

**Continuing Education Guidelines for EMS Providers
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Continuing Education Guidelines of EMS Providers

Introduction

This guide is designed to outline the recertification requirements for Iowa EMS providers. This is to be used only as a guide for the purpose of EMS continuing education and is not intended to be a substitute to the Iowa Administrative Code 641—131.

EMS certification is for a period of two years. Emergency care providers must have a current Iowa certification to provide emergency medical care.

Renewal Applications

Providers may renew online 90 days prior to the expiration date. To renew online, access the System Registry from the Bureau of Emergency and Trauma Services web site at <http://idph.iowa.gov/BETS/EMS/system-registry>.

Online renewal will not be accepted if the certification is expired. Expired providers must complete the late renewal process.

Affirmative Renewal of Certification Applications may be downloaded from the Bureau's web site. Applications must be postmarked by the expiration date to be accepted. If the application is not submitted prior to the expiration date see *Late Renewal* below.

It is the provider's responsibility to ensure that their address is current with the Bureau. Addresses may be updated through the system registry.

Renewal Requirements

The table below illustrates the minimum number of Continuing Education Hours (CEH) emergency medical care providers must have to renew certification:

Level	Hours	Renewal Fee
First Responder	12	\$0
EMT-Ambulance	24	\$0
EMT-Defibrillator	24	\$0
EMT-Basic/EMT	24	\$0
EMT-Intermediate/AEMT	36	\$10
EMT-Paramedic	48	\$25
Paramedic Specialist/ Paramedic	60	\$25

All continuing education hours must be completed during the certification period. Hours may not be "rolled-over" from one certification period to the following period. At least one-half of the total CEH must be designated as formal hours. Providers must also have a current course completion card for cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) that includes CPR, automated external defibrillation (AED) and obstructed airway procedures for all age groups.

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Instructors of approved continuing education courses may use those courses for renewal. The courses may be used for formal or optional education as designated in *Continuing Education Approval* below.

Military Active Duty

Military personnel on active duty may renew by submitting a copy of their Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (form DD214) and a completed Affirmative Renewal Application. A provider who has served honorably in military service will be deemed to have complied with continuing education requirements.

Formal Hours

As an emergency medical care provider, it is important to keep current with medical knowledge and skills. For that reason, a minimum of 50 percent of the required hours for recertification must qualify as formal education hours.

In order to meet the requirements to qualify as formal education, course topics must be relevant to the delivery and documentation of patient care. These courses are based on the training curricula for the provider's level and address at least one of the following topics 1) airway management 2) patient assessment 3) trauma/medical/behavioral emergencies 4) obstetrics/gynecology 5) infants and children 6) patient care record documentation.

The Bureau may also designate courses developed and presented by bureau staff or their designees for formal education hours. Information concerning the approval of formal education may be found under *Continuing Education Approval* below.

Optional Hours

Emergency medical care providers need to have knowledge and skills in areas other than direct patient care. For example, providers need to understand incident command structure and how to respond to a hazardous materials situation. There are many courses that are necessary in order to be a well prepared responder, but do not have direct connection to patient care. Courses that do not have a direct connection to patient care can be used for renewal as optional hours.

Examples of courses and activities which may be counted as optional education include:

- 1) Nationally recognized EMS-related course (which are not designated as formal by an EMS Training Program)
- 2) EMS self-study courses (i.e. computer based or periodical based continuing education)
- 3) Medical director or designee case review
- 4) Clinical rounds with medical team (grand rounds)
- 5) Working with students as an EMS field preceptor
- 6) Hospital or nursing home clinical performance (as part of training a health training program)
- 7) Skills workshops/maintenance

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- 8) Community public information education projects
- 9) Emergency driving training
- 10) EMS course audits
- 11) Injury prevention or wellness initiatives
- 12) EMS Service operations (e.g. management programs or continuous quality improvement)
- 13) EMS System Development meetings (county, regional or state)
- 14) Disaster preparedness
- 15) Emergency runs/responses as the primary attendant with an authorized volunteer EMS service program
- 16) EMS-Instructor development

Limit on Hours

Some topics are limited to a maximum number of hours for renewal. These topics, and the limits, are:

- 1) Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (2 hours)
- 2) Disaster Drills (4 hours)
- 3) Rescue (4 hours)
- 4) Hazardous Materials (8 hours)
- 5) Practical Examination Evaluator (4 hours)
- 6) Topics outside of the provider's core curriculum (8 hours)

Continuing Education Approval

Formal Hour Approval

Formal hours taken within the state of Iowa must be approved by an [EMS Training Program](#), the Continuing Education Coordinating Board for EMS (CECBEMS) or the Bureau. Courses approved by an EMS Training Program or the Bureau will have a formal sponsor number assigned by an authorized EMS training program, followed by an 'FE' designation at the end of the sponsor number. Courses approved by CECBEMS need to meet the requirements for formal education as described above. Internet-delivered courses which are CECBEMS approved, and are based on the topic areas described in *Formal Education* above, may be used for formal hours.

