topics in the National, Local, and Individual Components. *For example, an EMT who attends an Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) may apply those hours towards the “Ambulance Safety”, “Culture of Safety” and “Crew Resource Management” portions of the Operations topics. Or, if that EMT has already fulfilled those topics, the EMT may apply those hours to the LCCR or ICCR categories.*

Certain professionals may request approval to conduct a limited scope continuing education program. Such approval will be limited to the clinical field of that expert. *For example, a Respiratory Therapist may offer a 2-hour CME on “Oxygenation and Ventilation for EMS Professionals,” however they would not be approved to conduct a full 20-hour NCCR.*

Providers of continuing education will no longer submit T-4 forms, they will only be used for initial EMS education. They must, however, issue a course completion document to any person who completes the education program.

2019-2021 Recertification Education Requirements

Exp. Date	EMR	EMT
2019	Traditional 18-hour refresher with exam.	Traditional 30-hour refresher with exam.
2020	NCCP 16-hour program	NCCP 40-hour program*
2021 or later	NCCP 16-hour program	NCCP 40-hour program

Traditional EMR and EMT refreshers will only be provided until December 31, 2019. Any application processed in 2020 will be issued a 2-year certification.

A person who completes a traditional refresher course including the OEMS written exam on or prior to December 31, 2019 AND submits the application for renewal by December 31, 2019 will receive a 3-year certification.

*A person who attends a traditional refresher course may claim credit for that training towards the 40-hour requirement. *For example, an EMT whose certification expires June 30, 2020 attends a 30 hour refresher in November, 2019, and fails to complete the application for renewal until 2020, they may apply 30 hours from the refresher towards the 40 hours required of the NCCP.*

Tracking Continuing Education

All certified providers must track their continuing education activity utilizing the NREMT.org platform. This is available at no cost to the user or to the state. That platform will identify the categories of education that are needed and allow the user to track their own progress.

Completion of the NREMT continuing education alone does not complete the recertification process. During the final 6 months of a provider's certification period, the provider must complete an application for renewal on the eLicense system. At that time, the provider will certify that they have completed the required education and uploaded evidence of training to NREMT.

Other Changes

Effective January 1, 2020, all persons who earn NREMT certification are to maintain such NREMT certification throughout the life of their Connecticut certification. Those persons who did not hold NREMT certification may continue to maintain Connecticut certification alone.

The Department of Public Health will enter into an agreement with the NREMT called the Mark King Initiative, which allows EMS providers holding a current certification by CT DPH, who previously held NREMT certification, to re-enter the NREMT with a one-time fee and application, and without the need for any written or practical exam. Any NREMT certified provider who obtains their NREMT certification through this process **MUST** maintain it for the life of their state certification.

No provision is made for those who have never held NREMT certification to be granted such certification automatically. A currently certified EMS professional who has never been certified by the NREMT may obtain such certification by completing the NREMT cognitive and psychomotor examinations.

Training and Education Forms

The current T-1 “Application to Conduct EMS Training” form will be eliminated. A new one-page T-1 form will be provided along with an instruction page. One T-1 form is to be submitted for each initial certification training program.

A new T-2 “Application to Conduct EMS Continuing Education” form will be provided along with an instruction page. One T-2 form is to be submitted to each continuing education program.

The T-4 “Report of Course Completion” form will be used **ONLY** for initial certification programs. Continuing education programs shall maintain a roster of attendees, however they need not submit the roster to OEMS. Providers of continuing education are encouraged to utilize the NREMT.org platform to track CME.

Reinstatement of Lapsed Certification

A certification (EMR, EMT, AEMT, EMSI) that has expired remains valid for ninety (90) days.

A certification that expired less than 2 years may be reinstated by completing the required NCCP continuing education requirements as listed in the earlier section. The applicant must submit an approved “Reinstatement Application” which is available on the OEMS website.

A certification that has expired more than 2 years may be reinstated by completing the initial training and testing requirements required for initial certification. This is in line with current NREMT certification policies.

A person may apply to OEMS during their active certification period to request approved inactive status, during which time they may not practice in their certified capacity. They may return to

active status by completing the required NCCP continuing education requirements as listed above as if their certification had expired less than two years.

Licensed Paramedics

These changes have limited impact on paramedics.

There is no current statutory or regulatory requirement for Connecticut licensed paramedics to document continuing education. Those who elect to maintain NREMT certification are subject to the education requirements of the NREMT. Connecticut licensed paramedics who function only at the EMR, EMT or AEMT level should consult with their medical director for advice on minimum EMS continuing education requirements.

This office will continue to provide approval to paramedic level continuing medical education in the manner outlined above.

Acronyms & Definitions

NCCR – National Continued Competency Requirement – 50% of the continuing education required based on NREMT recommendations. This replaces the traditional refresher program. Up to 1/3 of this portion may be obtained through distance education.

