



# EMT-Basic

Requirements for  
National EMS Certification

*Because it's Important to the Public!*



National Registry of  
Emergency Medical Technicians®  
THE NATION'S EMS CERTIFICATION™



Accredited by the National Commission  
for Certifying Agencies



# National EMS Certification is Important to the Public!

National EMS Certification is important to the American public. It assures them that the EMS professionals providing care are competent. The goal of the NREMT is to offer this assurance to the public. Obtaining National Certification is the best way for you to communicate to the public and your employer that you have demonstrated a national level of competency. National Certification provides a standard that American citizens deserve—at their moment of greatest need. This brochure will help you understand the process of obtaining National Certification as an Emergency Medical Technician. More information is available on the NREMT website.

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[www.nremt.org](http://www.nremt.org)



# The Role of the NREMT

The founding of the NREMT in 1970 came as a result of recommendations made by President Lyndon Johnson's Committee on Highway Traffic Safety. The committee proposed the establishment of uniform standards for training and examination of personnel active in the delivery of emergency ambulance service. Since then, uniform standards have been established for training and examination of the people who provide out-of-hospital emergency medical care. **As a non-profit, non-governmental, independent certification agency, the NREMT provides four distinct areas of service:**

- Entry level competency assessment
- A Registry of nationally certified EMS professionals
- Re-registration process
- Research that benefits the EMS community

## **The NREMT is governed by a Board of Directors**

representing the broad EMS community. The Board consists of twenty-one individuals—including physicians, state EMS office officials, EMS professionals, educators, and members of the public—highly regarded in their respective areas of practice. We encourage you to review the biographical outlines that cover the accomplishments of the distinguished members of our Board of Directors. More information is available on the NREMT website.

**Accreditation by the National Commission For Certifying Agencies (NCCA)** is the highest assurance that the health, welfare and safety of the public is being met through a credible exam and certification process. Accreditation also ensures that the NREMT complies with the standards outlined in the "Standards for Education and Psychological Testing," developed jointly by the American Psychological Association (APA), American Educational Research Association (AERA) and the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME).



**Certification** means you have met the standards of the certifying body in credentialing. Certification is recognized by employers, state licensing agencies, and the public as being tied to competency.

**State Licensure**, on the other hand, is what gives you the right to work in a particular capacity. Nationally certified EMTs who are not state licensed cannot practice. After you obtain National Certification, you must obtain a license to work.

As a certifying body, the NREMT is not a membership association. In contrast, the National Association of EMTs (NAEMT) is the membership association that promotes and advocates the EMS profession. We encourage you to join the NAEMT once you become certified by the National Registry of EMTs.

# Entry Requirements

Individuals applying for EMT certification must meet the following requirements:

- 18 years of age or older
- Successful completion of a state-approved EMT-Basic course that meets or exceeds the U.S. Department of Transportation EMT-Basic National Standard Curriculum. You must have completed the course within the past two years. Your Program Director must verify your successful completion of the course on the NREMT website.

If your initial EMT-Basic educational program was completed more than two years ago and you have maintained state licensure at the EMT level, you must submit documentation verifying completion of an EMT-Basic refresher training program within the past two years. If your initial EMT-Basic educational program was completed more than two years ago and you never gained state licensure at the EMT-Basic level, you must complete an entire state-approved EMT-Basic course prior to applying for certification.

- Complete a National Registry online application, including Licensing Action and Felony statements. The NREMT may deny registration or take other appropriate actions in regards to applicants for registration or re-registration when a felony conviction has occurred. Complete information about the NREMT Felony Policy can be found on the NREMT website under General Policies.



- Verification from the Program Director that you hold a current CPR credential for health care providers and have demonstrated competence in EMT-Basic skills.
- Successful completion of the EMT-Basic cognitive (written) exam that tests your ability to safely and effectively perform emergency patient care.
- Successful completion of a state-approved EMT-Basic psychomotor (practical) exam.

**Complete information on Entry Requirements and applying for certification can also be found on the NREMT website.**

# Certification Process

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To become Nationally Certified, you will need to:

- Complete a state-approved EMT-Basic training course
  - Receive verification of course completion from your program director
  - Successfully complete a cognitive (written) and state-approved psychomotor (practical) exam
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All NREMT certification levels require successful completion of both cognitive (written) and psychomotor (practical) exams. Passed portions of the exam (both cognitive and practical) remain valid for a twelve (12) month period. Candidates not completing the remaining portion of the examination within that twelve (12) month period are required to repeat the invalid portion.

## Cognitive Examination

Committed to determining competency in the most fair, accurate and precise method possible, the NREMT uses computer adaptive testing (CAT) to deliver the EMT-Basic cognitive (written) exam. With computer adaptive testing, each question is tailored to the individual candidate. This means that if you answer a question correctly, the next question can be slightly more challenging. If you answer a question incorrectly, the following question will be slightly easier. With each question you are asked, the computer algorithm statistically re-estimates your ability. This estimate gets more and more precise as the exam progresses. This means no two exams are exactly alike. The exam, however, is designed so that all competent candidates can pass. The number of items a candidate can expect on the EMT-Basic exam will range from 70 to 120. The maximum amount of time given to complete the EMT-Basic exam is 2 hours.



All exams include pilot test items that do not count for or against your exam results. Pilot questions are being evaluated for possible inclusion on future exams. There is no way for you to identify pilot items, so it is in your best interest to answer every question to the best of your ability.

