

Fees increase due to legislation

By Linda Reyes

Bureau web home page address: www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/ems

EMS Standards home page: www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/ems/stdnhome.htm

Internet certification verification now on web site.

Certification verification phone line: 512/834-6769
Fax number: 512/834-6714
email: emscert@tdh.state.tx.us

Q: I'm really confused about the fees I'll be required to pay when I renew this fall. Say I want to renew online. Exactly what fees will I owe?

A: There are two legislative actions that increased EMS fees. The first is HB 2292, which allows TDH to increase all EMS regulatory fees. The second is SB 1152, which requires TDH to join TexasOnline and to charge a subscription fee. Find your renewal situation on the chart below to determine your total fee. All applications will be assessed a one-time subscription fee per renewal, whether the application is submitted on paper or online.

Q: Are there any exceptions to fee increases?

A: The first exception is exempt volunteers. Exempt volunteers owe no fee unless they choose to renew by the exam option, in which case they will be required to pay the National Registry assessment exam fee, but no state application or subscription fee.

Volunteers do not have the option to renew through TexasOnline.

The second exception is personnel who apply for renewal before June 1 but do not complete the process. Once you submit an application, paper or online, for the current renewal period (any time within one year prior through one year after expiration date), you do not get an opportunity to complete another application for this renewal period through TexasOnline. You must correct your deficiency by paper submission. For example, you submitted a renewal application prior to your expiration date, which was March 31, 2004, but did not complete requirements for recertification. You are now within 90 days past your expiration date. You are not eligible to renew through TexasOnline because your application status is either "Pending deficiencies" or "Eligible for testing."

New renewal fee structure for HB 2292 and TexasOnline

Level	Renewal Timeframe	HB 2292 New Base Fee	Plus SB1152 Subscript Fee	Total \$ Fee Owed
ECA or EMT	Within 12 mos prior to expiration date	60	4	64
ECA or EMT	Within 90 days after expiration date	90	4	94
ECA or EMT	Within 91 days to 1 year after expiration date	120	4	124
EMT-I or EMT-P	Within 12 mos prior to expiration date	90	6	96
EMT-I or EMT-P	Within 90 days after expiration date	135	6	141
EMT-I or EMT-P	Within 91 days to 1 year after expiration date	180	6	186
Licensed EMT-P	Within 12 mos prior to expiration date	120	6	126
Licensed EMT-P	Within 90 days after expiration date	180	6	186
Licensed EMT-P	Within 91 days to 1 year after expiration date	240	6	246
Basic or Adv Coord	Within 12 mos prior to expiration date	60	4	64
Basic or Adv Coord	Within 90 days after expiration date	90	4	94
Basic or Adv Coord	Within 91 days to 1 year after expiration date	120	4	124
EMS Instructor	Within 12 mos prior to expiration date	30	4	34
EMS Instructor	Within 90 days after expiration date	45	4	49
EMS Instructor	Within 91 days to 1 year after expiration date	60	4	64
EMS Information Operator Inst	Within 12 mos prior to expiration date	60	4	64
EMS Information Operator Inst	Within 90 days after expiration date	90	4	94
EMS Information Operator Inst	Within 91 days to 1 year after expiration date	120	4	124

This is applicable June 1 for renewals only. Initial fees for TexasOnline will increase as soon as we're mandated to collect Texas Online fees. We will post the information on our website as soon as we know it.

HB 2292 initial fees

As of June 1, 2004

Item	Fee Owed
Initial ECA or EMT	\$60
Initial EMT-I or EMT-P	\$90
Initial Licensed EMT-P	\$120
Initial Coordinator (basic or adv)	\$60
Initial EMS Instructor	\$30
Initial EMS Info Operator Inst	\$60
Duplicate ID card	\$10
Retest fee (all levels)	\$30
Reciprocity	\$120
Inactive status	\$30

Initial fees will increase as we're mandated to collect TexasOnline fees.

Applications received with incorrect fees will be considered deficient. Refer to the chart on the previous page to find your fee.

Q: What about using TexasOnline for initial applications?

A: That's a little trickier to answer. The folks at TexasOnline have not given us a firm date for when they will begin accepting initial applications online, although it may be as early as September 1. TexasOnline, which is being managed by a private contractor, has the legislative authority to charge subscription fees for every application (online or not) up to 90 days before the actual services begin. It appears we will receive very little notice of this fee increase. The only thing to do is to check our website the day that you send in your application. Applications received with incorrect fees will be considered deficient, which will cause a delay in your certification or licensure.

Q: What fees do I pay for initial applications?

A: Regulatory fees for initial applications will increase June 1. See box on this page for new fee amounts. These fee increases go into effect whether or not TexasOnline subscription fees are assessed. See previous question for more information on when TexasOnline fees might go into effect. And check the website before you send in your application!

Q: When will I be able to use the Texas Online system to renew my certification?

A: We are planning on a June start date. The initial implementation phase will only allow renewal applicants to use the TexasOnline system. If you have previously submitted a paper application and show as pending on the certification query page, you cannot use TexasOnline to correct your deficiency. We expect the implementation of the second phase to follow, allowing initial applicants, reciprocity and renewal provider licensing through Texas Online.

Q: Can I update my personal information such as address and phone number online?

A: Only while you are also renewing your EMS certification. Otherwise, you can write, email or call your address change to us.

Q: I need to change my last name on your records. Can I do that online?

A: No, to change your last name, you must provide us with documentation. If you have questions about changing your last name, call or email us.

Q: How can I confirm a payment or request a receipt for online payment?

A: TexasOnline will prompt you when a payment has been made and allow you to print a receipt on your printer.

Q: If I renew online will I receive my new card faster than if I submit a paper application and check or money order payment?

A: Yes. TexasOnline is designed for faster service turnaround. An electronic payment is much faster than the mail and paper process.

Q: If I renew online, will I be considered "legal" to work as soon as I get a confirmation that my payment was accepted and I complete the renewal process?

A: No. You can check your application status on the bureau web site at: www.tdh.state.tx.us/hcqs/ems, click on Certification Query. The department will consider you renewed as soon as

your new application status reads "Certified" with a new expiration date. The web page is considered an official record and is a live connection to our state database.

Bottom line: Because of HB 2292, all regulatory (initial and renewal) fees increase June 1. In addition, renewal fees will increase more on June 1 because of TDH's mandate to participate in TexasOnline. Initial fees will increase when we're mandated to collect TexasOnline fees. That may happen as soon as June 1. Watch our website for the latest information.

Always check the website the day you send in your application to make sure you are sending the correct fee. We will update the information about fees as we know it on our website, and send it out on our announcement email list. Rules mandate that applications received with incorrect fees will be marked deficient which will delay your application.

Let's sum it up:

Regulatory fee increases begin June 1, 2004.

- Approximately 20 percent increase in regulatory fees for initial and renewal applications

TexasOnline fee increases begin June 1, 2004.

- TexasOnline subscription fee for renewal certifications

You are not eligible to use TexasOnline for renewal if:

- You are a fee exempt volunteer.
- Your application status reads "Pending" or "Eligible for testing."
- You are earlier than one year prior or later than one year after your expiration date.

You do not owe a subscription fee if:

- You are a fee exempt volunteer.
- Your application status reads "Pending" or "Eligible for testing" and you applied prior to June 1.

