

Chad Blosser

From: Chad Blosser
Sent: Thursday, March 19, 2020 3:30 PM
To: 'chad.blosser@vdh.virginia.gov'
Subject: COVID-19 Update #3 for EMS Educators

This is a blanket e-mail message to all certified Education Coordinators and ALS Coordinators.

Dear Educator,

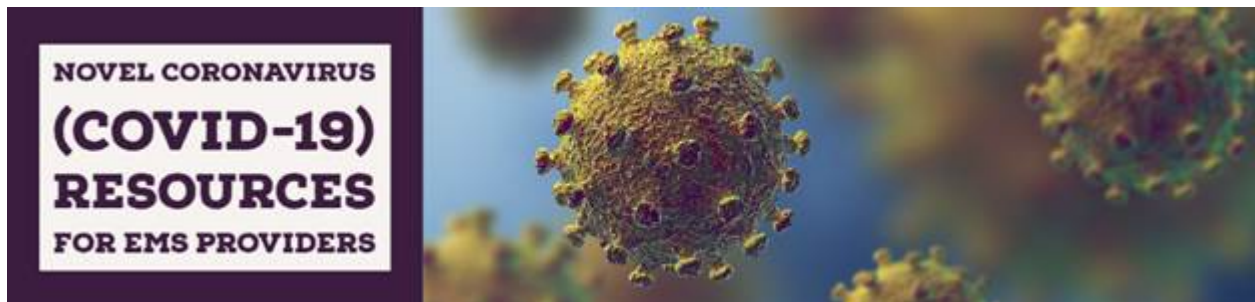
We have gathered a number of pertinent items below to assist you in your role as an EMS educator in the Commonwealth.

It is imperative that you read this thoroughly and make yourself aware of the changes outlined below due to COVID-19.

Please feel free to share/forward this message with your entire EMS agency as a way of ensuring consistent communications with all Virginia EMS Providers.

Virginia Office of EMS COVID-19 Guidance

The Office of EMS has been providing COVID-19 Guidance to Virginia licensed EMS Agencies and Virginia certified EMS Providers since late January 2020 on the Office's main webpage under the banner as displayed below. Clicking on the banner displays up-to-date information and guidance about our COVID-19 response efforts.



<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/coronavirus-2019-covid-19/>

Virginia Course Approval Requests

Effective immediately, you may submit your Course Approval Request (TR-01) electronically to the Office of EMS with the following stipulations:

- The form must be complete and submitted as a PDF.

- The form must contain either an original signature or an Adobe Digital signature from you as the Course Coordinator.
- The form must contain either an original signature or an Adobe Digital signature from your OMD or PCD. Rubberstamp signatures from an OMD will be rejected.

When submitting your Course Approval Request forms to the Office please ensure the following:

- E-mail them to: emstechasst@vdh.virginia.gov
- Subject MUST read: For Tracie Jones: Course Approval Request Attached

Please DO NOT submit your Course Approval Requests directly to Tracie’s e-mail account. We need to ensure that all course approvals come into an e-mail box which is accessible by multiple OEMS staff members.

If you have questions about this process, please feel free to reach out to Tracie Jones at tracie.jones@vdh.virginia.gov.

Virginia Continuing Education

During the course of any Governor declared State of Emergency the enforcement of regulations, is to not impede, in any way affect, the necessary delivery of services. However, this declaration does not indicate a complete abandonment of the ideal of regulatory compliance; simply to relax the commonsense enforcement of regulations to allow for the needs of citizens to be met.

The Virginia Office of EMS and the National Registry have together extended certification expiration dates for all EMS providers expiring in March, April & May—both state and/or nationally certified—until June 30, 2020. Both organization continue to daily monitor our Nation’s progress toward flattening the curve on COVID-19.

Based on the certification extensions granted under Governor Northam’s Executive Order 51 and the wide availability of Virginia approved online CE vendors and programs, the following guidance is provided:

- The Virginia Office of EMS will not be relaxing EMS Rules and Regulations or the Training Program Administration Manual (TPAM) policies for conducting, reporting and recordation of continuing education in the Commonwealth.
- Regulations and the Training Program Administration Manual does not permit conducting continuing education online via GoToMeeting, Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Capterra, TeamViewer, Cisco Webex, Skype, Google Hangouts (or any other online/web-based meeting platform) and submit CE credits to Virginia for processing.
- Education Coordinators who transition portions of initial certification programs to online content are not permitted to award CE credits for Virginia EMS providers accessing this content.
- Nationally approved continuing education programs—for example ACLS, PALS, AMLS, PHTLS, PEPP, ITLS, ECP, etc.—that have relaxed their program requirements allowing content to be completed online CANNOT be submitted to the Office of EMS for continuing education credit.

