



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
PO BOX 360
TRENTON, N.J. 08625-0360

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

www.nj.gov/health

JUDITH M. PERSICILLI, RN, BSN, MA
Commissioner

New Jersey EMS Education Guidance

Many EMS education institutions in New Jersey are concerned about the current outbreak of the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the impact it could have on their students' educational experience. Since the spread of COVID-19 is continuing, please know that you have the Department of Health Office of Emergency Medical Services' support and that we will work with you to help you navigate the challenges this public health crisis has presented.

To prepare for possible community transmission of COVID-19, EMS education institutions should plan, prepare and decide how best to respond to facility closures and postponements. It is important to keep in mind that the decisions you make may impact your students' graduation date.

Factors to consider include, but are not limited to:

- Implement the academic continuity plan for your institution.
- Meet with the program Medical Director to discuss options for continued learning.
- Prepare to offer distance learning (i.e. webinars) or virtual instructor led training for students.
- Plan to modify, postpone or cancel classes, for learning labs, psychomotor skills, practicums, and clinical and field experiences/rotations.
- Utilize alternative clinical or field internship affiliates that are accepting students.
- Consider extending the students' learning.
- Create an emergency communication plan and maintain up to date contact information for everyone in your communication chain.
- Plan workshops and trainings to educate staff and students on prevention measures.
- Increase the daily sanitization.
- Continue to monitor current information from health officials, educational and healthcare facilities.

Some colleges, universities and hospitals are suspending instructor led courses and activities. This may impact learning labs, practicums, clinical and field experiences. Candidates who are unable to complete the educational requirements due to the public health emergency are encouraged to coordinate an action plan with their Program Director or Coordinator.

How should an EMS educational institution report program changes, modifications, closures, and suspensions to the Department?

- The Program Director or Coordinator should complete a COVID-19 related report utilizing, located at <https://nj.gov/health/ems/ems-toolbox/>, for any program change, closure, suspension, cancellation, or modification.

Can an EMS Educational Institution change their program schedule?

- Temporary schedule changes, made in response to COVID-19, are acceptable and must be reported at <http://nj.gov/health/ems/ems-toolbox/>.

If my initial EMT education program site temporarily closes, can I relocate my program without a site inspection?

- Yes, you may temporarily relocate your initial EMT program to another educational facility as long as it is ADA compliant and conducive to the learning experience.
- Program relocations must be reported as a COVID-19 related report at <http://nj.gov/health/ems/ems-toolbox/>.

If a paramedic student is unable to complete all regulatory requirements within 36 months, due to this public health emergency, will the Department grant a waiver?

- The Program Director is encouraged to work with the Medical Director to evaluate the progress of each student and develop a plan to ensure every opportunity has been taken to meet all regulatory requirements. Please consider utilizing alternative clinical and field affiliates that are accepting students.
- After an evaluation is completed, and it is determined that a waiver is needed, the Program Director should contact OEMS.
- If the Program Director can clearly demonstrate and provide evidence that the COVID-19 crisis prohibited a student from meeting all regulatory requirements within 36 months, a waiver may be granted on a case by case basis.

What if an initial EMT program student has met all program requirements EXCEPT the clinical time, can it be waived?

- The Program Coordinator is encouraged to work with the Medical Director to evaluate the progress of each student and develop a plan to ensure every

opportunity has been taken to meet all regulatory requirements. Please consider utilizing an alternative clinical affiliate that is accepting students.

- After an evaluation is completed, and it is determined that a waiver is needed, the Program Coordinator should contact OEMS.
- If the Program Coordinator can clearly demonstrate and provide evidence that the COVID-19 crisis prohibited a student from meeting all regulatory requirements, a waiver may be granted on a case by case basis.

Will the NREMT paramedic psychomotor examinations be cancelled?

- The NREMT Paramedic psychomotor examinations will continue to be administered, subject to the guidance of local health authorities nationally. The decision to cancel an examination lies with the Examination Coordinator and the National Registry Representative in coordination with the National Registry examinations team. The decision to cancel an examination will be made as soon as is practical and candidates will be notified as soon as possible. Candidates should contact the Examination Coordinator for questions and to reschedule an examination if necessary.

Will EMT and paramedic students be able to take the cognitive examination?

- Pearson VUE is closely monitoring local conditions and is following the guidance of local health authorities. Decisions will be made by each individual test center.

What if a student has not completed the NREMT testing requirements within two years due to quarantine or impacts of the public health emergency?

- These students must contact NREMT at Support@nremt.org and the Department at ems@doh.nj.gov **PRIOR** to their two year expiration date.

For additional information and resources regarding COVID-19 go to: <https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml> or call the 24-Hour Public Hotline at 1-800-222-1222 or 1-800-962-1253 if in New Jersey, but using a non-NJ cell phone to speak to a trained healthcare professional about COVID-19.

For specific information on education regulatory and compliance in New Jersey, please email OEMS at ems@doh.nj.gov.