Optional Hour Approval

Courses used for optional education do not require a formal sponsor number.

Optional education may be approved by an EMS Training Program, CECBEMS, the Bureau, the service program medical director, or a community sponsor. Courses approved by an EMS Training Program or the Bureau will be assigned a sponsor number and have an "OE" designation. Documentation of the name of the program or event, date and title, number of hours approved, and applicable signatures should be kept for courses without a sponsor number.

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Out-of-State Continuing Education

Out-of-state continuing education courses will be accepted if the course has been approved for emergency medical care personnel in the state in which the course was held. A copy of the course completion documentation should be kept for verification. In order to qualify as formal CEH, courses taken out of state need to meet the requirements for formal education as described above.

Using College Courses for Continuing Education

Courses taken at an accredited college or university in the physical, social or behavioral sciences may be used for provider renewal. In order to qualify for formal hours, courses have to meet the requirements for formal education as described above. College transcripts and course syllabi should be kept for documentation. One quarter credit hours is considered equivalent to 10 CEH. One semester hour is considered equivalent to 15 CEH.

Renewal of Endorsement

Instructor

EMS instructors must attend at least one Bureau Instructor workshop during each certification period. If an instructor attained the endorsement during the current certification period, that will count as attending a workshop.

Critical Care Paramedic

Paramedic Specialists with a Critical Care Paramedic (CCP) endorsement must include a minimum of eight hours of approved CCP core curriculum topics within their formal hours.

Evaluator

There is no renewal requirement for this endorsement.

Extension of Renewal

Medical Extension

If an individual is unable to complete the required continuing education during the certification period due to medical reasons, an extension of certification **may** be issued. Submission of a signed statement from an appropriate medical authority is required and must be approved by the Bureau. The letter must include information concerning the reason the individual could not complete the continuing education requirements, the time period affected and the length of time requested for extension.

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Other Extension Requests

A provider who is unable to attain all continuing education requirements, and does not meet medical extension requirements, may request a 45-day extension. The provider must submit a [Request for Extension Application](#) at least 7 days prior to the expiration date, but no more than 90 days prior to the expiration date. There is a \$50 extension fee.

Late Renewal

Providers, who have allowed their certification to expire, and have completed all continuing education requirements during the certification period, are eligible to complete the late renewal process. To submit a late renewal, an Affirmative Renewal Application must be submitted along with appropriate certification fees, \$30 late fee and the required audit information.

Required audit information includes:

- 1) Date of course
- 2) Title of course
- 3) Number of hours approved
- 4) EMS Sponsor number
- 5) Appropriate signatures (if required)
- 6) Proof of current CPR training

The Affirmative Renewal Application, along with an audit reporting form, is available at <http://idph.iowa.gov/bets/ems/certification>.

Reinstatement

Providers, who have allowed their certification to expire, and have not completed all continuing education requirements during the certification period, must complete the reinstatement process. The reinstatement process includes completing specific refresher training, a practical examination and a written examination. The reinstatement application is available at www.idph.state.ia.us/ems/certification.asp.

Continuing Education Records

Continuing education records must be kept by the provider for a period of four years from the end of the certification period. If audited, the following information must be provided within 45 days: date of the program, program sponsor number, title of program, number of hours approved, and appropriate supervisor signatures if clinical or practical evaluator hours are claimed.

NREMT Registration in Lieu of Continuing Education

A provider who is registered with the National Registry of EMTs may renew their Iowa certification by meeting the National Registry's re-registration requirements. To renew the Iowa certification:

- 1) Complete the NREMT *Registration in lieu of Continuing Education Application* available at <http://idph.iowa.gov/bets/ems/certification>.
- 2) Submit proof of NREMT registration with an expiration date exceeding that of the Iowa certification.

The application must be submitted within 90 days prior to the expiration date of the provider's Iowa certification.