

Policy Title: ENTRY INTO THE NORTHWEST COMMUNITY EMS SYSTEM**No. E - 3****Board approval: 9/20/12****Effective: 9/21/12****Supersedes: 7/1/10****Page: 1 of 6**

- I. **BLS Privileges:** All PM/PHRNs licensed in Illinois will be granted BLS privileges upon date of hire. They may perform BLS assessments and interventions under the direct supervision of a NWC EMSS paramedic with full System privileges in accordance with the ALS/BLS Scope of Practice Policy, SOPs and Procedure Manual. If Temporary ALS Privileges have not been awarded within nine (9) months of hire, the BLS privileges will be revoked. They may be entered into the Image Trend database as a Probationary paramedic which allows them to do BLS skills only.
- II. **PARAMEDIC (PM)/PREHOSPITAL R.N. (PHRN) LICENSED IN ILLINOIS seeking ALS Privileges**
- A. PMs/PHRNs who must complete System entry requirements to receive advanced life support (ALS) privileges in the NWC EMSS:
1. Those educated and/or licensed outside of the NWC EMS System. They never held NWC EMSS practice privileges.
 2. Former System members
 - a. Not affiliated with a System Provider Agency for six months or longer.
 - b. Those that did not leave the NWC EMSS in good standing or left with an incomplete corrective action plan or due to patient care issues must complete System Entry no matter how long non-affiliated with a System Provider Agency.
- B. **Former System members: Left in good standing - gone for 6 months or less**
1. If they can provide documentation they have continued to attend NWC EMSS CE classes, passed all post-tests, and have completed all mandatory requirements since they left the System, their application will be considered on a case by case basis for reactivation.
 2. If they have not attended CE classes, they must complete and submit the CE credit questions for all non-mandatory classes conducted since they left, pass all missed post-tests, pay all applicable fees, and complete mandatory classes that occurred after they left the System as a prerequisite to regaining privileges.
- C. **Once application for ALS privileges begins, the entire process must be completed within four months** (including receipt of all documents, successful completion of all exams and skill labs). **If it is not completed within that time, the applicant's file will be destroyed** (unless extenuating circumstances apply and are approved by the EMS System.) **The applicant will be required to reapply, resubmit all paperwork/fees, retake all exams, and re-attend all skills labs.**
- D. **Fees**
1. A per person processing fee will be assessed (payable by cash, money order, or EMS agency purchase order to Northwest Community Hospital Acct. #17496-533990. This defrays costs incurred to educate, evaluate, and process an applicant for System entry.
 2. Fee amounts are based on current costs and will be published on the System website.
- III. **Procedure**
- A. **Step #1:** Provider Agency submits to NWC EMSS office (via e-mail or fax) completed "System Entry Authorization Form" which documents:
1. Name of individual
 2. Employment verification date or intent to hire pending success System entry
 3. Name of assigned mentor (PEMSC or designee, Peer II preferred) within Provider Agency
 4. Who (Provider Agency or individual) is responsible for paying the System entry fees

Policy Title: ENTRY INTO THE NORTHWEST COMMUNITY EMS SYSTEM

No. E - 3

Board approval: 9/20/12

Effective: 9/21/12

Supersedes: 7/1/10

Page: 2 of 6

- B. **Step #2:** PM/PHRN to contact the NWC EMSS office Secretary at 847/618-4482 to open a file.

Go to the System website (www.nwcemss.org) to access System Entry documents, information, and resources including the SOPs, Policy Manual, self-assessments, etc.

- C. **PM/PHRN to submit the following to the NWC EMSS office:**

1. Application for System membership to include demographic and contact information
2. Copy of a valid driver's license for confirmation of birth date and driver's license number
3. Copy of current healthcare provider CPR card
4. Copy of current Illinois PM/PHRN license. A National Registry certificate is not an Illinois license. Those that hold an out-of-state license need to seek reciprocity with IDPH.
5. Documentation of PM/PHRN education to include (copy of a diploma including this information is sufficient.)
 - a. Name of educational program
 - b. Name of Lead Instructor
 - c. IDPH site code for class
 - d. Date of course completion
 - e. Verification of successful completion of PM/PHRN course approved by IDPH
6. Letter from the last EMS MD or designee attesting to standing in their system. If on inactive or independent status, a letter verifying dates of affiliation and scope of practice from the most recent system of affiliation is requested.
7. Copy of all EMS CE hours accumulated since licensure or the last renewal

- D. **Step #3: SOP and Policy Manual Self-assessments:** These must be completed and submitted prior to taking the written exams. The self-assessments shall be reviewed for completion and accuracy, and signed off, by the assigned mentor prior to submission. If they are not submitted, the individual will not be allowed to test.