Pearson VUE Owned Professional Test Centers (PPC’s) Closing Due to COVID-19

Late Monday night, March 16, Pearson VUE notified National Registry that they were closing all Pearson Professional Center’s (PPC) in response to the rapidly developing COVID-19 situation. This decision does not affect privately run Pearson VUE Authorized Test Centers (e.g. those in Regional Councils, community college and universities) This directly

impacts all National Registry examinations delivered by Pearson VUE. The National Registry was already preparing alternative pathways, in conjunction with partners, to ensure the continuity of certification and support the national EMS system during this crisis.

These are unprecedented times. NREMT, as the Nation's EMS Certification organization, recognizes the thousands of providers on the path to EMS service. NREMT is finalizing potential solutions and will be sharing additional details in the coming days. We remain committed to supporting the vital work that you do.

Currently, there are three options that National Registry is looking at as an interim solution:

1. Have Pearson VUE open some PPC's for the health professions ONLY (e.g. EMS and Nursing). They are working with Pearson VUE to see if this would be possible. Not all existing PPC's will open, maybe just one or two per state.
2. NREMT is working with NASEMSO, IAFF and others to pen a letter to the National Governor's Association asking them to open community colleges for Pearson VUE testing. This is still a work in progress.
3. Finally, NREMT has been working on a plan for more than a year to allow for remote proctoring of NREMT certification exams. This will take several months to develop but once completed, this will be a psychometrically sound and legally defensible means of delivering the test in other environments rather than a Pearson Vue testing center. More information will be forthcoming.

National Registry Psychomotor Exams

National Registry will be cancelling all scheduled psychomotor exams by the end of this week and will not be approving any new psychomotor exams for an indefinite period.

NREMT is in the final stages of being able to issue a provisional National Registry certification when the following components are completed:

1. Students must complete their certification program according to state or CoAEMSP requirements.
2. Students must sit for and pass the NREMT cognitive exam.
3. When these two items are completed, a 2-year provisional certification will be issued. The issued certification will clearly indicate the awarding of provisional certification pending completion of the psychomotor exam when successfully completed.

Provisional certifications can be converted to full certification once the COVID-19 threat is mitigated and the student takes and passes their NREMT required psychomotor exam. States are not required to accept provisional NREMT certifications if they cannot legally do so.

When being scheduled for work, National Registry strongly urges that no two provisionally certified providers work on the same truck. There should always be a fully certified provider riding with a provisionally certified provider.

Virginia and NREMT Psychomotor Examinations

- All psychomotor (CTS and NREMT) testing will be suspended, effective Monday, March 16 through April 30.

- All test deadlines will be extended in accordance with the suspended test sites.

The Briefing Room

- Please remember that all e-mail communications to Virginia educators can be found online at: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/education-certification/the-ace-briefing-room/>

Expiration of Virginia EMS Provider Certifications

- Due to Executive Order 51, the Virginia Office of EMS will be extending the certification of all providers who are currently set to expire on March 31, 2020 and April 30, 2020 until June 30, 2020. These providers should be reminded of the plethora of online CE opportunities that are available to them.
- Online continuing education courses can be found at: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/education-certification/provider-resources/web-based-continuing-education/>

Expiration of Operational Medical Director Endorsements

- Due to Executive Order 51, the Virginia Office of EMS will be extending the certification of all Medical Directors who are currently set to expire on March 31, April 30, May 31, and June 30, 2020 until December 31, 2020.

Education Coordinator Candidate Program

The Eligibility deadline for the next Education Coordinator Institute has been modified as follows:

- The deadline for EC Candidates to have completed all requirements in order to be considered eligible for this institute is May 24, 2020.
- Invitations will be sent to eligible candidates via e-mail on the morning of May 29, 2020.**
- <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/ems-education-coordinator-requirements/>

**Dates changed due to COVID-19 State of Emergency.

We will be back in touch with more information if and/or when the situation in Virginia changes. Please be vigilant, use commonsense, keep your distance and stay safe!

Thank you for all you do.

Best,

Chad

Chad Blosser | Education Program Manager | Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services | Division of Accreditation, Certification & Education | 1041 Technology Park Drive, Glen Allen, VA 23059 | 804.888.9124 (p) | 804.371.3409 (f) | chad.blosser@vdh.virginia.gov | www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/

Please let us know how we are doing by [clicking here](#) to complete a short customer experience survey.

The Office of EMS continues to monitor the ongoing situation regarding the spread of COVID-19. For more information and updates on COVID-19 please visit the link below: <http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/coronavirus-2019-covid-19/>

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