CALIFORNIA’S
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
PERSONNEL PROGRAMS

Emergency Medical Services Authority
California Health and Human Services Agency

EMSA #131 4th Revision - November 2011
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CALIFORNIA’S EMS PERSONNEL PROGRAMS

ABOUT THE MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

The California Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Authority is the department within California state government that is empowered to develop and implement regulations governing the medical training and scope of practice standards for the following emergency medical care personnel:

1. Emergency Medical Technician (EMT-I or EMT-Basic)
2. Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (EMT-II or EMT-Intermediate)
3. Paramedic
4. Public Safety Personnel:
   a) Firefighters
   b) Peace Officers
   c) Lifeguards
5. Mobile Intensive Care Nurse (MICN)

Additionally, the EMS Authority operates California’s paramedic licensure program. This program coordinates with the National Registry of EMTs to administer written and skills exams to all initial applicants for paramedic licensure in California, and also issues licenses to all qualified initial and renewal paramedic applicants.

LOCAL EMS AGENCIES

Actual day-to-day EMS system operations are the responsibility of the local EMS agencies. EMS systems are administered by either county or multi-county EMS agencies, which follow regulations and standards established by the State EMS Authority. Local EMS agencies are responsible for certifying EMTs and AEMTs (however, EMTs employed by public safety agencies, such as fire departments and law enforcement agencies, may be certified by their own departments). Local EMS agencies’ certification and accreditation requirements are explained on the following pages.

CALIFORNIA EMS PERSONNEL

In California, public safety personnel (firefighters, peace officers, and lifeguards) often administer prehospital medical assistance. These professionals are required by law to be trained, at a minimum, in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). An emergency medical technician, or EMT, as part of an EMS system, is a specially trained and certified or licensed professional who renders immediate medical care in the prehospital setting to seriously ill or injured individuals. California has three levels of EMTs: EMT (or Basic), AEMT (or Intermediate), and Paramedic. The following chart provides further information regarding the substantive differences between each of the
three EMT categories. However, keep in mind the chart only summarizes the qualifications and requirements for each category.

# Eligibility, Training, and Skill Requirements for Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EMT (EMT Basic) (Basic Life Support)</th>
<th>AEMT (Advanced EMT) (limited advanced life support)</th>
<th>PARAMEDIC (Advanced Life Support)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Eligibility</strong></td>
<td>• 18 years of age</td>
<td>• 18 years of age</td>
<td>• 18 years of age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• High School diploma or equivalent</td>
<td>• EMT certificate</td>
<td>• High School diploma or equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• CPR Card</td>
<td></td>
<td>• EMT certificate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum Training Requirements</strong></td>
<td>• 120 hours total</td>
<td>• 88 hours total</td>
<td>• 1090 hours total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• ≈ 110 hours didactic</td>
<td>• ≈ 48 hours didactic &amp; skills lab</td>
<td>• ≈ 450 hours didactic &amp; skills lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• ≈ 10 hours clinical</td>
<td>• ≈ 16 hours hospital clinical training</td>
<td>• ≈ 150 hours hospital clinical training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• ≈ 24 hours field internship &amp; 10 ALS patient contacts.</td>
<td>• ≈ 480 hours field internship &amp; 40 ALS patient contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum Scope of Practice</strong></td>
<td>• Patient Assessment</td>
<td>• All EMT skills</td>
<td>• All EMT &amp; AEMT skills and medications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Advanced first aid</td>
<td>• Perilaryngeal airways</td>
<td>• Laryngoscope</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Use of adjunctive breathing aid &amp; administration of oxygen</td>
<td>• Intravenous infusion</td>
<td>• Endotracheal (ET) intubation (adults, oral)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Automated external defibrillator</td>
<td>• Obtain venous blood</td>
<td>• Glucose measuring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cardiopulmonary resuscitation</td>
<td>• Glucose measuring</td>
<td>• Valsalva’s Maneuver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Transportation of ill &amp; injured persons</td>
<td>• 8* medications (*scope of practice varies by area)</td>
<td>• Needle thoracostomy &amp; cricothyroidotomy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>EMT (EMT Basic) (Basic Life Support)</td>
<td>AEMT (Advanced EMT) (limited advanced life support)</td>
<td>PARAMEDIC (Advanced Life Support)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Notable Optional Skills (added at the local level)** | • Perilaryngeal airways  
• Epi pens  
• Duodote kits  
• Naloxone | • Previously certified EMT-IIs have additional medications approved by the local EMS agency. | • Local EMS Agencies may add additional skills and medications if approved by the EMS authority. |
| **Written and Skills Exams**         | • Administered by the National Registry of EMTs | • Administered by training program or local EMS Agency | • Administered by the National Registry of EMTs |
| **Length of Certification or Licensure** | • 2 Year certification with retesting every 2 years | • 2 Year certification with retesting every 2 years | • 2 Year licensure without retesting |
| **Refresher Course/Continuing Education** | • 24 hour refresher course or 24 hours of CE every two years | • 36 hours of CE every 2 years | • 48 hours of CE every 2 years |
| **Certification & License Provisions** | • Certified locally/valid statewide | • Certified locally/valid statewide | • Licensed by State/valid statewide; local accreditation |
EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN (EMT-BASIC)

California law requires all ambulance attendants to be trained & certified to the EMT level and many fire agencies require firefighters to be EMT certified. EMTs are often used as the first dispatched medical responder in a tiered emergency medical system.

