

Texas Administrative Code

TITLE 25	HEALTH SERVICES
PART 1	DEPARTMENT OF STATE HEALTH SERVICES
CHAPTER 157	EMERGENCY MEDICAL CARE
SUBCHAPTER D	EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES PERSONNEL CERTIFICATION
RULE §157.49	Emergency Medical Services Operator and Operator Instructor Training and Certification

(a) Purpose. The purpose of this section is to establish standards and requirements related to protocols for delivery of emergency medical information to members of the public during medical emergencies; certification of emergency medical services (EMS) information operators; approval of training programs for EMS information operators; certification of EMS information operator instructors; and approval of EMS information operator instructor training programs.

(b) Provision of medical information.

(1) An EMS information operator may provide medical information to a member of the public during an emergency call if the information operator has successfully completed an EMS information operator training program approved by the Texas Department of State Health Services (department) and holds a certificate issued under the provisions of this section or holds equivalent credentials recognized by the department; and

(2) An EMS information operator may provide medical information to a member of the public during an emergency call if the information provided conforms to the protocol and medical direction for delivery of the information adopted by the department under the provisions of subsection (c) of this section.

(c) Protocols for delivery of medical information.

(1) The department shall approve the use of protocols for delivery of medical information to a member of the public by EMS information operators during an emergency call if it determines that the protocols are substantially equivalent to the Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Protocol Reference System (PRS) as referenced by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration in the EMD National Standard Curriculum and are approved by a physician who is providing medical direction for the delivery of the medical information.

(2) Delivery of medical information to a member of the public by EMS information operators during an emergency call shall be conducted under the medical direction of a physician who shall have reviewed and approved:

(A) the protocol to be used; and

(B) a system for assuring the quality of the information and the process followed in providing the information.

(d) EMS information operator certification.

(1) To become certified as an EMS information operator, a candidate must meet the following criteria:

(A) be at least 18 years of age;

(B) hold current evidence of completion of a nationally recognized basic CPR course approved by the department which includes written and skills proficiency examinations;

(C) have completed, within one year prior to application, a department-approved EMS information operator training program as defined in subsection (g)(1) and (2) of this section; and

(D) pass an EMS information operator written examination and skills proficiency evaluation which have been approved by the department.

(2) A candidate who does not pass the written EMS information operator examination may retest one time within 90 days of attempting the initial examination.

(3) A candidate who does not pass the written EMS information operator reexamination shall be required to complete another department-approved EMS information operator training program as defined in subsection (g)(1) and (2) of this section.

(4) Certification as an EMS Information Operator shall be valid for a period of four years commencing on the date the certificate is issued.

(e) Recognition by equivalent credentials. Upon written request to the department and submission of its program's curriculum, the department may approve credentials issued by an emergency medical dispatch certification agency, organization, or by another state as being equivalent to EMS information operator certification.

(f) Recertification. If an EMS information operator has not received notice of expiration of the certification it is the individual's responsibility to locate an EMS information operator instructor for recertification.

(1) To be eligible for recertification as an EMS information operator the individual shall:

(A) maintain current CPR certification; and

(B) complete 12 hours of continuing education in any of the following areas or activities:

(i) protocol review;

(ii) planning and management;

(iii) quality assurance; and

(iv) non-traditional educational programs.

(2) An EMS information operator meeting the requirements in paragraphs (A) and (B) of this subsection shall be issued a certificate valid for four years commencing on the date of issuance.

(g) EMS information operator training programs.

(1) EMS information operator training programs shall be conducted by a certified EMS information operator instructor who has met the requirements established in subsection (h)(1) of this section.

(2) The standards for EMS information operator training and operations shall be in accordance with the EMD National Standard Curriculum.

(3) The course shall consist of not less than 24 hours of classroom instruction in, but not limited to, the following content areas:

- (A) roles and responsibilities;
- (B) legal and liability issues;
- (C) EMD concepts;
- (D) obtaining information from callers;
- (E) resource allocation;
- (F) providing emergency care instruction;
- (G) introduction to the EMD PRS;
- (H) introduction to chief complaint types; and
- (I) EMS system overview.

(h) Course approval.

(1) Prior to starting a course, an EMS information operator instructor shall:

- (A) submit a completed and signed course approval application;
- (B) submit a non-refundable course approval fee of \$60, except a fee shall not be required if the EMS information operator instructor is not to be compensated for providing EMS information operator training;
- (C) submit a course outline listing content by contact hours and instructor names; and

(D) submit a copy of the PRS protocols to be used.

(2) If the course approval application meets the criteria established in this section, the EMS information operator instructor shall receive a letter of approval from the department with an assigned course number.

(3) Representatives of the department may monitor courses at any time for compliance and quality with on-site observation and other methods as deemed necessary.

(i) Denial of course application.

(1) Reasons for denial of course approval include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (A) failure of an EMS information operator instructor to hold current certification in accordance with subsection (j)(1) of this section;
- (B) issuing a check which is returned unpaid;
- (C) submission of an incomplete course approval application;
- (D) failure to meet minimum course content requirements;
- (E) starting or advertising a course without prior approval from the department; and

(F) failing to maintain affiliation with a sponsoring agency as defined in subsection (j)(1)(D) of this section.

(2) If a course approval application is denied, the EMS information operator instructor shall receive a letter from the department detailing the specific reasons for the denial.

(j) EMS information operator instructor certification.

