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# Frequently Asked Questions

By Mattie Mendoza

**Q: Will DSHS accept continuing education (CE) hours taken on the internet?**

**A:** Yes. If it is most convenient for you, all of your required CE hours can be obtained via the internet. There are several approved internet providers you can use to obtain your EMS CE hours. They are: CE Solutions at [www.ems-ce.com](http://www.ems-ce.com), Emergency Medical Certification Inc. at [www.emcert.com](http://www.emcert.com), Emergency Medicine Internetwork at [www.eminet.com](http://www.eminet.com) and EGenesis at [www.egenesis.cc](http://www.egenesis.cc). Also, more and more colleges are offering courses via the internet. Check with your local college to see if it is an approved EMS education agency and if it has EMS internet courses available. And don't forget to retain your CE documentation for up to five years, as you will need to submit it if you are selected for audit.

**Q: Can an EMT-basic receive credit for attending advanced-level CE courses?**

**A:** Yes, EMT-basics can receive credit for attending intermediate- and paramedic-level courses. As long as the CE comes from an approved provider and falls into one of the required content areas, you can count those CEs. In fact, there are definite advantages when EMTs participate in advanced-level CE. First, studying and practicing together improves the ability of EMS personnel to work together on calls. This, of course, leads to better patient care. Second, sitting in on advanced CE may help some EMTs make the decision to pursue intermediate or paramedic

certification. Finally, attending programs which cover intermediate and paramedic content can increase an EMT's chances of success in advanced certification courses. EMS personnel should never be hesitant about pursuing opportunities to further their skills and competence. After all, that's why it's called *continuing education*.

**Q: Can I earn CEs on a topic more than once during a certification period?**

**A:** Yes. Instruction in a *topic* – such as EKG interpretation – can be repeated. However, the *content* cannot be exactly the same. For example, courses such as BTLS, PHTLS, ACLS, PALS or CPR cannot be used more than once in the four-year reporting period since the curricula are standardized and participants would simply be repeating material. The intent is to prevent individuals from attending identical courses just to accumulate CE hours. At the same time, as much flexibility as possible is retained to allow instruction in areas where improvement is needed or special interests have developed. Please visit our website for more information about CEs at: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems>.

**Q: I've met my CE requirements for the four-year reporting period except for one hour. What is going to happen to my certification?**

**A:** So long as you have met the minimum requirements for your level of certification in each of the content categories and have earned the necessary total number of hours, you have satisfied the CE requirements and

are entitled to renew your certification choosing the CE option. If you have *not* earned the CEs necessary to meet the minimum requirements in each of the content areas, you may *not* renew your certification using the CE option. Your CE accrual has to be complete when you submit your renewal application or you will have to choose another option for renewal. You can find all of your renewal options and minimum content areas for renewal by CEs on our website at: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems>.

Also, if you renew by CEs and have *not* met the full CE requirements at time of renewal application submission, it is considered falsification of documentation. Falsification of documentation shall be cause for reprimand, probation, suspension or revocation of a certificate, license, provider license or EMS program/course approval in accordance with §157.16 (relating to Emergency Suspension, Suspension, Probation, Revocation or Denial of a Provider License); and/or §157.32 (relating to Emergency Medical Services Education Program and Course Approval); and/or §157.34 (relating to Recertification); and/or §157.36 (relating to Criteria for Denial and Disciplinary Actions for EMS Personnel and Voluntary Surrender of a Certificate or License); and/or §157.38 (relating to Continuing Education); and/or §157.43 (relating to Course Coordinator Certification); and/or §157.44 (relating to Emergency Medical Service Instructor Certification). See link to Rules page at: [www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems). Click on EMS.