



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
MAINE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
152 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333



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MEMORANDUM

To: All Training Center Directors, PSE Administrators, Maine EMS Board, Maine EMS Exam Committee, Maine EMS Education Committee, Maine EMS Medical Direction and Practices Board, Maine EMS Medical Directors

From: Maine EMS

Date: July 1, 2020

Subject: Approval of Checklists for Resuming PSEs and Student Clinicals

Maine EMS is happy to announce that the safety checklists for resuming conduction of the Board of EMS-approved psychomotor skills exams (PSEs) at the EMR/EMT level and resuming EMS program clinical activities have been approved by the Department of Health and Human Services.

To resume PSEs, Training Centers and/or instructors are responsible for:

- Training/orienting PSE Administrators, Exam Coordinators and Exam Evaluators to the revised testing materials and Exam User Manual, as appropriate;
- Developing and completing an operational site plan that meets or exceeds this guidance;
- Submitting the operational plan to Maine EMS electronically; and
- Plans must be updated with the most current U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S. CDC), Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC), and Maine EMS guidance regarding safety and PPE.

Training centers will not have to have plans pre-approved prior to conducting PSEs. Submission of the plan is all that is required to do so; however, training centers are responsible for maintaining compliance with the most up-to-date guidelines. Resuming PSEs is directly linked with Phase Three of the Governor's Restarting Maine's Economy Plan and the most contemporary safety measures that have been instituted. Training centers must submit revised plans that account for changes to policies and procedures that come as a result of any changes to safety recommendations from Maine CDC, Maine EMS, the Governor's Office, or U.S. CDC. In the event the State of Maine regresses to a previous Phase due to increased transmission or other factors, PSEs will need to be re-evaluated.

The checklist Guidance for Conducting PSEs testing materials which have been revised with the COVID-19 accommodations will be made available to all Training Centers and PSE Administrators and will also be available for download on the Maine EMS website.

To resume Student Clinicals Training Centers are responsible for:

- Training/orientation of Training Center staff, students and clinical partners, as appropriate, regarding pertinent provisions of the plan.
- Completion of an operational plan for conducting clinicals by the Training Center in accordance with the checklist.
- Submission of the operational plan to Maine EMS electronically; and
- Plans must be updated with the most current U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (U.S. CDC), Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC), and Maine EMS guidance regarding safety and PPE.

Training centers will not have to have plans pre-approved prior to resuming training operations in the clinical setting. Submission of the plan is all that is required to do so; however, training centers are responsible for maintaining compliance with the most up-to-date guidelines. Resuming Clinicals is directly linked with Phase Three of the Governor's Restarting Maine's Economy Plan and the most contemporary safety measures that have been instituted. Training centers must submit revised plans that account for changes to policies and procedures that come as a result of any changes to safety recommendations from Maine CDC, Maine EMS, the Governor's Office, or U.S. CDC. In the event the State of Maine regresses to a previous Phase due to increased transmission or other factors, student clinicals will need to be re-evaluated.

The checklist guidance for Resuming Clinical Rotations document, which has been revised with the COVID-19 accommodations will be made available to all Training Centers and will also be available for download on the Maine EMS website.

All questions regarding this should be directed to Maine EMS.

Appendices:

Guidance for Resuming PSEs (1 Jul 2020)

Guidance for Resuming Field Clinicals Rotations (1 Jul 2020)



Guidance for Resuming Practical Skills/Psychomotor Examinations in the Presence of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Introduction

The ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic has dramatically impacted emergency medical service (EMS) agencies, clinicians, and education. To minimize risk of exposure as much as possible, Maine EMS suspended all clinical rotations across the State of Maine early during the pandemic. As the State of Maine continues to move towards a recovery following the initial response phase of this public health disaster, it is incumbent to consider resuming psychomotor testing for EMS students who may be eligible to complete testing. Maine EMS is committed to providing safe, quality care of patients and the maintaining the well-being of EMS clinicians and students as we consider the next steps forward.