- E. **WRITTEN TESTING**

1. Written testing is conducted by appointment at NCH every Tuesday morning from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. Call 847-618-4482 to schedule an appointment.
2. **Components:** Four multiple choice exams are scored separately covering all aspects of the SOPs: Cardiac, Trauma, Medical, and Fundamentals (includes General Assessment, IMC, Withholding Resuscitation, Airway/Respiratory, OB, Peds, Elderly, and Extremely Obese patients). In addition, there is an ECG strip test. Exam objectives are available in advance.
3. **Time allowance:** One minute per question. Applicants will be allowed to take a maximum of two written exams at each sitting plus the strip test.
4. **Scores: Passing** is 75% on each exam plus no critical errors on the ECG exam
 - a. If an applicant fails an exam, they will be informed regarding the specific area(s) needing further study.
 - b. The applicant's employer (or potential employer) will be informed of the initial failure in writing on the System Entry Status Form
 - (1) It is the employer's decision as to whether or not the candidate is approved to retest.
 - (2) If approved, the applicant is responsible for scheduling retest appointments and completing independent study and focused review with assigned mentor to prepare for the retest(s).

Policy Title: ENTRY INTO THE NORTHWEST COMMUNITY EMS SYSTEM

No. E - 3

Board approval: 9/20/12

Effective: 9/21/12

Supersedes: 7/1/10

Page: 3 of 6

- c. If an applicant fails one or more sections of the retest, further remediation must be completed and verified prior to scheduling a third and final testing attempt. The same notice provisions are imposed as specified above.
- d. Third attempt failures will be handled on a case-by-case basis. A conference will be convened with the EMS MD/designee and the Chief/ Provider EMS CEO to establish a corrective action plan.

F. SKILLS LABS

1. If System-entry fees are paid in advance, or an authorizing PO is received, individuals may attend the skill labs before and/or concurrently with written testing – except for the airway lab. All written exams must be passed prior to attending the airway skill lab. This will maximize scheduling opportunities and minimize the time it takes to complete System entry.
2. **Scheduling:** Each Lab is generally held every three to six weeks (depending on need). The schedule is posted on the System website.
3. All skills lab must be completed within 90 days of receiving Temporary ALS Privileges unless extenuating circumstances apply. An applicant may request an extension, for cause, that will be reviewed by the EMS MD or designee.
4. **Lab content and time requirements**
 - a. Airway access and management (8 hours)
 - b. 12-L ECG (5 hours)
 - c. Capnography (2.5 hours)
 - d. EZ-IO (4 hour)

These times may be extended if an applicant is learning a skill for the first time or has difficulty demonstrating competency. Hour/hour CE time will be granted.
5. **Performance expectation:** Applicants are expected to competently demonstrate the essential steps of ALS skills required in the NWC EMSS in the correct sequence and timing without critical error. They will also be verbally questioned on their knowledge of pathophysiology related to major illnesses and injuries included in the national EMS Education Standards, System drugs (including action, indications, dose, route and side effects), and the System SOPs.

G. System ALS privileges

1. **Temporary ALS Privileges:** Once the file is complete and all written testing is successfully completed, an applicant will receive Temporary ALS Privileges that allows them to provide ALS assessments/care for which they have received education and been declared competent by their previous EMS System pending completion of the skills labs.
 - a. For patient safety, PMs with temporary ALS privileges should only be partnered on the ambulance with PMs with full system privileges. Two PMs with temporary ALS privileges shall not be assigned to an ambulance together.
 - b. If all skill labs are not completed within 90 days of Temporary ALS Privileges being granted, they will be revoked.
2. **Full ALS Privileges** are granted after successful completion of all written testing and skills labs.

Policy Title: ENTRY INTO THE NORTHWEST COMMUNITY EMS SYSTEM

No. E - 3

Board approval: 9/20/12

Effective: 9/21/12

Supersedes: 7/1/10

Page: 4 of 6

- H. **System status and CE requirements:** PMs and PHRNs will be required to begin meeting System CE requirements upon receiving Temporary ALS privileges. They will receive a large number of CE hours during the process of System Entry and will also be receiving System-specific education and demonstrating practical competency, so should not be disadvantaged with respect to gaining CE towards relicensure. They are encouraged to attend In-station classes during the process of gaining System privileges.

