



Emergency Communications Registered Nurse (ECRN) Course Student POLICIES – Fall 2025

Course description

The Northwest Community Emergency Medical Services System (NWC EMSS) Emergency Communications Registered Nurse (ECRN) course presents components of the National EMS Education Standards with an emphasis on applying these principles to the role of an ECRN in conformity with the Illinois EMS Act and Administrative Rules and state ECRN Guidelines. The course is facilitated by the NWC EMSS EMS System Coordinator (Kourtney Chesney) and is assisted by Hospital EMS Coordinators/Educators (HEMSC/Es) from System hospitals.

Registration and tuition

Course applications with confirmation of ECG interpretation review course or online module (if completed) shall be submitted in the NWC EMSS office **no later than 1 week prior (October 1st) to commencement of class** so a student file can be opened.

Tuition: \$200.00 payable to Northwest Community Hospital; cost center 1201101532

Payment is due on or before the first day of class unless alternative arrangements have been made in advance with the course facilitator.

Course Prerequisites

- ☐ Current unrestricted license as a registered professional nurse in the State of Illinois.
- ☐ An employee in good standing at a System hospital **who has completed their probationary period** in the emergency department.
- ☐ Completing an ecg review course or online module prior to first day of class is **highly recommended**. Attach written documentation of successful completion/competency measurement to the application.
- ☐ Completion of the Policy Manual and 4 SOP self-assessments are required assignments. Due dates are specified in the Course Agenda. **Note: The Policy & Fundamentals self-assessments are due at the start of the first day of the course.**

Course content delivery

Classes will be conducted in person in the NCH Auditorium with the exception of November 12th where exams and practical's will be conducted in the NCH Learning Center. Class is scheduled 9am -3:30pm. There will be a 30-45 min break for lunch.

Needed Resources during class

Print the following from the System website (www.nwcemss.org Standards of Practice Tab), have written copies available, or electronic access during class:

- EMS Policy Manual – policies to be discussed are listed on the Course Agenda
- EMS Procedure Manual
- A copy of the 2022 NWC EMSS Standard Operating Procedures will be issued on the first day of class or can be picked up in the NWCEMS Resource office prior to the first day of class if prearranged. Contact NWC EMS Administrative Assistant Pam Ross to coordinate (847) 618-4482.

Attendance and CEU credits

Attendance at all classes is required. Communicate with Kourtney Chesney (via email if you will be late). Students are held to knowing all content covered in each class. Continuing education (CE) credits will be awarded for class hours.

Class outcomes and passing criteria

Students must demonstrate acceptable mastery of all cognitive, psychomotor and affective objectives as assessed and measured by the final written and practical examinations and direct observation.

Final Written exam: 100 multiple choice questions blueprinted to the entire SOP.

Final Practical exam

- ECG rhythm exam: Allowed one min/strip to identify 15 rhythms
- Simulated cardiac run (dysrhythmia or HF mgt progresses to a cardiac arrest)
- Simulated medical run (patient with behavioral health emergency, septic shock, or stroke alert)
- Simulated respiratory run (asthma/COPD, anaphylaxis, upper or lower respiratory infection)
- Simulated trauma run: In addition to appropriate System trauma mgt, must be able to calculate an accurate GCS and determine appropriate trauma center destination per triage guidelines

Testing deadlines: Students will complete all final exams on the last day of class. (Final written exam, ECG rhythm interpretation exam, and all practical exam stations).

GRADING CRITERIA: Participants must achieve a minimum of 80% on each component (and no lethal errors on the ECG strip test or critical errors on the practical simulated runs).

Retest option: If a candidate scores < 80%, misses a lethal rhythm on the ECG exam, or makes a critical error on the practical exam, one retake of each component is allowed. No retakes of the written or ECG interpretation exam on the day of initial testing are allowed. Remediation is required before a second attempt. Retests must be completed within two weeks.

If a student fails to meet the criteria for successful course completion, the following options are available:

- Repeat the course at a later time
- Complete the provisions of a remediation plan agreed to by the participant, their employer and the EMS System Coordinator prior to retesting again.

Interim status: A nurse is not given on line medical control (OLMC) privileges to begin the radio internship until all course requirements are successfully achieved.

Tutoring is available and encouraged for those seeking assistance and/or finding it difficult to master course objectives. Please contact the course facilitator or your hospital's EMS Coordinator.