**Training**
Training for EMTs is offered at the local level by approved training programs. A list of approved training programs may be obtained through the EMS Authority via telephone, mail, or from our web page. Training hours consist of 120 hours, broken down into 110 classroom and laboratory hours and 10 hours of supervised clinical experience.

**Testing**
In order to practice as an EMT, an individual is certified after passing the National Registry of EMTs’ written and skills exams.

**Certification**
After passing the written and skills certification exams, and obtaining a criminal background check, an applicant may be certified through the local EMS agency or through a public safety agency, both of which issue an EMT certification card (They are also known as the certifying entity). Certification is valid for two years from the date of issue and is recognized statewide.

**Recertification**
Every two years, an EMT must provide the certifying entity with proof of 24 hours of refresher course work or 24 hours of EMS approved continuing education units (CEUs), and have documented competency in 10 skills. Proof of completion of these requirements allows the certifying entity to recertify an EMT.

**Reciprocity**
Individuals from out-of-state who meet the following criteria and complete the application requirements of a certifying entity are eligible for certification: (1) Possess a current & valid National Registry EMT-Basic certificate, (2) possess a current & valid out-of-state or National Registry EMT-Intermediate certificate or paramedic license, or (3) have documentation of successful completion of an out-of-state EMT-Basic training course within the last 2 years that meets California’s EMT training requirements.

**Scope of Practice**
An EMT is trained and certified in basic life support practices. Basic life support (BLS) means emergency first aid and CPR procedures which, at a minimum, include recognizing respiratory and cardiac arrest and starting the proper application of CPR to maintain life without invasive techniques until the patient can be transported or until
advanced life support (ALS) is available. Automated external defibrillator (AED) training is now part of the basic scope of practice.

Optional Skills
EMTs may obtain additional training to supplement their standard scope of practice. EMTs may become locally-approved to use certain medications & skills. The local EMS medical director for each county determines the use of these optional scope items.

ADVANCED EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN – AEMT (EMT-INTERMEDIATE)

An AEMT is trained and certified in limited advanced life support (LALS) practices. In rural or sparsely populated areas of California, AEMTs may be the only responders who provide immediate medical intervention. Some local EMS agencies are phasing out EMT-II/AEMT programs in favor of upgrading to paramedic programs. Note: California now has fewer than 100 AEMTs; contact the county you are interested in working to determine if they use AEMTs, or refer to the attached list on pages 8-11.

Training
Training programs for AEMTs are limited, because AEMTs are not utilized throughout California. To learn which counties use AEMTs refer to pages 8-11. The minimum training hours for AEMTs is 160. The minimum number of hours for each portion of the training program is listed below, although most programs exceed this amount:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Didactic and skills</th>
<th>48 hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical and field/ Internship</td>
<td>16 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Internship</td>
<td>24 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>88 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Testing
To become certified as an AEMT, an individual must pass written and skills exams administered by the local EMS agency. Local EMS agencies determine if the testing will be administered by the training facility or the local EMS agency.

Certification
After passing both the written and skills exams, an applicant must obtain a criminal background check & may be certified through the local EMS agency. Certification is valid for two years from the date of issue. A small number of EMS agencies recognize AEMTs in their jurisdiction. Certification of AEMTs is recognized only by the local EMS agency that has policies, procedures & protocols for AEMTs. Therefore, AEMT certification is not valid statewide. In order to be certified in a different area by a different EMS agency, an applicant must provide proof of current AEMT certification and employment with a provider in the new area. Be sure to contact the local EMS agency to confirm the feasibility of practicing as an AEMT in that agency’s area of jurisdiction.
Recertification
Every 2 years, an AEMT must provide the local EMS agency with proof of completion of 36 hours of EMS approved continuing education units (CEUs), and provide documented competency in 6 skills.

Reciprocity
An individual who possesses or has possessed a valid EMT-Intermediate or Paramedic license from another state or the National Registry of EMTs may be eligible for certification. Again, please contact the local EMS agency in the area you are interested in working, because AEMT certification is not accepted in all jurisdictions.