There are two important concepts to remember about CAT:

1. There is no minimum number or percent of correct items needed to pass as with a traditional paper-and-pencil test.
2. All candidates will be challenged to the limit of their ability, so everyone taking the exam will think it was difficult.

The exam will cover the entire spectrum of EMS care including: Airway and Breathing, Cardiology, Trauma, Medical, Obstetrics and Pediatrics, and EMS Operations. The NREMT will provide feedback on your performance in these areas in the event you are unsuccessful in passing the exam.

Candidates are given three opportunities to pass the cognitive exam provided all other requirements for National Certification are met. After three attempts, candidates must submit official documentation verifying completion of 24 hours of remedial training. The candidate is given three more attempts to pass, provided all other requirements for National Certification are met. Candidates who fail to pass after a total of six attempts are required to repeat the entire EMT-Basic course.

In order to pass the exam, you must meet a standard level of competency. The passing standard is defined by the ability to provide safe and effective entry level emergency medical care. Refer to the NREMT Annual Report (available on the NREMT website) for current national pass rates.

## Scheduling the Cognitive Exam

The cognitive (written) portion of the NREMT exam is a computer-based exam that is given at authorized Pearson VUE testing center locations on a date and time convenient for you. To schedule your exam:

- Create an account and complete an application on the NREMT website.
- Pay your application fee of \$70 which is non-refundable and non-transferable. This fee is charged for each attempt of the cognitive examination.
- You will receive an Authorization to Test (ATT) once you are eligible to take the exam.
- Once you receive your ATT, you can then schedule your test with Pearson VUE. Additional scheduling details are provided in the ATT letter. Complete information on the application process can be found on the NREMT website.

## Psychomotor Exam

Throughout your EMT-Basic educational program you must demonstrate competence in a wide range of emergency care skills. Your instructor must attest that you have demonstrated competence in the following skills during your course: patient assessment/management of a trauma patient, patient assessment/management of a medical patient, cardiac arrest management/AED, bag–valve–mask ventilation of a apneic patient, spinal immobilization (both seated and supine patient), long bone fracture immobilization, joint dislocation immobilization, traction splinting, bleeding control/shock management, upper airway adjuncts and suction, mouth-to-mouth ventilation with supplemental oxygen, and supplemental oxygen administration to a breathing patient.

You must also successfully complete a state-approved EMT-Basic psychomotor (practical) examination. Speak with your instructor or State EMS Office about the format and logistics of completing a state-approved EMT-Basic psychomotor exam.

# General Information

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As in other professions in which the safety of the public is paramount, emergency medical services providers need to meet continuing education and refresher requirements every two years to maintain National Certification. Keeping your National Certification current attests to the public and to your employer that you are prepared to provide competent and safe emergency medical care. More information on re-registration is available on the NREMT website. You will also be sent more information with your initial certification materials.

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## Lapsed Certification

If your National EMS Certification lapsed as an EMT-Basic within a two year period or you are currently state licensed as an EMT-Basic, you can obtain National EMS Certification by completing a state-approved Refresher course and successfully completing the cognitive and psychomotor examinations. If your EMS certification expired more than two years ago, you must complete an entire state-approved EMT-Basic course, and complete the cognitive and psychomotor examinations.

## ADA Compliancy

The NREMT complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and offers reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities. Pearson VUE test centers are also ADA compliant.

For more information about accommodations for the exam, see the NREMT website under General Policies.

## Disciplinary Policy and Rights of Appeal

Any unscrupulous activity including but not limited to submission of fraudulent or misleading information, cheating of any kind, misrepresentation, or attempts to recreate portions of the exam are subject to investigation and disciplinary actions. The NREMT reserves the right to inform state EMS officials of the outcomes of any investigations. The NREMT has disciplinary procedures, rights of appeals and due process within its policies. Requests to appeal must be submitted in writing (non-electronic) within 45 days of the date of the notice of determination.

## Updating Your NREMT Account is Critical

Once you become Nationally Certified, it is necessary for you to update the NREMT in the event of change in contact information. The NREMT wants to be able to provide you with additional information such as policy changes, educational opportunities, re-registration information, and job opportunities in your area. Be sure to update your account in the event of an address, phone or email change.

If you are currently Nationally Certified but do not have an account on the NREMT website, you can set one up anytime.

**Organizations that nominate  
members to the Board of Directors**

American College of Emergency Physicians  
National Association of EMS Physicians  
National Association of State EMS Officials  
International Association of Fire Chiefs  
American Ambulance Association  
National Association of EMTs  
At-Large Physicians  
At-Large EMS Professionals  
Public Member

**Liaison Organizations**

American College of Osteopathic Emergency Physicians  
American College of Surgeons  
American Heart Association  
American Red Cross  
Committee on Accreditation for EMS Professionals  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)  
Department of Defense  
Emergency Nurses Association  
Maternal and Child Health Bureau  
National Association of EMS Educators  
National Volunteer Fire Council  
U.S. Air Force Medical Service  
U.S. Army Medical Corps  
U.S. Navy

Payments or contributions to the National Registry of  
Emergency Medical Technicians, Inc., are not deductible as  
charitable contributions for Federal Income Tax purposes.

Payments may be deductible as a business expense.

If in doubt, please contact your tax advisor.

The NREMT website serves as the NREMT policy manual  
and will reflect the most up-to-date policies. Please refer to  
[www.nremt.org](http://www.nremt.org) for questions about NREMT policy.

The Registry does not conduct business by e-mail.

Please call 614-888-4484.





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