This document has been prepared to provide EMS training centers with standardized criteria that shall be addressed as part of operational plans for conducting psychomotor examinations during the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. These criteria are intended to ensure consistency among training centers wishing to resume practical skills examinations.

Purpose

To define the parameters that must be in place to allow for practical skills examinations.

Scope and Applicability

The requirements in the attached checklist (Appendix A) must be met throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This checklist applies to all practical skills examinations state-wide. It sets forth the minimum requirements, and all examinations must only be administered within the directives, guidelines, and executive orders issued by the Governor's Office, Maine CDC, and Federal CDC.

For the purpose of addressing the ability to perform Practical Skills Examination activities, Training Centers will follow the reopening and congregating guidelines that the Governor sets for Retail Stores. As there is no specific guidance set forth by the governor for practical skills examinations, openness of retail stores will serve as the surrogate guidance for allowing testing centers to operate. This document is in effect during all four stages of the governor's reopening plan. Upon the Governor declaring the end of the recovery plan, these operation requirements are automatically terminated and return to normal testing operations is allowed.

Infection Control

All tests that are administered will be administered within best practices as issued by Maine and Federal CDC. These requirements are not flexible, and testing centers or individuals that cannot meet these requirements will be prohibited from offering, or participating in, tests.

Appendix A (Pages 3-5)

Psychomotor/Practical Skills Examination Operation Checklist

Training Center: _____ PSE Date: _____

PSE Location: _____ (include facility name)

State Test Administrator: _____

Training Center Administrator: _____

Number of Test Takers: _____ Number of Test Examiners: _____

Total Number Expected on Site _____

General

- The county in which the test is being operated must be allowing Retail Store opening for in-store shopping. If the county is not open for this type of activity by the governor, the testing may not occur.
- Participation of Non-Maine (including test takers, examiners, and administrators) falls in alignment with Phase Three of the Governor's Restarting Maine's Economy Plan and the most contemporary safety measures that have been instituted.
- Compliance with current social distancing guidelines in the place of testing, in any one room in the testing center, while proceeding from one area to another, during breaks and restroom breaks.
- No more than 10 individuals may occupy a single room at any time. All individuals in the room must be at least six feet apart at all times.
- Procedure for student registration and accounting so as to ensure that both students and exam staff are captured in the CDC epidemiological tracings if it becomes necessary to contact them due to an exposure while at the exam.

Infection Prevention

Testing Locations

- Testing locations must meet one of the following standards:
 - Allow enough time for a complete air exchange in all spaces being used. If that required time period is unknown or the space does not have a central air handler; then:
 - At least 24 hours must have passed since the facility was occupied including setup.
- Testing locations must be set up so that no individual is ever within six feet of another individual. The following considerations should be taken into account:
 - One-way traffic patterns with signage indicating which direction traffic should move.
 - Removal of extra tables and chairs, and spacing all chairs six or more feet apart
 - Placement of examiners in such a way where no one is walking past them when entering or exiting the rooms, and such that they can remain six or more feet from the candidate.

- Test sheets should be collected in the test room, and not removed until the conclusion of the test.

Personnel Considerations

- All individuals participating in, or administering, the test will be masked at all times, with no exceptions. Food and beverage will not be consumed in the facility.
- Proper hand hygiene will be followed. Each individual must sanitize their hands upon entering and exiting any room
- Individuals who have been sick with COVID-19 symptoms as defined on the federal CDC website on the day of the exam may not participate in any way and must leave the site immediately upon identification of any signs and/or symptoms.

