

Chad Blosser

From: Chad Blosser
Sent: Monday, October 26, 2020 9:45 PM
To: 'chad.blosser@vdh.virginia.gov'
Cc: 'Akers, Deborah'; 'Owens, Karen'; 'Harrell, Adam'
Subject: COVID-19 Update #13 for EMS Educators
Attachments: TR-18 VILT Course Schedule & Registration - 10-21-2020 - Fillable.pdf; TR-19 Custom CE Program Outline - 10-21-2020 - Fillable.pdf; Virginia Office of EMS Digital Certification Card Fact Sheet.pdf

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

Dear Educator,

It's been several weeks since our last update. As we settle into fall and prepare for this coming winter, it is imperative that each of you keep abreast of any changes that are made by the Governor regarding limits on the number of people who can gather, face covering/masking and social distancing requirements for your area of the state.

The ACE Division will do our best to keep you informed as we move through the fall.

EMS Portal Downtime

The Virginia EMS Portal will be down for maintenance from 5 PM to 10 PM this evening. The Portal and all web applications associated with the portal database (e.g. Course Lookup, EMS Provider Search, etc.) will be unavailable during this time. We appreciate your patience while our IT Teams work to upgrade the Virginia EMS Portal.

OMD, PCD or EMS Physician?

Beginning October 27, 2020, the Office of EMS will begin adopting a new term—EMS Physician—as a replacement for the outdated Operational Medical Director (OMD) and Physician Course Director (PCD) terminology. We will be slowly integrating this new terminology as we move forward with changes to the EMS Portal, updating of documentation, forms, policies, etc.

EMS Physician is a term that more closely aligns with national nomenclature and this terminology immediately elicits a mental image and improved cognitive understanding of the important role our physicians play in Virginia's EMS System.

Digital Certification Cards

The Office of EMS is pleased to introduce digital certification cards to EMS providers, EMS Physicians and EMS Agency Leadership. Remember the days when you had to carry your printed certificate around and hope not to lose it? Those days are gone!

Digital certificates make keeping your certification with you easier than ever. The certificates are easy to pull up from a cell phone or computer. Digital certificates also make it a snap for an employer or organization to check and verify your certification levels.

Digital certification cards will be available beginning October 27, 2020. Accessing a digital version of your certification card is as easy as logging into the Virginia EMS Portal. A fact sheet on digital certification cards is attached to this

message. Providers can now download their certification card directly to their devices and keep it with them in digital format wherever they go!

Why transition to digital certification?

1. EMS providers lose their certification cards, frequently. With digital certification cards providers never have to worry about replacement cards because providers will always have access to the digital certification for the duration of their certification period.
2. Saving taxpayer money! Certification card stock, the cost of envelopes and postage, manpower to print, fold and stuff cards all cost money! Money which could be better spent on new technology resources, increased funding for the Rescue Squad Assistance Fund, and other benefits to the EMS system as a whole.
3. Instead of faxing or mailing copies of your certification card to your employer or anyone requesting proof of your training, just e-mail them your Virginia EMS Certification card. It's fast and easy!
4. Be on the cutting edge and go green! Save our valuable natural resources whenever possible.

Concerned about Safety and Security?

Verify any Virginia EMS certification quickly on the Office of EMS website. This website allows for a search by a certificate number, first and last name and/or agency. If you are an employer and your employee has given you his or her Virginia EMS certification, or even just the certification number, you can use it to search for the certificate to validate that it's valid as well as see when it expires.

This tool makes compliance and HR record keeping a breeze. Just go to the Virginia Office of EMS Digital Certification Verification web page and search for the certificate number you are trying to verify.

- <https://vdhems.vdh.virginia.gov/emsapps/f?p=200:3>

Once you've had a digital certification card, you'll have a hard time going back to "the way we used to do it."

Please see the online training for this new module for how to access digital certification cards.

- <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/virginia-ems-portal-training-videos/>

Online EMS Course Requests

Another long promised enhancement to the Virginia EMS Portal is finally here. Today we are introducing online submission of EMS Course Requests through the Virginia EMS Portal. Beginning Tuesday, October 27, 2020, the Office of EMS will no longer accept electronic or paper submissions of form TR-01 – Course Approval Request. Any paper or electronic forms received from October 27, 2020 forward will be returned to the Education Coordinator / ALS-Coordinator and they will be asked to login to the Virginia EMS Portal to complete their submissions.

The Course Request feature is fully integrated into the Virginia EMS Portal and involves several approval flows/queues for your courses. At any step in the process, it is possible for your EMS Physician or the Office of EMS to deny a course request. You will be notified of the decision of your EMS Physician and/or the Office of EMS via e-mail messages from the EMS Portal.

