



JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI  
GOVERNOR

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



MICHAEL P. CANTARA  
COMMISSIONER

JAY BRADSHAW  
DIRECTOR

# Memo

To: Maine EMS Services and Providers  
From: Scott A. Smith, Education & Training Coordinator  
CC: Maine EMS Regional Offices, Maine FT&E, AVOC Instructors  
Date: 02/07/07  
Re: 2007 Maine EMS Ambulance Vehicle Operators Course (AVOC) – Basic and Equivalent Courses Update

---

Questions continue to come into the office concerning the law and courses that may be considered equivalent to the AVOC-Basic course. Since there seems to be some confusion over what the law actually says, following is a copy of the law, and the requirements for a course to be considered equivalent.

## Title 32: Professions and Occupations

### Chapter 2-B: Maine Emergency Medical Services Act of 1982

#### §85. Emergency Medical Persons

**“6. Ambulance operator course.** By January 1, 2007, a person whose job description includes operating an ambulance in an emergency mode or transporting a patient must possess within 6 months of being employed, certification of successful completion of a basic ambulance vehicle operator course, or a course that has been approved by the board as an equivalent, in order to operate an ambulance in an emergency mode or to transport a patient. This requirement applies to all paid and volunteer ambulance operators and transporters. This requirement is in addition to vehicle operator requirements of Title 29-A or other law. A person whose job description includes operating an ambulance in an emergency mode or transporting a patient who successfully completes a basic ambulance vehicle operator course or a course that has been approved by the board as an equivalent may apply to the board for reimbursement for the cost of the course.” 32 M.R.S.A. § 85.6.

Services should be aware that the 6-month grace period applies only to new employees, not existing service members. The earlier interpretation of this law by MEMS still applies- those personnel who do not have a primary

PHONE: (207) 626-3860

TTY: (207) 287-3659

FAX: (207) 287-6251

With offices located at the Central Maine Commerce Center, 45 Commerce Drive, Suite 1, Augusta, ME 04330

responsibility to perform EMS work are not required to complete the AVOC training when it is not a normal job expectation.

In late 2006 and early 2007, a number of additional training programs were held for AVOC instructors, bringing the number statewide to 111. Maine EMS is confident that this cadre of instructors can meet the training needs of the EMS community. MEMS will continue to offer standardized CEHs for the AVOC programs- please consult the latest edition of the MEMS Standardized CEH Guide available on the MEMS website at [www.maine.gov/dps/ems](http://www.maine.gov/dps/ems). To locate an AVOC instructor near you, please contact your regional office or Maine EMS.

At this time, there is no mandate for individuals to complete an AVOC refresher course. A brief, 4 hour program was developed in 2006 to be used by services interested in completing on-going training in emergency vehicle operations. Any AVOC instructor is qualified to present this program and Maine EMS encourages all services to consider adopting annual refresher training in emergency vehicle operations. For more information, please contact Maine EMS.

Maine EMS has reviewed the requirements for other vehicle operator courses to be considered equivalent to the Maine EMS AVOC-Basic course. Equivalent courses must include a didactic portion and an in-vehicle practical portion in the program.

The didactic portion must include the following topic areas:

1. Overview of driver responsibility to safety
2. Vehicle inspection and maintenance
3. Route selection and pre-planning
4. Communication responsibilities – radio and interpersonal
5. Review of pertinent Maine Motor Vehicle Statutes (Title 29-A)
6. Defensive driving techniques
7. Accident avoidance techniques
8. Ambulance operations in the emergency mode
9. Special situations
10. Handling characteristics of ambulances

The in-vehicle practical portion must include the following scenarios:

1. Serpentine maneuver
2. Backing with turns (offset driveway, perpendicular parking, etc.)
3. Diminishing clearance (narrowing alleyway, preferably including backing into diminishing clearance)

The following courses have been reviewed by MEMS and are considered equivalent to the MEMS AVOC- Basic Course:

- Maine EMS AVOC Course (regardless of year)
- DOT EVOC-Ambulance
- VFIS Emergency Vehicle Driver Training Program
- Maine Fire Training & Education EVOC Program
- Maine Criminal Justice Academy EVOC course
- CEVO-II (if practical skills and Title 29-A reviewed as listed above)
- Department of Defense EVOC-Ambulance Course

Other programs will be reviewed by Maine EMS on a case-by-case basis, and will be approved if they meet the minimum standards listed above.

In 2007, a number of things have changed with AVOC.

- AVOC instructors are now responsible for issuing certificates to participants.
- Maine EMS is not charging a course fee, however, individual instructors are free to set course fees that fairly compensate them for their time and expenses.
- Driver's license credit (points) is available for a \$5.00 per person fee.
- All regional offices have cones available for rental at \$25.00 per course.

AVOC instructors are reminded to:

- Please submit typed rosters only to MEMS.
- Please submit a single check payable to Treasurer, State of Maine for those wishing DMV credits.
- Contact MEMS for any updated materials as needed.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions at (207) 626-3862 or by email at [scott.a.smith@maine.gov](mailto:scott.a.smith@maine.gov).