



The Pennsylvania EMS Act requires that a person who has failed the written or practical skills examination three times receives refresher or remediation training. While these terms are often interchangeable, according to the PA EMS Act they are distinctly separate. A Refresher Program is related to the cognitive certification examination. Remediation refers to the psychomotor skills exam. Additionally, the EMS Act indicates that the refresher and remediation training courses are approved by the Department. The purpose of this document is to provide guidance on these processes.

Written (cognitive) examination (Refresher Program)

The Bureau of EMS recognizes the availability of continuing education courses available through online methods which are recognized by Commission on Accreditation for Prehospital Continuing Education (CAPCE). These courses are often designed on the NREMT National Continued Competency Program (NCCP) which is meant to provide continuing education to those who are currently certified as an EMS Provider. These courses often are not strictly focused or based on the most current [National EMS Education Standards](#).

For a refresher course to be approved by the Department the EMS refresher course sponsor must demonstrate the following topics that have been covered in the depth of the certification level being taught according to the competency area identified in the 2021 EMS Education Standards:

Preparatory	Airway Management, Respiration, and Ventilation
Anatomy and Physiology	Assessment
Medical Terminology	Medicine
Pathophysiology	Shock and Resuscitation
Life Span Development	Trauma
Public Health	Special Patient Populations
Pharmacology	EMS Operation

In addition, to aid in the development process, sponsors of a refresher course need to ensure the information related to the certification testing plan is addressed. The most current information for each exam is located on the [National Registry website](#). Below is some information.

[EMR Test Plan](#)

[EMT Test Plan](#)

[AEMT Test Plan](#)

[Paramedic Test Plan](#)

Expert opinion provides the following recommendation of the minimum number of hours to cover the necessary content in a refresher program for candidates who have not passed the Cognitive exam after three attempts. These are recommendations as each candidate's needs are unique.

EMR	-	08 hours
EMT	-	20 hours
AEMT	-	25 hours
Paramedic (PHRN, PHPE)	-	30 hours

Psychomotor Skills Examination (Remediation)

Candidates who have required remediation because they have not been successful within three attempts at the psychomotor skills examination will need to complete a Department approved remediation course.

For a remediation course to be approved by the Department the EMS remediation, a course sponsor must demonstrate the following topics are covered in person with a student regarding the content in the Clinical Behavior/Judgement section of the most current [National EMS Education Standards](#) and the [National EMS Scope of Practice](#). have been covered to the depth of the certification level being taught:

Assessment

Therapeutic Communication and Cultural Humility

Psychomotor Skills (*as identified in the National EMS Scope of Practice*)

Professionalism

Decision Making

Record Keeping

Team Dynamics

Safety

Much of this content can be covered through various scenario application and skill practices. This does not mean this occurs without any assessment of the student's cognitive preparation. In scenario-based exams, students are to demonstrate their knowledge and application of the content.

Expert opinion provides the following recommendation of the minimum number of hours to cover the necessary content in a remedial program for candidates who have not passed the psychomotor skills exam after three attempts.

For all levels, a guideline of 4 hours should be spent reviewing the material.

50% of the remediation hours should cover all cognitive material topic above to improve patient assessment and management to improve critical thinking.

50% of the remediation hours should be hands-on practice of psychomotor skills.

This content is to be evaluated by the sponsor based on candidate performance. For candidates to have been successful, the sponsor is to complete the Refresher/Remediation form which attests the candidate has been successful in demonstrating their entry level competency during the remediation and or refresher content.

Reference

§8113(e)(3) A person who fails the written examination three times shall complete a refresher course approved by the department or repeat the EMS provider training program before taking the examination again.

§8113(e)(4) A person who fails the practical skills examination three times shall complete a remedial course approved by the department or repeat the EMS provider training program before again taking the examination.

§8113(e)(5) A person who fails either examination six times or who does not pass the required examinations within two years after completing the EMS provider training program shall receive no credit for an examination previously passed and shall repeat the training program for the EMS provider certification before the person may take the certification examinations again.