(1) To become certified as an EMS information operator instructor, a person must:

(A) be at least 18 years of age;

(B) hold a high school diploma or GED certificate;

(C) hold certification as an EMS information operator;

(D) have a written agreement or verified affiliation with an EMS provider, a licensed health care facility, an institution of post secondary education, a law enforcement agency, a fire department, a public emergency dispatch agency, or other public safety agency;

(E) have completed, within one year prior to application, a department-approved EMS information operator instructor training program or hold EMS Instructor certification;

(F) submit an application to the department with a nonrefundable fee of \$60, except a fee shall not be required if the candidate is not to be compensated for providing EMS information operator training; and

(G) pass an EMS information operator instructor written examination administered or approved by the department.

(2) After verification by the department of the information submitted by the candidate, the candidate who meets the requirements in subsection (j)(1) of this section shall be certified for a period of two years commencing on the date of issuance of the certificate.

(3) Persons holding EMS information operator instructor certification from any department-approved training program prior to the effective date of this rule are considered to have met the requirements as set forth in this section and may apply for certification by submitting to the department:

(A) a written application with a nonrefundable fee of \$60, except a fee shall not be required if the candidate is not to be compensated for providing EMS information operator training; and

(B) documentation of current EMS information operator instructor certification.

(4) Retesting.

(A) A certificiant who does not pass the department's written examination may retest after:

(i) submitting an application to retest; and

(ii) paying a nonrefundable fee of \$30, if applicable.

(B) A certificiant who does not pass a retest shall meet the requirements in subsection (k)(1) of this section.

(k) EMS information operator instructor recertification.

(1) Prior to the expiration of an EMS information operator instructor certification, the department shall send a notice of expiration to the

certificant at the address shown in the current records of the department. It is the responsibility of EMS information operator instructor to notify the department of any change of address.

(2) If an EMS information operator instructor has not received notice of expiration from the department 45 days prior to the expiration, it is the duty of the EMS information operator instructor to notify the department and request an application for recertification. Failure to apply for recertification shall result in expiration of the certificate.

(3) To be eligible for recertification, the EMS information operator instructor shall:

(A) maintain current active certification or licensure as an EMT or above;

(B) maintain current active EMS Instructor certification;

(C) maintain an agreement or affiliation with sponsoring agency or organization as defined in subsection (j)(1)(D) of this section;

(D) submit an application for recertification with a nonrefundable fee of \$60, except a fee shall not be required if the candidate is not to be compensated for providing EMS information operator instructor training; and

(E) instruct at least one EMS information operator training program each year.

(4) After verification by the department of the information submitted, the EMS information operator instructor who meets the requirements of paragraph (3) of this subsection shall be recertified for two years beginning on the date following the expiration of the last certificate.

(5) An EMS information operator instructor who has not met all requirements for recertification prior to the end of the certification period is not certified and shall not perform the duties of an EMS information operator instructor.

(6) An EMS information operator instructor whose certification has been expired for 90 days or less may renew the certificate by meeting the provisions in paragraph (3)(A) - (C) of this subsection and submitting an application and a renewal fee that is equal to 1-1/2 times the normally required application renewal fee.

(7) An EMS information operator instructor whose certification has been expired for more than 90 days but less than one year may renew the certificate by meeting the provisions in paragraph (3)(A) - (C) of this subsection and submitting an application and a renewal fee that is equal to two times the normally required application renewal fee.

(8) An EMS information operator instructor whose certification has been expired for one year or more shall complete the requirements in subsection (j)(1) of this section.

(I) EMS information operator instructor training.

(1) All EMS information operator instructor training courses shall be conducted by a regionally accredited post-secondary educational institution which is approved as an EMS education program.

(2) EMS information operator instructor training courses shall follow a department-approved curriculum.

(m) Responsibilities of an EMS information operator instructor. The responsibilities of an EMS information operator instructor shall be to:

(1) process student applications and select students;

(2) schedule courses and assign instructors;

(3) verify the certification, license, or other proper credentials of all personnel who instruct in the program's courses;

(4) meet at least the minimum requirements for course curriculum established by the department for EMS information operator initial and refresher training;

(5) maintain in conjunction with the sponsoring agency or organization, all EMS information operator training course records for a minimum of 5 years;

(6) attest to the successful course completion of all students who meet the program's requirements for completion;

(7) provide candidates who have satisfied the requirements in subsection (d)(1) of this section with documentation on a form approved by the department, of certification that meets the requirements established by the department. Documentation shall include the candidate's name, a unique identification number, date of successful completion of the EMS information operator training and the training program's approval number;

(8) maintain in conjunction with the sponsoring agency or organization, a list of the names, addresses, social security numbers and the date the training was completed of each individual who successfully completes EMS information operator training for a minimum of five years;

(9) verify EMS information operator certification upon request of a certificant, a licensed EMS provider, a public safety agency, the department, or another individual or entity authorized by law;

(10) provide the department with information and reports necessary for planning, administrative, regulatory, or investigative purposes; and

(11) provide certified EMS information operators who have met the requirements in subsection (f) of this section, relating to recertification, with documentation on a form approved by the department renewing the certification.

(n) Disciplinary Action. An EMS information operator instructor shall be subject to the same disciplinary actions set forth in §157.44 of this title (relating to Emergency Medical Service Instructor Certification).

(o) For all applications and renewal applications, the department is authorized to collect subscription and convenience fees, in amounts determined by texas.gov, to recover costs associated with application and renewal application processing through texas.gov.

Source Note: The provisions of this §157.49 adopted to be effective December 10, 2000, 25 TexReg 12174; amended to be effective June 1, 2004, 29 TexReg 4492; amended to be effective September 11, 2011, 36 TexReg 5689