IV. **TRANSFERRING FROM OUT OF STATE** (EMS Rules Section 515.610, July 25, 2003)

- A. EMTs and paramedics may apply to IDPH for license reciprocity using the IDPH Reciprocity Application form posted to the IDPH website.
- B. Such application shall be in writing and contain the following:
1. Part I of the EMT Reciprocity Application completed by applicant.
 2. A photocopy of the current EMS certificate/license and a current AHA Healthcare Provider CPR card.
 3. Letter of recommendation from the most recent EMS MD indicating that you are or were in good standing when you left their jurisdiction and are up-to-date with continuing education hours. If an applicant cannot obtain a letter of recommendation, they will need to request a waiver as described in point 4.
 4. If the applicant has not functioned as an EMT or under the direction of an EMS MD, they must include a letter with their signature stating they that have never worked as an EMT or under an EMS MD and request that the letter of recommendation be waived. Also, if requesting a wavier, the applicant will need to provide photocopies of all CE completed during the current license/certification period.
 5. Completed child support declaration statement including the applicant's Social Security number, driver's license number, date of birth.
- C. Return the above materials to the IDPH Springfield office for processing.

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Office of Preparedness & Response
Division of EMS & Highway Safety
422 S. 5th Street (Floor 3)
Springfield, IL 62701

- D. IDPH will review requests for reciprocity to determine compliance with the applicable provision of the Rules. Continuing education hours from the state of current licensure will be prorated based on the expiration date of the current license.
- E. Individuals who meet the requirements for licensure reciprocity will be State licensed consistent with the expiration date of their current license but not to exceed a period of 4 yrs.
- F. NOTE: If the applicant has been educated by an EMS System in Illinois and has taken the National Registry exam, they do not need to apply for reciprocity. The EMS System Coordinator where they were trained needs to submit a transaction card to the attention of the Licensure Section of IDPH. Reciprocity is only required for those who were educated outside of Illinois.
- G. Once an Illinois license is awarded, petitioners for NWC EMSS System privileges must obtain and submit the same information and complete the same entry testing as Illinois licensed paramedics.

Policy Title: ENTRY INTO THE NORTHWEST COMMUNITY EMS SYSTEM

No. E - 3

Board approval: 9/20/12

Effective: 9/21/12

Supersedes: 7/1/10

Page: 5 of 6

V. EMS PROVIDER AGENCIES JOINING THE SYSTEM

EMS Provider Agencies petitioning for system entry must submit a Plan Agreement on forms prescribed by IDPH that address the criteria specified in the EMS Rules and Regulations. In addition:

- A. Providers must agree to System staffing requirements. The system requires a minimum of six licensed PMs per 24 hour ALS vehicle and a minimum of six licensed EMT-Bs per 24 hour BLS vehicle plus three additional (appropriately licensed) EMS personnel (one per shift) with full system privileges who could supplement staffing in the event of illness/vacation/time off.
- B. FTE requirements for vehicles that are submitted for less than 24 hour per day service shall be determined based on the proposed hours of operation.
- C. Illinois law states that all employees must have 24 hours of continuous rest per week. Research shows that medical personnel who work continuously for longer than 10 hours are at risk for fatigue and errors in judgment. Therefore, the system discourages staffing patterns for EMS personnel that result in a tour of duty lasting longer than 24 hours.
- D. System applicants must name a Provider EMS Coordinator (PEMSC) who meets the requirements of the System Job Description for PEMSC, agree to participate in the Computer Aided Reporting System (CARS) program, agree to participate in the In-Station Continuing Education Program, and must provide the names of representatives to the PBPI, CARS, and Education Committees. They are welcome to send a representative to the R&D Committee.
- E. System applications have been developed by IDPH and must be completed by all Provider Agencies seeking entry. Paperwork will not be forwarded to IDPH until the plan agreement is complete, all personnel have been awarded system practice privileges, they have been educated on the completion of a computerized patient care report, and the vehicles have been inspected and approved by IDPH.
- F. In addition to the individual entry fees, there is a one-time fee assessed to each Provider Agency seeking entry to offset administrative costs. The current fee schedule is available from the NWC EMSS office.

VI. ASSOCIATE/PARTICIPATING HOSPITALS JOINING THE SYSTEM

Hospitals petitioning for system entry must submit a Plan Agreement that addresses all the criteria specified in the EMS Rules and Regulations and the NWC EMSS requirements. The NWC EMSS requires at least one approved ECRN on duty and available to take radio calls at all times at Associate Hospitals or Participating Hospitals with radio privileges due to reciprocity agreements. Entry paperwork will not be forwarded to IDPH until the plan agreement is complete and ECRNs have been awarded system practice privileges. There is a one-time fee assessed to each hospital seeking entry into the system to offset administrative costs. The current fee schedule is available from the NWC EMSS office.

Note: System eligibility criteria are acceptable, even though they may tend to disadvantage people with disabilities, given that they are reasonable, necessary, legitimate and uniformly applied (*Southeastern Community College v. Davis*, 442 U.S. 397 (1979)).