



**EMS Information Bulletin 2020-22**

**DATE:** May 18, 2020

**SUBJECT:** Guidance to EMS Educational Entities

**TO:** PA EMS Educational Institutes  
PA Continuing Education Sponsors

**FROM:** Dylan Ferguson, Director  
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During the week of May 4, 2020, the Bureau of EMS (Bureau) pushed guidance to Regional EMS Councils from the Department of Economic Development (DCED) sharing additional information related to the ability of certain workforce development trainings to be able to resume. Below is the specific language, which was issued by DCED.

**44. When can workforce development training resume?**

*The following workforce development training programs may resume statewide beginning May 8: nurse aid and direct care training programs; police academy training; emergency medical services (EMS) training; emergency medical technician (EMT) training; and fire training programs. Each program must be structured around ongoing social distancing, universal masking, and/or other public health guidance so as not to result in a spike of cases and new stay-at-home and closure orders.*

As a result of this guidance, all Department of Health Accredited EMS Educational Institutes and Continuing Education Sponsors may resume in person instruction at the programs discretion. These resumptions should take place in accordance with the following issued guidance and general recommendations.

- To the extent possible and practical, programs should continue to utilize distance learning techniques and technology.
- In situations where distance learning is not possible/practical, significant care and attention must be paid to infection control practices.
- Per the guidance from DCED all instructors and students should wear a mask.
- All equipment and surfaces that students and instructors interact with should be wiped down frequently. Equipment must be disinfected after each individual student use.
- The number of students assembled for in person interaction should be limited at any given time. The number of students may vary by specific facility, based on available

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space. However, there must be adequate space to ensure that all persons can remain 6 feet apart in accordance with social distancing guidelines. In addition, the minimum number of instructors needed should be utilized to reduce exposure.

- 6 ft safe zone markings, and other visual cues should be utilized to inform and enforce social distancing in the classroom.
- Educational institutes should implement health screenings before permitting students and/or staff to enter. Individuals should be screened for COVID-2019 symptoms, in addition to temperature screening. Any individual who is exhibiting symptoms and/or has a fever should be sent home and referred to their health care provider.
- Educational institutes should ensure that handwashing facilities with soap and water are available. Furthermore, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer should be readily available in the classroom for hand hygiene purposes.
- As is normal practice educational institutes and continuing education sponsors should maintain meticulous attendance records for the purpose of contact tracing, should that become necessary.
- If gloves are worn, special attention should be taken to ensure that there is not cross contamination. All utilized personal protective equipment including gloves should be disposed of in accordance with program policies and procedures.
- Simulated live patients should not be utilized. Mannequins should be utilized as a substitute.

These guidelines are based on the most current CDC and Department of Health Guidance and have been adapted for the applicability of the EMS classroom environment. EMS educational institutions are encouraged to work with their program medical directors related to implementation of infection control procedures. Furthermore, EMS educational institutions are encouraged to engage with their facility administration and risk management in assessing the needs of your local EMS system in making the decision of whether to resume in person instruction.

It is expected that EMS educational entities may resume at different paces based on local conditions. The Bureau encourage EMS educational entities to make decisions and implement policies in the best interests of their students, staff, and the EMS community as a whole.

Please address any questions to your Regional EMS Council.

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