

Maine EMS Exam Committee Meeting

Tuesday September 27, 2011

Fallen Heroes Conference Room, Augusta

Minutes

Present: Sally Taylor, Joanne LeBrun, Shaun St. Germain

Absent: Jeff Regis, Peter Carbonneau, Gary Utgard, Jeremy Damren

Guests: N/A

Staff: Drexell White, Kerry Pomelow

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 9:45 a.m.

Drexell reported that Gary Utgard had notified him that he would not be in attendance.

Leah Mitchell, Region 6 (Mid Coast EMS) representative to the Committee has submitted a letter of resignation. In her letter, she thanked the committee and indicated that she is continuing in her role with the Maine EMS Education Committee.

A. Assign Timekeeper – Kerry Pomelow

B. Additions/Deletions to the Agenda – None

2. Minutes – June 28, 2011 Meeting Minutes - review for acceptance

The minutes of the June 28, 2011, meeting, were reviewed.

Motion: To accept the minutes of the June 28, 2011, meeting (LeBrun; second by St Germain - carries)

3. Old Business

A. EMT-Basic Skill Sheet Instructions – Equipment Requirements

Committee members reviewed an Excel spreadsheet prepared by staff that included all equipment for all First responder and EMT-Basic skill stations. Consensus was to work on one station list and then divide the remaining five amongst those in attendance.

Work commenced on the airway station equipment, including discussions about placement of gloves for candidate use during an exam.

The committee also discussed the use of “full” oxygen tanks during the exam, which expanded into a larger discussion about tank storage requirements, in general. Drexell reported that the Fire Marshal’s Office has specific requirements about oxygen cylinder storage, including specific room construction requirements. Discussion continued about testing options using “live” oxygen cylinders.

Following review of the Airway Equipment, the balance of the list was divided amongst committee members and staff:

Cardiac – Sally Taylor

Patient Assessment – Shaun St Germain

Spinal – Kerry Pomelow

Bleeding – Joanne LeBrun

Splinting – Joanne LeBrun

B. Use of NREMT AEMT Exam at the EMT-Intermediate Level.

Drexell reported that the Maine EMS Board approved the committee's recommendation concerning approval and transition to the NREMT AEMT exam for the EMT-Intermediate level.

Staff will work on forms revisions needed as part of the transition. Joanne LeBrun offered that there should be a letter from the committee to the Training Centers that clearly outlines the AEMT process and training center needs requirements as related to conducting the exam.

4. New Business

A. Expansion of the Exam Administrator Pool

The consolidation of Northeastern Maine, Kennebec Valley and Mid Coast EMS under one entity means that several of our current administrators will be ineligible to conduct practical exams in that region. Drexell has contacted two prospective candidates who are interested in becoming PSE administrators for Maine EMS.

Drexell also reported that he has corresponded with Rob Wagoner at NREMT about securing AEMT Exam Administrator training in Maine, either this fall or early spring 2012.

B. MEMS Test Policy on Re-Test after Three Failures – Discussion

Staff brings this issue to the committee because Maine EMS policy inconsistencies with NREMT have lead to confusion about re-test requirements and concerns of fairness (in the current policy).

The Maine EMS licensing exam consists of cognitive and psychomotor components. The current process allows three attempts to successfully complete the exam. Three failed attempts at either the cognitive or psychomotor components of the exam constitute failure of the entire exam.

A candidate who fails a state licensing exam must complete a Maine EMS-approved refresher training course in order to be eligible to re-test the state licensing exam (i.e. three additional attempts at the psychomotor and cognitive components). The re-test requires completion of both the cognitive and psychomotor components, regardless of whether either component was successfully completed (initially).

Following discussion, it was proposed that an exam candidate receive credit for the exam component that was successfully completed, provided that the re-test of the failed component is completed within one year of the date the (successfully) completed component.

Changing the Maine EMS re-test process to the model recommended above will:

- Alleviate a disparity with the National Registry of EMT (NREMT) re-test policy, which allows single component re-tests, within one year of the completed component. Currently, a person could re-test only the failed component with NREMT and receive NREMT recertification, without re-testing the component that had been successfully completed during the candidate's initial attempts (as currently required by Maine EMS).
- Provide an incentive for a candidate to complete testing within the year following the course. Experience has shown that the farther from the course completion date, the less likely the candidate will successfully test.
- Remove a perceived penalty in the testing system in that a candidate must re-test a component even though he or she may have successfully completed it during the initial test sequence.

- Establish a reasonable cut-off date for completing the failed component only. The proposed process would still require a new psychomotor and cognitive exam beyond the one year time limit.

Motion: That The Exam Committee recommends that the Maine EMS Board approve a change to its Exam Administration Manual to not require re-testing of a (successfully completed) practical or cognitive exam component, in the case of an exam candidate who passes one of the components but fails three attempts at the other component, provided that:

- ***The candidate receives MEMS –approved refresher training making him or her eligible to re-test the failed component; and***
- ***That successful re-test of the failed component is completed by the candidate within one year of the test component that was successfully completed by the candidate (prior to the refresher training).***

(LeBrun; St Germain – motion carries)

C. Exam Committee Composition

Committee members discussed the committee composition and found no need to recommend changes. Staff will work on filling current vacancies.

5. Next Meeting

In order to avoid conflicts with the December holidays, the next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday November 29, 2011 at 9:30 a.m. at Maine EMS in Augusta.

6. Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Drexell White