LCCR – Local (or State) Continued Competency Requirement – 25% of the continuing education required based on NREMT recommendations. This replaces the traditional refresher program. Up to 2/3 of this portion may be obtained through distance education. Must be CAPCE or state OEMS approved education.

ICCR – Individual Continued Competency Requirement – 25% of the continuing education required based on NREMT recommendations. This replaces the traditional refresher program. All of this portion may be obtained through distance education. May be obtained from conferenced, journals, in-house training etc.

CAPCE – The Commission on Accreditation for Prehospital Continuing Education

Distributive Education - An educational activity in which the learner, the instructor, and the educational materials are not all present at the same time, and students and instructors are not able to interact in real time.

Video Instructor Led Training (VILT) - training that is delivered in a virtual or simulated environment, or when instructor and learner are in separate locations. Virtual instruction environments are designed to simulate the traditional classroom or learning experience. VILT can be conducted synchronously or asynchronously. This counts as “live instructor” for EMS education.

Approved Inactive Status – An EMR, EMT, AEMT or EMSI certified person may enter a voluntary “Approved Inactive” status by applying on an OEMS form. They may resume normal certification and practice upon completing the usual recertification requirements. During the inactive period, the person may not practice in any way, including as a volunteer. This allows a person to remain inactive for a period without the need to retake an initial course.

Resources

[NREMT Agency Guide to Recertification](#) – This document outlines the NREMT requirements for recertification continuing education.

[NREMT One Page Grid – All Levels of NCCR](#) – Outline the topic and hour requirement for NCCR continuing education by level of certified provider.

Detailed education outlines for NCCR programs:

- [EMR NCCP](#)
- [EMT NCCP](#)
- [AEMT NCCP](#)
- [Paramedic NCCP](#)

One-page flyers regarding NCCR programs:

- [EMR Brochure](#)
- [EMT Brochure](#)
- [AEMT Brochure](#)
- [Paramedic Brochure](#)

[NREMT Standardized Course Guide](#)

[NREMT Webpage about NCCP](#)

Note to instructors: The NREMT “Agency Guide to Recertification” and education outlines are hereby incorporated by reference as official policy of the OEMS. All continuing education programs shall follow these guidelines.

Note to providers: This document refers to certification practices only. Local agencies and sponsor hospital medical directors may continue to apply other requirements to EMS personnel such as certification in ACLS, PALS, BLS, compliance with policies and procedures and specific trainings or skill competencies.

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. May a certified person whose certification expires on September 30 or December 31, 2019 wait until after January 1, 2020 to complete recertification training in order to avoid taking the current examination?**
 - a. Allowing one's certification to expire is not advised. All certified personnel should strive to complete all recertification education well before their expiration date and prepare for a 4 to 6 week timeframe for processing.
- 2. Should a certified provider submit continuing education certificates to OEMS?**
 - a. No – providers should keep their proof of completion of continuing education and produce it upon request of the Department. The NREMT.org website allows for uploading of documents for safe keeping.
- 3. Can a provider hold NREMT certification in place of Connecticut state certification?**
 - a. No – The state certification is permission to practice and must be maintained. NREMT certification is one route of earning state certification.
- 4. Will expiration dates be changed to match the NREMT cycle?**
 - a. No – The current calendar-quarter based system of expiration will be maintained.
- 5. Who may document skills competency?**
 - a. Certified EMS instructors may document skills competency using the NREMT.org website.
 - b. Agency approved “training officers” may document skills competency for affiliated EMS professionals. Unaffiliated EMS professionals must have their skills verified by an EMS instructor.

Sample EMT Recertification Cycle

This outline could apply to an EMT whose certification expires on September 30, 2021. This is a representation only and does not need to be followed exactly.

During the period of October 1, 2019 and September 30, 2021, the EMT will complete the following:

1. NREMT NCCR – 20 hours of compliant education
 - a. 12 hours classroom
 - b. 4 hours online CME
 - c. 4 hours live distance education (Virtual Instructor Led)
2. NREMT LCCR/ICCR – 20 hours of compliant education
 - a. 1 hour Bloodborne Pathogens at local agency
 - b. 2 hours EMS journal article CME
 - c. 3 hours CPR certification course
 - d. 2 hours stroke CME at local hospital
 - e. 8 hours PHTLS course
 - f. 2 hours call review with sponsor hospital physician
 - g. 2 hours skill verification with EMS-I

After each training session, the EMT will utilize their NREMT.org account to log their education hours and upload a course completion certificate.

During the final six months of the certification cycle (between April 1, 2021 and September 30, 2021) the EMT will utilize their eLicense account to file a renewal application with the Department of Public Health. In this application they will verify that they have completed the required continuing education, subject to audit by the Department.

Please note: This applies to Connecticut EMT certification. The EMT will apply for NREMT certification renewal during the six months preceding their expiration, which occurs every two (2) years on March 31.