For most courses, you will need only select the course type and fill in the requisite details and click submit for approval. However, there are occasions when you must submit an attachment as a part of your course approval:

1. All Auxiliary Courses will require that you submit a digital copy of your instructor certification from the parent organization for that program. You will not be able to complete the submission process without an attachment. Attachments can be in the form of: PDF, DOCX, JPG, PNG, TIF.

2. All “custom CE” courses will require that you submit form [TR-19 - Custom CE Program Outline](#) (attached). You will not be able to complete the submission process without an attachment.
3. All “VILT” courses will require that you submit form [TR-18 - VILT Program Course Schedule and Registration](#) (attached). You will not be able to complete the submission process without an attachment.

Please see the online training for this new module on the following page [BEFORE you attempt](#) to complete and submit a course approval the first time.

- <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/virginia-ems-portal-training-videos/>

While we have thoroughly tested this module in our beta environment, it is nearly impossible to account for all the various contingencies that could occur with such a large update. Please report ANY issues or error messages you encounter in as much detail as you can to Chad Blosser at chad.blosser@vdh.virginia.gov along with screenshots so we can troubleshoot appropriately.

Many thanks to our IT Team for their hard work in making this year’s long “wish” become a reality.

Virginia EMS Portal Training Tutorials

For the last 10-15 years, the Office has published paper/digital “Quick Guides” for various features and functions of the Virginia EMS Portal. These guides, while detailed and easy to follow, were prone to becoming outdated as the core technology driving the EMS Portal is updated.

Over the next several weeks, we will be replacing the Quick Guides with video-based training tutorials for these key features and functions. These training resources can be found at the URL below.

- <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/virginia-ems-portal-training-videos/>

New WASP CE Scanners

In the next week or so, I will send out a detailed schedule of “*Debbie and Chad’s Trip Across the Commonwealth*”—a weeklong tour we will be taking to distribute the new WASP CE scanners to instructors. We will be stopping in key locations across the Commonwealth for 30 minutes at each stop to allow instructors to meet us to pick up their new scanner in a location that is convenient to you.

More details to follow...

Stay safe and as always, please reach out to us with any questions you may have!

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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Digital Certification Card Fact Sheet¹

A Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services (heretofore referred to as the Virginia Office of EMS) digital certification card (sample attached) is the electronic form of a Virginia Office of EMS printed certification card. “Digital” is defined as “composed of data in the form of especially binary digits. E.g. “digital images”.² The term “certification” means verification that on the indicated completion date the participant named on the Virginia Office of EMS certification card demonstrated achievement of the required knowledge and hands-on skill performance objectives to the satisfaction of a qualified and currently authorized Virginia Office of EMS provider. Certification (or recertification) in a Virginia Office of EMS training program is documented by the legitimate issuance of a correctly completed Virginia Office of EMS print or digital certification card.

Virginia Office of EMS does not offer or endorse online-only initial emergency medical services certification training programs. Virginia Office of EMS training is competency-based and certification requires evaluation and verification of a participant’s cognitive and psychomotor skills as required by the National Registry of EMT’s. Online-only initial EMS certification training does not meet the standards of the Virginia Department of Health Office of Emergency Medical Services or the National Registry of EMT’s.

Relevant Facts Concerning Electronic Records

1. The Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) have permitted electronic recordkeeping of employee safety training records since 1997.³
2. Just as with paper documents, electronic documents are a record. Regarding its own records management program, OSHA has stated *“The electronic data may be considered a copy of a hard copy or paper record. If a hard copy or paper record is not maintained, then the electronic copy is the record copy”*.⁴
3. Since 2001 U.S. Federal courts have accepted electronic records (legal filings) over the Internet via the Public Access to Court Electronic Records ([PACER](#)) system.
4. Amendments to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure require civil litigants to preserve and produce any electronically stored information as it can play an important role as evidence.⁵ There is no doubt that electronic records have the same legal force as those produced in other formats (such as paper).
5. U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations permit electronic records and electronic signatures as equivalent to paper records and handwritten signatures executed on paper. FDA regulations are intended to permit the widest possible use of electronic technology, compatible with FDA’s responsibility to protect the public health.⁶
6. Web content is rendered in two basic forms - dynamic and static. Dynamic web content consists of information that is rendered differently based on specific user input and is managed in a database associated with a server. Static content consists of information in the form of documents that are rendered identically each time they are accessed. Both static and dynamic web content are considered a permanent record and meet the requirements of the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) Electronic Records Management (ERM) E-Gov Initiative.⁷
 - a. Virginia Office of EMS Digital Certification Cards are both static and dynamic. Each document is rendered identically in static format (PDF) and is based on the providers dynamic certification records in the Virginia EMS Portal.
 - b. Every Digital Certification Card is a true and accurate record of the original information received by the Virginia Office of EMS on the date the record was downloaded and is uniquely tracked in the Virginia EMS Portal electronic content managementsystem.