Passing all exam components confers **Provision ECRN status** with temporary OLMC privileges while under the direct preceptorship of a licensed ECRN or physician.

Field observation experience

A Provisional ECRN must be scheduled by their hospital EMS Coordinator to ride as an observer with an EMS Provider Agency on an ALS ambulance within the NWC EMSS for a minimum of one eight-hour shift. During this time, the nurse must observe at least one Advanced Life Support (ALS) call. If this is not achieved during the initial shift, the nurse must be rescheduled for one additional shift. They may leave as soon as an ALS run is completed on the second shift day. If they do not observe an ALS run during the second shift, contact the EMS System Coordinator and an alternative method will be negotiated to achieve the field observation objectives. The experience must be documented on the Field Observation Form provided by the System and be provided to the EMS System Coordinator along with the ECRN candidate's Internship portfolio.

On line Medical Control Internship

Upon successful completion of all course testing requirements, the Provisional ECRN may begin a precepted OLMC internship and build a portfolio of competency measurements that justify a recommendation for ECRN licensure with the Illinois Department of Public Health Division of EMS.

Opening a file: Each provisional ECRN must make an appointment to meet with their HEMSC or designated alternate to open a file prior to commencing the internship. During this meeting, the HEMSC/Educator will review the provisional internship process and that hospital's expectations.

Scope of practice: No provisional ECRN has independent OLMC privileges. During the internship, each Provisional ECRN is to provide OLMC within the System standards of practice as defined by the NWC EMSS SOPs, policies and procedure manual and while under the **direct** supervision of an ECRN preceptor or an approved ED physician who **must be present throughout each call, and approve all orders**. Supervision is interpreted as approving the provisional ECRN's orders to protect patient safety and coaching as necessary, but **not taking over the call**. Those runs where orders were initiated by someone other than the provisional ECRN DO NOT qualify as acceptable in building the portfolio demonstrating ECRN competency.

The preceptor must co-sign all Communication logs documented by the Provisional ECRN.

Time requirements: The internship shall be completed when all objectives are achieved. While there is no minimum time frame, the maximum allowable time is 12 months from the date of successful testing unless a written extension request is submitted and approved.

Internship requirements:

- Each ECRN candidate must complete a minimum of 10 ALS calls of varying natures (2 each: respiratory, cardiac, medical emergencies, trauma, and peds). Communications Logs and ECG strips that have been redacted of all Protected Health Information (PHI) under HIPAA must be submitted to the hospital EMSC/Educator at least one week prior to the summative assessment meeting. Pediatric calls may be simulated if an actual call of this nature was not completed.

Meeting: The ECRN candidate must meet at least once with the HEMSC to evaluate the nurse's progress and/or assess if all objectives have been met to recommend ECRN licensure. **If the runs are evaluated as unsatisfactory**, a corrective action plan shall be developed with time frames for achievement in order to complete the internship.

COMPLETION OF THE INTERNSHIP – Paperwork submission to Resource Hospital

All internship forms are available from the Resource Hospital and are posted to the System website

- ☐ **Cover letter** from the HEMSC recommending ECRN licensure
- ☐ **Certification check list:**
- ☐ Scan and submit at least 10 Communications logs for ALS runs as specified above. Attach ECG and EtCO₂ strips.
- ☐ **Summative Performance Appraisal:** Completed and signed
- ☐ **Field experience form:** Completed and signed
- ☐ Completed, legible, and signed **IDPH Personal History Form (Child Support Statement)** (mandated per EMS Act and Rules).

Do NOT send a check. The initial IDPH licensure fee shall be paid by the ECRN candidate online.

Extensions: If an extension is needed beyond the 12-month period, a written extension request must be submitted by the provisional ECRN to the EMS System Coordinator at least 30 days prior to the expiration of the provisional period. Any nurse who completes the internship after an extension may be required to complete additional testing.

RECOGNITION of ECRN STATUS

When all objectives are achieved and approval is granted by the EMS System Coordinator or designee, the ECRN candidate will be recommended for ECRN licensure per Illinois Rules and System policy. The nurse will receive a license from IDPH with an ECRN number and expiration date. Employing hospitals may require that an ECRN provide them with a copy of the license. Individuals are strongly encouraged to keep the original in a place that allows for easy retrieval. Nurses who hold an ECRN license may use the designation "ECRN" as part of their professional credentials.