



The Role of Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Principles of LPSCS

Copyright and Terms of Service

Copyright © Texas Education Agency, 2011. These materials are copyrighted © and trademarked ™ as the property of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and may not be reproduced without the express written permission of TEA, except under the following conditions:

- 1) Texas public school districts, charter schools, and Education Service Centers may reproduce and use copies of the Materials and Related Materials for the districts' and schools' educational use without obtaining permission from TEA.
- 2) Residents of the state of Texas may reproduce and use copies of the Materials and Related Materials for individual personal use only, without obtaining written permission of TEA.
- 3) Any portion reproduced must be reproduced in its entirety and remain unedited, unaltered and unchanged in any way.
- 4) No monetary charge can be made for the reproduced materials or any document containing them; however, a reasonable charge to cover only the cost of reproduction and distribution may be charged.

Private entities or persons located in Texas that are **not** Texas public school districts, Texas Education Service Centers, or Texas charter schools or any entity, whether public or private, educational or non-educational, located **outside the state of Texas** *MUST* obtain written approval from TEA and will be required to enter into a license agreement that may involve the payment of a licensing fee or a royalty.

Contact [TEA Copyrights](#) with any questions you may have.

Definition of EMS

- A coordinated network of professionals whose function is to provide a variety of medical services, such as pre-hospital medical and trauma care and transportation for those in need of emergency care
- Begins with a call for service made to a 911 call center
- Ends when the patient is delivered to a source of more advanced medical treatment, such as a hospital
- The gateway to the healthcare system

Definition of EMS (continued)

- Components in the private and public sectors
 - Public EMS
 - Provided by a city, county, or other political subdivision
 - Funded by a combination of user fees and taxes
 - May be provided as part of a local fire or police department
 - Private EMS
 - Places to handle emergencies, such as hospitals
 - Can include both for-profit and non-profit

The History of EMS

- 1797
 - Baron Dominique-Jean Larrey
 - Chief physician of Napoleon’s army
 - Instituted the first triage-like system for injured soldiers in battle
 - Suggested the introduction of “ambulances volantes”
 - “ambulances volantes” (flying ambulance) – horse-drawn wagons used to collect and carry wounded from the battlefield to base hospitals
- 1865 – America’s first ambulance service was instituted by the US Army
- 1869 – America’s first city ambulance service was instituted in New York City by Bellevue Hospital

The History of EMS (continued)

- 1937
 - A 5-fatality fire on Wimpole Street in Britain was caused by the delayed reporting of phone calls
 - Britain implemented its 999 emergency telephone system serving police, fire, and EMS
- 1940s – ambulance services were turned over to local police and fire departments due to a shortage of manpower caused by WWII
- 1951 – helicopters began to be used for medical evacuations during the Korean War
- 1957 – the traffic emergency number zenith 1-2000 was debuted by the California Highway Patrol
- 1959 – North America's first three-digit (999) emergency telephone system was introduced in Winnipeg, Canada

The History of EMS (continued)

- 1966
 - The National Research Council published a research paper known as “The White Paper”
 - Considered the catalyst for improving emergency medical care
 - Actually titled “The Neglected Disease of Modern Society”
 - Recommended that ambulance service be provided by local government, including helicopter ambulance services, streamlined communications between ambulances, emergency rooms, and other health-related agencies

The History of EMS (continued)

- 1967 – President Lyndon B. Johnson’s Commission on Law Enforcement recommended one phone number for calling the police
- 1968 – 911 was designated the emergency number at a press conference in Washington, DC
- Feb. 16, 1968 – the first 911 call was made in Haleyville, AL
- 1990 – the fire department pushed to expand into EMS Services

Careers in EMS

- Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics
 - Duties
 - Care for the sick or injured in emergency medical settings
 - Work in all types of environments
 - Include work that is physically demanding and highly stressful

Careers in EMS (continued)

- EMTs and Paramedics (continued)
 - Education
 - Need a minimum of a high school education and a structured post-secondary training program
 - Specific guidelines
 - Vary from state-to-state
 - Established by the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) which provides national certification of EMTs and Paramedics at three levels
 - » EMT basic
 - » Advanced EMT
 - » Paramedic

Careers in EMS (continued)

- Dispatchers
 - Duties
 - Answer emergency and nonemergency calls
 - Take information from the caller and send the appropriate type and number of units
 - Determine from the caller the type of emergency and its location
 - Give over-the-phone medical help and other instructions before emergency personnel get to the scene
 - Monitor and track the status of police, fire, and ambulance units on assignment
 - Work in communication centers called Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP)
 - Work between 8 to 12 hours and sometimes 24-hour shifts
 - Education
 - A high school diploma is essential for this career
 - Some states have developed 40+ hour training programs

Roles and Responsibilities of EMS Professionals

- Readiness
- Safety
- Advocate
- Maintain effective communication skills
- Have a caring and patient attitude
- Ensure that patients receive care that is in their best interest
- Ensure that patients receive continuous care and transfer
- Maintain patient confidentiality
- Maintain professionalism

EMS Today

- Expanding into more areas than just providing advanced life support services
- For example, Fire Service EMTs
 - Receive training in extrication procedures
 - Train in using extrication tools
 - Receive search and rescue training
 - Use technologically advanced methods to locate wireless and voice-over-Internet protocol (VoIP) callers

Resources

- Grafft, J. A. (2012). *Essentials For The Emergency Medical Responder*. Clifton Park: Delmar Cengage Learning.
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2013, January 7). *EMTs and Paramedics*. Retrieved from Occupational Outlook Handbook:
<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/print/emts-and-paramedics.htm>
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2013, January 8). *Police, Fire, and Ambulance Dispatchers*. Retrieved from Occupational Outlook Handbook:
<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/office-and-administrative-support/police-fire-and-ambulance-dispatchers.htm#>
- <http://www.fcems.org/EMS-purpose.html>
- Do an Internet search for the following:
- Emergency Medical Technicians CollegeGradCareers video
- Whonamedit
- Medical-dictionary free
- Basic ems extrication procedures by Elizabeth Otto