



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Health

Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Training Standards (current as of 3/15/2024)

The purpose of this document is to ensure continuity and consistency in Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) training across the Commonwealth. Any EMD training program utilized by a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) must meet these minimum training standards regardless of whether they are offered by an approved third-party vendor or developed internally with EMS Physician (as defined in 12VAC5-31-10) oversight.

1. Roles and Responsibilities of the EMD

- a. Introduction and principles of EMD
- b. Components of EMD
- c. Customer service (can be a pre- or co-requisite of EMD course)
- d. Techniques for obtaining information and calming the caller (can be a pre- or co-requisite of EMD course)

2. Legal and Liability

- a. Definitions and understandings of:
 - i. Negligence
 - ii. Duty
 - iii. Breach of duty, and
 - iv. Injury/Damage

3. Anatomy and Physiology

- a. Basic medical terminology taught by instructor approved by the programs overseeing EMS Physician.

4. Chief Complaint Protocol Selection

- a. Understanding the difference in medical and trauma complaints
- b. The minimum required protocols are:
 - i. Cardiac/respiratory arrest
 - ii. Altered mental status/unconscious
 - iii. Medical, and
 - iv. Trauma

PSAPs may develop additional protocols above the required minimum. Those protocols shall be approved by the EMS Physician.

5. Post Dispatch Instructions

- a. Minimum instructions to include:
 - i. Telecommunication cardiopulmonary resuscitation
 - ii. Airway management for choking victims
 - iii. Bleeding control, and
 - iv. Naloxone (Narcan) Administration

PSAPs may develop additional instructions above the required minimum. Those instructions shall be approved by the EMS Physician.

6. Initial Examination and Recertification

- a. Final written examination will be conducted with minimum passing score of 75%
- b. Retest process shall be established for those who do not meet minimum passing score
- c. Certification is valid for no more than two years
- d. Minimum of 24-hours of continuing education required for recertification

7. System and Program Functions

- a. Review of how to operate system, program, or function
- b. Understanding of back-up system, if applicable

Development of Standard

This training standard was developed utilizing documents and research from nationally recognized organizations and approved by the Governor's EMS Advisory Board's Communications Committee.