Screening and Monitoring

- The training center must make arrangements for screening all personnel and candidates participating in the test. At the beginning of the day, the following information must be collected:
 - Question: Have you left the state of Maine within the last 14 days for any reason? (if yes, deny entry). EMS personnel who have transported patients out of state, but within New England, may test if that is the only reason they have left. This includes any other travel for any reason – the exception for essential workers does not apply.
 - Question: Have you been in contact with anyone with any signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19 (provide list in effect from Federal CDC at time of exam) without full personal protective equipment [i.e. respirator (N95), gloves, eye protection, gown]? If yes, deny entry.
 - Question: Have you been in contact with anyone who has tested positive or is a presumed positive for COVID-19 without full personal protective equipment [i.e. respirator (N95), gloves, eye protection, gown]? If yes, deny entry.
 - Question: Do you have any signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19 (provide list in effect from Federal CDC at time of exam) or have you experienced any of the defined signs and/or symptoms in the last 14 days? If yes, deny entry.
 - Measure temperature. If over 100.4 degrees F, deny entry

Cleaning and Sanitizing¹

- All high-touch areas must be cleaned between each station and at least hourly (including but not limited to, doorknobs, hand railings, and light switches)
- All testing equipment must be cleaned between each test, and at the end of the examination event.
- Tables and chairs in waiting areas should be cleaned and disinfected at least hourly throughout the exam.

[Signatures appear on next page]

¹ Disinfection products must inactivate large and small enveloped viruses. Use products on EPA list of approved disinfectants (<https://cfpub.epa.gov/giwiz/disinfectants/index.cfm>)

Other considerations taken into account:

I, _____, certify the PSE has/will fulfill all items on the checklist above, and that all criteria for holding the exam have/will be adhered to at all times.

Signature of Training Center Administrator

Date

Verification by State Test Administrator

Date

ORIGINAL FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO MAINE EMS



Guidance for Resuming Field Clinical Rotations in the Presence of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Introduction

The ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic has dramatically impacted emergency medical service (EMS) agencies, clinicians, and education. To minimize risk of exposure as much as possible, Maine EMS suspended all clinical rotations across the State of Maine early during the pandemic. As the State of Maine continues to move towards a recovery following the initial response phase of this public health disaster, it is incumbent to consider resuming clinical and field rotations for EMS students, with emphasis on those who have otherwise completed all other program requirements that would make them eligible for program completion and licensure testing. Maine EMS is committed to providing safe, quality care of patients and maintaining the well-being of EMS clinicians and students as we consider the next steps forward.

This document has been prepared to provide EMS training centers with standardized criteria that shall be addressed as part of operational plans for conducting clinical opportunities, including field rotations, during the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. These criteria are intended to ensure consistency among training centers wishing to resume student clinical rotations. Once authorized by the Maine Board of EMS and approved by the Governor's office as part of the Restarting Maine's Economy Plan, the checklist will be made available and distributed. Training Centers should develop their operations plans in accordance with the checklist and submit them to Maine EMS, after which they may re-commence student clinical and field rotations as they are ready.

Purpose

To define the parameters that must be in place to allow for continuation of EMS student clinical and field rotations.

Scope and Applicability

The requirements must be met throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. This checklist applies to all Maine-licensed Training Centers statewide who conduct EMS clinical and field rotations. It sets forth the minimum requirements for precautions that must be in place. All rotations must be conducted only within the directives, guidelines, and executive orders issued by the Governor's Office, Maine CDC, and Federal CDC.

This document is in effect during all four stages of the governor's reopening plan. As with past pandemics, it is expected that COVID-19 will have a significant impact on standards for healthcare and EMS care delivery. As the duration, depth and breadth of that impact is currently unknown, this checklist will remain in effect and be periodically reviewed by Maine EMS for revision and/or need for continuation as the environment changes.

Infection Control

All students participating in clinical experiences will abide by at least the current minimum standards adopted by Maine EMS, Maine CDC, and/or U.S. CDC, where appropriate, infection control guidelines.

All plans submitted to Maine EMS shall address the following components:

1. Informed Consent

- Methods of educating the student of the potential risks of participating in clinical rotations during the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic. Risk(s) to the student that must be discussed include:
 - Exposure, infection, and the potential for infecting loved ones at home.
 - Current known clinical co-morbidities that may place the student or family at higher risk for complications if they were to contract and develop COVID-19.