§1023.21(c)(3) A person who fails a written certification examination three times shall complete a refresher course approved by the Department or repeat the education required for the EMS provider certification before retaking a written certification examination.

§1023.21(c)(4) A person who fails a practical skills certification examination three times shall complete a remedial course approved by the Department or repeat the education required for the EMS provider certification before retaking a practical skills certification examination.

§1023.21(c)(5) A person who either fails an EMS provider certification examination six times or does not pass all required EMS provider certification examinations within 2 years after completing the EMS provider education required for the EMS provider certification may not receive credit for an examination previously passed. If that person elects to continue to pursue EMS provider certification, that person will be required to repeat the EMS provider education program and take the EMS provider certification examinations in accordance with paragraphs (1)—(4).

NHTSA. National EMS Education Standards (2021). Retrieved from: https://www.ems.gov/assets/EMS_Education-Standards_2021_FNL.pdf

Providing refresher education or remediation in this case is “deliberate educational activity designed to correct deficits identified during formal and informal evaluations”. (National Guidelines for Educating EMS Instructors, 2002).

Chou CL, Kalet A, Costa MJ, Cleland J, Winston K. Guidelines: The dos, don'ts and don't knows of remediation in medical education. *Perspect Med Educ*. 2019 Dec;8(6):322-338. doi: 10.1007/s40037-019-00544-5. PMID: 31696439; PMCID: PMC6904411.

https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6904411/pdf/40037_2019_Article_544.pdf



Remediation and Refresher form

LAST NAME		FIRST NAME		MI	SUFFIX
DATE OF BIRTH	PA DOH CERTIFICATION NUMBER: (IF CURRENTLY OR PREVIOUSLY CERTIFIED)		PA DOH CERTIFICATION EXPIRATION DATE:		
ADDRESS	STREET:				
	CITY:	STATE:	ZIP CODE:		
TELEPHONE:			EMAIL:		

HAS ATTENDED AND SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED A PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH APPROVED:

I attest the following topics were covered in person, as a psychomotor skills remediation course with the student regarding the content in the Clinical Behavior/Judgement section of the most current [National EMS Education Standards](#) and the [National EMS Scope of Practice](#), to the depth of the certification level being taught:

- Assessment
- Therapeutic Communication and Cultural Humility
- Psychomotor Skills (*as identified in the National EMS Scope of Practice*)
- Professionalism
- Decision Making
- Record Keeping
- Team Dynamics
- Safety

I attest the following topics have been covered as a cognitive exam refresher course to the depth of the certification level the candidate is seeking:

- Preparatory
- Anatomy and Physiology
- Medical Terminology
- Pathophysiology
- Life Span Development
- Public Health
- Pharmacology
- Airway Management, Respiration, and Ventilation
- Assessment
- Medicine
- Shock and Resuscitation
- Trauma
- Special Patient Populations
- EMS Operations

FOR CERTIFICATION EXAM LEADING TO: (circle one)

- Emergency Medical Responder (EMR)
- Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)
- Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT)

- Paramedic (P)
- Prehospital Registered Nurse (PHRN)
- Prehospital Physician Extender (PHPE)
- Prehospital Physician (PHP)

COURSE COMPLETION DATE: _____ TOTAL COURSE HOURS COMPLETED: _____

INDIVIDUAL PROVIDING INSTRUCTION

I certify that the instructions provided comply with the parameters selected above, thereby qualifying the course as approved. I further affirm that the information provided in this form is true, complete, and accurate to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief, and I acknowledge that any false statements are subject to the penalties set forth in 18 Pa.C.S.A. § 4904, pertaining to unsworn falsification to authorities.

Name: _____ Phone number: _____

Email: _____ PA EMS Certification number (if applicable): _____

Accredited Education Institute affiliation (if any) _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

CANDIDATE SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____