

EMS Education Approval Policy and Procedures

PURPOSE: To establish standards for the submission and approval of Emergency Medical Service (EMS) educational courses to the West Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services (WVOEMS) in conjunction with §64-48-8.

DEFINITIONS: Professional competence is most commonly defined as “the habitual and judicious use of communication, knowledge, technical skills, clinical reasoning, emotions, values, and reflection in daily practice for the benefit of the individual and community being served.”

Professional competence is multidimensional. The dimensions of competence evolve as an EMS provider’s career evolves. Achieving competence, as demonstrated in knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes and behaviors, is a lifelong process, motivated by both self-interest and a commitment to providing the highest quality care. The initial educational programs lay the foundation for application of the competencies in clinical care. Upon entering the field, it is the responsibility of the EMS provider to continue their life-long learning. EMS providers must engage in continuing professional development, using a variety of modalities to continuously assess and improve their knowledge, skills and attitudes with the goal of improving patient care outcomes.

The public is demanding more rigorous accountability from healthcare professionals. Whether it is a focus on competency-based education, certification or recertification; the EMS profession has long been a leader in demonstrating its commitment to competence. Likewise, the West Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services is committed to helping EMS providers to maintain the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve professional competence in order to deliver the highest quality health care.

POLICY: EMS educational courses must be submitted to WVOEMS through CIS. Courses that require approval shall be reviewed by WVOEMS to ensure those courses are deemed to be consistent with WVOEMS educational requirements, standards, protocols, scope of practice, code/rule, or are viewed as an educational advancement opportunity.

- A. Certification/Recertification and CE courses may be taken online if available and pre-approved as outlined in this policy. On-line courses may account for a maximum of 50% of the recertification hours. (Example: A recertifying 4 year EMT is required to complete a 24 hour refresher class and 56 additional hours totaling 80 hours over that 4 year certification period. The candidate may utilize 40 online hours toward the recertification). Verification of course completion may be by Educational Institution or TSN representative signature, submission of certificate of completion, submission of certification card, copy of your education history from an approved WVOEMS database, college transcript, CIS entry, or other approved method.

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EDUCATIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS:

- A. Initial Certification / Recertification
- B. Continuing Education Courses
 - 1. CLASS I
 - 2. CLASS II

PROCEDURE/REQUIREMENTS:

A. INITIAL CERTIFICATION / RECERTIFICATION:

- 1. Must be submitted to WVOEMS five (5) working days prior to the course starting date to guarantee course approval prior to the class beginning.
- 2. All courses shall be submitted prior to the start date of the class to be considered for approval. Classes submitted after the class has taken place will be denied in accordance with §64-48-8.1.g.
- 3. In the event that a course is submitted in a time period shorter than the specified five (5) working days, WVOEMS will review the course per policy, however, there may be up to a fifteen (15) working day delay in the approval process. Students and instructors will not be able to enter data into the course until such time that it is approved. Should the class be denied with legitimate reason, students who participated in the program will not receive credit for taking the class.
- 4. Students who complete an unapproved course will be ineligible to test for certification nor will they will receive credit for taking the class and no hours will be awarded for certification.

B. CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES – **CLASS I:**

- 1. Class I Continuing Education courses are those directly related to EMS and have been accredited or sanctioned by any nationally recognized accrediting body, College/University, or WVOEMS. (Examples of Nationally recognized accrediting bodies are as follows: CoAEMSP, CAAS, CAPCE, AHA, ACEP, ACS, etc.)
- 2. These courses DO NOT require pre-approval and will be entered into CIS as a CE course class I. These will be automatically approved in CIS upon creation of the class regardless of being taught traditionally or on-line.

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3. Current pre-approved Class I courses are published on the WVOEMS website and will be updated as future courses are approved.
4. Class I Continuing Education courses also encompass National EMS Conferences, WVOEMS endorsed EMS Conferences, and EMS Educational Symposiums/Schools. Verification of course completion may be by Educational Institution or TSN representative signature, submission of certificate of completion, submission of certification card, college transcript, or other approved method.
 - a. Verification of course completion for courses falling into this category may be submitted directly to WVOEMS to be entered into CIS however signature of an Educational Institute or TSN representative on the appropriate forms shall suffice for purposes of certification/recertification. A copy of verification should be kept for use when completing your recertification CE record.

C. CONTINUING EDUCATION COURSES – **CLASS II:**

1. Class II Continuing Education are classes NOT accredited or sanctioned by a Nationally recognized accrediting body, College/University, and have not been previously approved by WVOEMS. (Example: A squad wishes to do an EMS related class pertinent to their respective squad. They create the class, outline, and support material and want to use the course for CE).
2. If a course does not appear on the Class I CE list, and is not accredited or sanctioned by a nationally recognized accrediting body or College/University, it is considered a class II and must be submitted for approval (See Course Submission Requirements Section). These courses will be reviewed annually for current content.

COURSE SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS:

- A. All Initial and Refresher courses not previously approved by WVOEMS as well as Continuing Education Class II Courses require approval by WVOEMS. The process is as follows:
 1. The course material shall be submitted to WVOEMS fifteen (15) working days prior to the course starting date.
 2. The course material required to be submitted is a course outline or syllabus.
 3. In some cases, WVOEMS may need additional information to approve a class. Should that be the case, WVOEMS may ask for further explanation, lesson plans, and/or class handouts.

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- B. These courses shall not be administered prior to approval by WVOEMS.
- C. Students who complete an unapproved course will be ineligible to test for certification nor will they will receive credit for taking the class and no hours will be awarded for certification/recertification.

Applicable Hours:

- A. Some programs have requirements that meet a specific code. These courses often are taught in many different manners and may fluctuate in hours. WVOEMS will approve class hours in this category based on the average contact hours of available courses. These courses are as follows:
 - 1. Hazardous Materials Awareness 3 Hours
 - 2. CPR 4 Hours
 - 3. First Aid 3 Hours

This Education Approval Policy replaces all previous Education Approval Policies.