One or more of the following methods of documenting the risks may be used, so long as it is evident that the Training Center is consistently and effectively communicating the risks:

- Signed disclaimer
- Documented online training
- All students must be given the opportunity to defer their clinical rotations in accordance with their Training Center's policies and procedures to satisfy the program objectives. Students must not be penalized for opting to defer clinicals due to potential or perceived safety concerns.*

2. Screening of Students Participating in Clinicals

- All students participating in clinical and field rotations will be screened for COVID-19 related signs/symptoms in alignment with Maine EMS guidelines for all EMS clinicians. This may be done by the Training Center and/or clinical/field site, however, the responsibility for completion of this item is defined in the plan.

At the beginning of each clinical day/shift, the following information must be collected:

1. **Question:** Have you left the state of Maine within the last 14 days for any reason?*
2. **Question:** Have you been in contact with anyone with any signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19 *without proper aerosol precautions* (i.e. respirator (N95), gloves, eye protection, gown)?*
3. **Question:** Have you been in contact with anyone who has tested positive or is a presumed positive for COVID-19 *without proper aerosol precautions*?*
4. **Question:** Do you have any signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19 or have you experienced any of the defined signs and/or symptoms in the last 14 days?*
5. Measure temperature. If over current designated CDC metric, deny entry.*

** Based upon the current standards set by the National/Maine State CDC and the Governor's office, the answers to the above questions will be evaluated. Each Training*

Center will specify their pathway for decision-making regarding the above and maintain any revisions to their plans with Maine EMS as necessary.

3. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Donning/Doffing Training

- Training is provided for all students regarding Donning/Doffing of PPE. The training will include:
 - Current National/State CDC guidelines for healthcare providers use of PPE
 - Completion of Pandemic Response education from Maine EMS, including Pandemic Response Protocols and the COVID-19 specific Out of Hospital Cardiac Arrest Response Protocol.
 - Reinforce donning and doffing of PPE and the importance of compliance and use of PPE during EMS operations.
 - An outline of the training will be provided by the Training Center, they will elicit current standards from clinical sites and CDC guidance.*
 - Training center plans shall include a provision to ensure that preceptors provide oversight and guidance to the student regarding proper PPE usage and procedures.

* Training may be conducted online via Learning Management System (LMS) or via in-person classroom-based training in accordance with the Governor's re-opening plan.

- PPE Use Is Maintained as Appropriate During the Clinical Experience
 - The Training Center plan details how each student participating in various clinical rotations will maintain adherence to the most current U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and/or Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines for healthcare providers in place at the time of the clinical rotation. The plan addresses the following components:
 - Students will receive medical clearance documentation, if necessary.
 - Student will be fit-tested and/or trained for an appropriate respiratory protection device prior to the beginning of their clinical experiences. If training center elects to conduct the fit testing itself, it will be responsible for coordinating with the clinical site to obtain the specific masks that will be used as part of the clinical experience to maintain compliance with current Maine Department of Labor and/or OSHA standards, where applicable.
 - Ensuring that students will have and/or be provided all appropriate PPE during their clinical rotation.

4. Documentation of Clinical Rotations with EMS Services

- All students who are participating in clinical rotations must be registered on the eLicensing platform with Maine EMS to ensure that the Maine EMS office has current contact information for all individuals involved with clinical care in the field.
- Maine EMS will distribute a policy regarding documentation of students on patient care reports for the purpose of facilitating CDC contact tracing. However, it is incumbent upon the Training Centers to address this with their contracted services as well.

Training centers must write their clinical plans in accordance with the above checklist and submit them to Maine EMS. Once plans have been submitted Training Centers may implement clinical activities as they are ready. Submissions can be made to electronically as a packet to maine.ems@maine.gov.