Scope of Practice
AEMTs are certified in the use of limited advanced life support (LALS) skills. LALS includes all EMT skills, intravenous infusion, periharyngeal airway, and 8 medications (jurisdictional scope of practice may vary).

Optional Skills
In addition to the LALS scope of practice, AEMTs who were previously certified as AEMT-IIs may practice additional skills and administer certain medications. These additional optional skills and medications may be utilized in limited jurisdictions and are approved by the local EMS agency.

PARAMEDIC (EMT-PARAMEDIC)
A paramedic is trained and licensed in advanced life support (ALS) practices, which include the use of expanded skills and medications. The paramedic is typically employed by public safety agencies, such as fire departments, and by private ambulance companies. Paramedics are employed throughout the state’s EMS system to provide ALS prehospital care.

Training
The minimum number of hours for each portion of the training program is listed below, although most programs exceed these amounts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Didactic and skills</th>
<th>450 hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospital and clinical training</td>
<td>160 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field internship with 40 ALS patient contacts</td>
<td>480 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>1,090 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Testing
In order to practice as a paramedic, an individual must pass the National Registry of EMTs' written and skills exams. Tests are given on a regular basis throughout California; contact the EMS Authority or look on our web site to obtain a California test schedule.

Licensure
California law requires an individual to be licensed by the EMS Authority in order to practice as a paramedic. Licensure is valid statewide. Individuals seeking licensure should apply directly to the EMS Authority. Note: All licensees must undergo a California background check and submit proof of U.S. citizenship or legal residency.

Accreditation
In addition to State licensure, a paramedic must be locally accredited in order to practice in any California county. Accreditation is orientation to local protocols and training in any local optional scope of practice for the particular local EMS agency jurisdiction. Paramedics must apply for accreditation directly to the local EMS agency.

License Renewal
Paramedics must complete a minimum of 48 hours of approved continuing education units (CEUs) every two years to maintain licensure.

Reciprocity
Individuals who possess a current paramedic certificate/license from the National Registry of EMTs, are eligible for paramedic licensure in California when they submit proof of successful completion of a field internship and complete all license requirements.

Scope of Practice
Paramedics are trained and licensed in the use of advanced life support (ALS) skills. ALS includes all EMT and AEMT skills, use of laryngoscope, endotracheal and nasogastric intubation, Valsalva’s Maneuver, needle thoracostomy, administration of 21 drugs, and other skills listed on page 2.

Optional Skills
The EMS Authority can approve the use of additional skills and administration of additional medications by paramedics upon the request of a local EMS medical director.

MOBILE INTENSIVE CARE NURSE (MICN)
Some local EMS agencies also certify Mobile Intensive Care Nurses. Since a State standard for training and scope of practice for this classification has not been established, information concerning this category of prehospital care personnel should be directed to the respective local EMS agency.
PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL
(This includes firefighters, peace officers, and lifeguards.) Minimum training standards are 15 hours of first aid and 6 hours of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Training and certification questions should be addressed to the local EMS agencies. In addition to first aid and CPR, public safety personnel may also perform the optional skill of defibrillation when approved by the local EMS medical director for the jurisdiction in which the public safety personnel practice.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
It is recommended that once an individual has decided where in California he/she wants to work, the individual should contact the local EMS agency in that area to request further information regarding any additional requirements for training, exams, certification, licensing, and accreditation, as well as to obtain information on employment opportunities.
LOCAL EMS AGENCY LISTING

MULTI-COUNTY EMS SYSTEMS

Central California (EMT, AEMT, Paramedic)
(Fresno, Kings, Madera, Tulare)
P.O. Box 11867
1221 Fulton Mall, 5th floor
Fresno, CA 93775-1867
(559) 600-3387
www.ccemsma.org

Sierra-Sacramento Valley
(EMR, EMT, AEMT, Paramedic)
(Butte, Colusa, Nevada, Placer, Shasta,
Siskiyou, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba)
5995 Pacific Street
Rocklin, CA 95677
(916) 625-1701
www.ssvems.com/

Inland Counties (EMT, Paramedic)
(San Bernardino, Inyo, Mono)
515 N. Arrowhead Ave.
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0060
(909) 388-5823
www.sbcounty.gov/icema/

Coastal Valleys EMS
(Sonoma, Mendocino)
(EMT, AEMT, Paramedic)
Sonoma County
625 5th Street
Santa Rosa, CA 95404
(707) 565-6501 (Sonoma)
www.coastalvalleysems.org

Mountain-Valley (EMT, Paramedic)
(Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa,
and Stanislaus)
1101 Standiford Avenue, #D1
Modesto, CA 95350
(209) 529-5085
www.mvems.com/