7. The United States Federal Government Paperwork Elimination Act (GPEA) uses *reliability, authenticity, integrity, and usability* to describe the characteristics of trustworthy records.⁸ The Virginia Office of EMS follows best practice guidelines regarding reliability, authenticity, integrity, and usability. Consequently, a Virginia Office of EMS Digital Certification Card(s):
- Reliably* identifies the certified Virginia Office of EMS Education Coordinator and the National Registry of EMT's as the record source and provides evidence that the Virginia Office of EMS certified Education Coordinator documented achievement of the participant's knowledge in cognitive and psychomotor performance according to the program standard.
 - Authentically* establishes what it purports to be. The Virginia Office of EMS business practices and electronic content management system controls the creation, transmission, receipt, and maintenance of the Digital Certification Card. The transaction is tied electronically to the Virginia Office of EMS Portal.
 - Integrity* is supported by Virginia Office of EMS rules and regulations, standards, business practices, and electronic content management system that prohibit alteration.
 - Usability* ensures that it can be located, retrieved, presented, and directly connected to the provider's certification records and certified Education Coordinator who coordinated the program. The link to the Digital Certification Card remains permanently active.

About the Virginia Office of EMS

Virginia Office of EMS (OEMS) is responsible for planning and coordinating an effective and efficient statewide EMS system. Our programs and services are designed to assure quality prehospital patient care, from when the call is received by the 911 center to the delivery of the patient to the trauma center or hospital.

If you have questions please contact us at 804-888-9100.

Disclaimer: Governmental entities may or may not be authorized, empowered, or required by law to accept electronic records. This Fact Sheet cannot address all the possible implications, applications, or exceptions to acceptance of electronic records, including Digital Certification Cards.

¹ Last reviewed/updated: October 26, 2020.

² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/digital>

³ <https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/standardinterpretations/1997-08-14>

⁴ <https://www.osha.gov/enforcement/directives/adm-03-01-004>

⁵ <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/USCODE-2010-title28/html/USCODE-2010-title28-app-federalru-dup1-rule34.htm>

⁶ <http://www.fda.gov/RegulatoryInformation/Guidances/ucm125067.htm>

⁷ <http://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/initiatives/web-content-records.html>

⁸ <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-105publ277/pdf/PLAW-105publ277.pdf>

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
(804) 888-9100 OR (800) 523-6019 IN VA

EXPIRES
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CERTIFIED AS
EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN

JOHN L DOE
1041 TECHNOLOGY PARK DRIVE
GLEN ALLEN VA 23059

CERTIFICATE NUMBER
B122701701

Gary R. Brown

DIRECTOR OF OEMS

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA - DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
CERTIFIED AS
EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN

CERTIFICATE NO. B122701701
EXPIRES 03/31/2021

JOHN L DOE
1041 TECHNOLOGY PARK
DRIVE
GLEN ALLEN VA 23059

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JOHN L DOE
1041 TECHNOLOGY PARK DRIVE
GLEN ALLEN VA 23059

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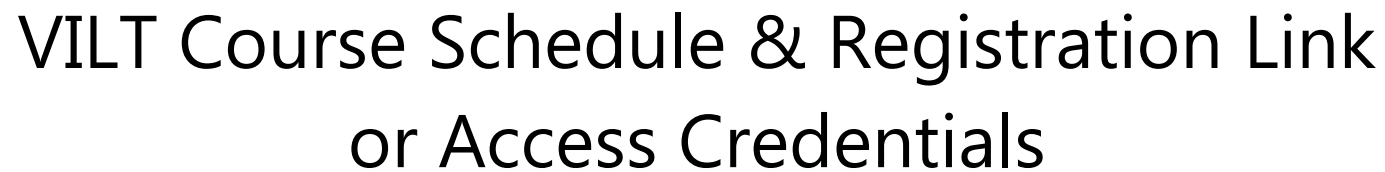
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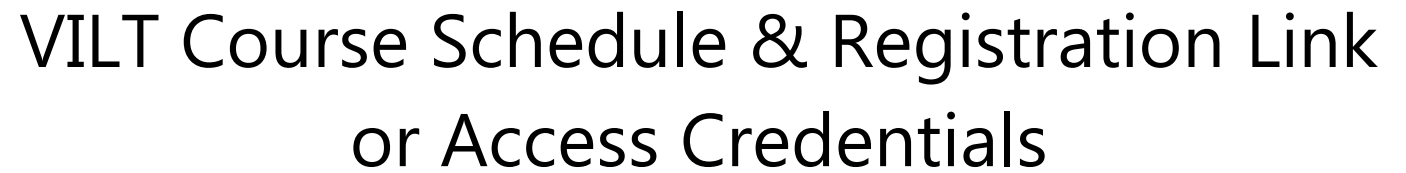
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1041 Technology Park Drive
Glen Allen, VA 23059
804-888-9120
<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/>

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1041 Technology Park Drive
Glen Allen, VA 23059
804-888-9120
<http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/>