



Virginia Psychomotor Accommodation Policy

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

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This document is intended to be distributed by course coordinators to students who after a formal review of the administrative aspects of a Virginia Basic Life Support program believe they need to pursue an accommodation.

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<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/>

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 has implications for coordinators and students in the areas of prospective student information, testing of knowledge and psychomotor competency. Among the many provisions of the ADA are several that pertain specifically to agencies, institutions and organizations that provide courses or examinations leading to certification.

The intent emphasizes that individuals with disabilities are not to be excluded from jobs that they can perform merely because a disability prevents them from taking a test or negatively influences the results of a test, which is a prerequisite to the job. Passing cognitive and psychomotor examinations during an EMS course and passing certification examinations are prerequisites for functioning as a certified EMS provider.

This law permits testing that requires the use of sensory, manual or speaking psychomotor where the tests are intended to measure essential functions of the profession. For example, an applicant with a reading disability could be required to take a cognitive examination if the ability to read is an essential function of the profession, and the examination is designed, at least in part, to measure the ability to read. An essential function of an EMS provider is the ability to read and understand small English print under highly stressful conditions for the provider and patient. A second example deals with psychomotor examinations that must be performed within established time frames.

Performing a skill within a certain time frame can be required if speed of performance is an integral part of the skill being measured. Both the ability to read and the ability to perform basic psychomotor within time frames are essential functions of an EMS Provider.

II. SCOPE

The information provided herein applies to all prehospital EMS personnel.

III. SPECIFIC DIRECTIONS

Coordinators must review the standard functional position description and the information concerning the ADA, with every prospective student. Prospective students need to understand the competencies and tasks that are required within the profession BEFORE entering a training program.

Students cannot be discriminated against on the basis of a disability in the offering of programs or services. There will be NO allowed accommodations during the course of instruction or certification examinations unless written approval is received from the certification/licensure agency, in advance. Students who have received an accommodation during the course need to fully understand that there is a separate process for requesting an accommodation for the state psychomotor examination. The certification agency will establish eligibility for an accommodation on a case-by-case basis. Documentation confirming and describing the disability must be

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submitted according to policy, for consideration.

Here are examples of accommodations that would NOT be allowed during the instructional program:

1. Additional time for psychomotor with specific time frames will NOT be allowed. Obviously, patients would suffer due to life threatening conditions in emergency situations.
2. No accommodation will be made in a training program that is not reasonably available in a prehospital environment. Students may use performance aids which could be readily available and easily accessible to them in the prehospital setting. It is the responsibility of the student to provide any personal aids they deem necessary and the certifying agency deems appropriate.

IV. DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION POLICY

A. Requesting Accommodations

"Accommodation Request" must be submitted online through the following URL:

<https://vdhems.vdh.virginia.gov/emsapps/exceptions.html>. The candidate who is requesting an accommodation must complete the Office of EMS online request form at the start of the instructional program or as soon as the need for an accommodation is recognized.

Applicants with disabilities are entitled to, and have the responsibility to meet the same deadlines for application and submission of documentation established for preregistration as non-disabled individuals. The process involved in establishing eligibility will not impose discriminatory timeliness for application on the individual with a disability.

B. Reasonable Accommodations

The certification/licensure agency will offer reasonable accommodations for the psychomotor certification exam for those persons with written documented disabilities.

V. RECORD KEEPING

Diagnostic information related to an individual's disability is highly confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties. The accommodation file will be maintained separately from the application and test result files.