SINGLE COUNTY EMS SYSTEMS

Northern California (EMT, AEMT, Paramedic)
(Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas,
Sierra, and Trinity)
457 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 120
Redding, CA 96002 - 0121
(530) 229-3979
www.norcalems.org/

Alameda County
(EMT, Paramedic)
1000 San Leandro Blvd.
San Leandro, CA 94577
(510) 618-2050
www.acphd.org/ems

North Coast (EMT, AEMT, Paramedic)
(Del Norte, Humboldt, and Lake)
3340 Glenwood Ave.
Eureka, CA 95501
(707) 445-2081
www.northcoastems.com

Contra Costa County
(EMT, Paramedic)
1340 Arnold Drive, Suite 126
Martinez, CA 94553
(925) 646-4690
www.cchealth.org/groups/ems/

Northern California (EMT, AEMT, Paramedic)
(Glenn, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas,
Sierra, and Trinity)
457 Knollcrest Drive, Suite 120
Redding, CA 96002 - 0121
(530) 229-3979
www.norcalems.org/

El Dorado County
(EMT, Paramedic)
415 Placerville Drive, Suite J
Placerville, CA 95667
(530) 621-6500
www.co.el-dorado.ca.us/ems/
Imperial County  
(EMT, AEMT, Paramedic)  
935 Broadway  
El Centro, CA 92243  
(760) 482-4768  
www.icphd.org/sub.php?idm=103

Kern County  
(EMT, Paramedics)  
1800 Mt. Vernon Ave, 2nd Floor  
Bakersfield, CA 93306  
(661) 321-3000  
www.co.kern.ca.us/ems/

Los Angeles County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
10100 Pioneer Blvd., Suite 200  
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670  
(562) 347-1500  
www.ems.dhs.lacounty.gov/

Marin County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
899 Northgate Dr., Suite 104  
San Rafael, CA 94903  
(415) 473-6871  
www.co.marin.ca.us/depts/HH/main/ems

Merced County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
260 East 15th Street  
Merced, CA 95341  
(209) 381-1250  
www.co.merced.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=581

Monterey County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
1270 Natividad Road  
Salinas, CA 93906  
(831) 755-5013  
www.mtyhd.org Click Emergency Medical Services

Orange County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
405 West Fifth Street, Suite 301A  
Santa Ana, CA 92701  
(714) 834-3500  
www.ochealthinfo.com/medical/ems/

Riverside County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
4065 County Circle Drive, Suite 102  
Riverside, CA 92503  
(951) 358-5029  
www.rivcoems.org/home/

Sacramento County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
9616 Micron Avenue, Suite 960  
Sacramento, CA 95827  
(916) 875-9753  
www.sacdhhs.com/default.asp?WOID=EMS

San Benito County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
1111 San Felipe Road, Suite 102  
Hollister, CA 95023  
(831) 636-4066  
www.sanbenitocounty.org/ems/

San Diego County  
(EMT, AEMT, Paramedic)  
6255 Mission Gorge Road  
San Diego, CA 92120  
(619) 285-6429  
http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov/hhsa/programs/phs/emergency_medical_services/index.html

City and County of San Francisco  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
30 Van Ness Avenue, Suite 3300  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
(415) 487-5000  
San Joaquin County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
500 West Hospital Road  
Benton Hall, Room 47  
French Camp, CA 95231  
(209) 468-6818  
http://www.sjgov.org/ems/default.aspx

San Luis Obispo County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
2156 Sierra Way  
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401  
(805) 788-2517  
http://www.sloemsa.org/index.html

San Mateo County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
225 37TH Avenue  
San Mateo, CA 94403  
(650) 573-2564  
http://www.co.sanmateo.ca.us

Click on A-Z services, then "Health" then follow links to EMS.

Santa Barbara County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
300 North San Antonio Road  
Santa Barbara, CA 93110-1316  
(805) 681-5274  
http://www.santacountyofsb.org/phd/ems.aspx?id=20620

Santa Clara County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
976 Lenzen Avenue, Suite 1217  
San Jose, CA 95126  
(408) 885-4250  
http://sccemsagency.org/portal/site/ems/

Santa Cruz County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
1080 Emeline Avenue  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
(831) 454-4000  
http://www.santacruzhealth.org/phealth/ems/3ems.htm

Solano County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
275 Beck Avenue, MS5-240  
Fairfield, CA 94533  
(707) 784-8155  
http://www.co.solano.ca.us/depts/ems/

Tuolumne County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
20111 Cedar Road North  
Sonora, CA 95370  
(209) 533-7460  
http://portal.co.tuolumne.ca.us/psp/ps/TUP_HEALTH_EMS/ENTP/h/?tab=DEFAULT

Ventura County  
(EMT, Paramedic)  
2220 E. Gonzalez Road, Suite 130  
Oxnard, CA 93036-0619  
(805) 981-5301  