

## Re-entry/Reinstatement Process

Individuals who have surrendered their EMS credentials as a condition of entry into the treatment program may petition for issuance of an encumbered EMS credential in order to return to practice. In order to obtain an encumbered credential with limited privileges, an individual must be compliant for a minimum of 90 consecutive days with the treatment program. Documentation, including an evaluation by an addictionologist, letter of support by the individual's treatment counselor, and documentation of evidence of compliance with the Alternative Program Contract must be submitted. The individual must appear before the Re-entry/Reinstatement Committee, as well as be interviewed by the EMS Disciplinary Committee. Practice restrictions and privilege limitations of the encumbered EMS credential will be detailed in a contractual agreement outlining the consequences of failure to abide by the terms of the agreement. However, if a decision is made to not issue an encumbered EMS credential, the earliest date the individual may re-petition and the evidence/data that must be provided will be determined.

The Office of Emergency Medical Services' Compliance Manager may be contacted for additional information regarding petitioning for the issuance of an encumbered EMS credential.

A work site teleconference must be conducted with the EMS System Administrator and System Medical Director prior to the individual being approved to function within the EMS System.

### One year conditions of practice are as follows:

- Shall not work or volunteer more than one hundred twenty (120) hours per two (2) weeks or more than seventy two (72) hours in a seven (7) day interval unless approved by the program.
- Shall not be scheduled to work or volunteer more than twenty-four (24) consecutive hours in any one shift.
- Shall not have access to or be accountable for controlled substances, including a patient's personal medications.
- Shall not work or volunteer for more than one (1) EMS System at a time.
- Shall not be left alone with the patient or function as the primary patient care provider at any time.
- Shall not work or volunteer in any capacity in the healthcare setting if a drug screen tests positive until further testing or investigation.
- Must perform duties in a safe and competent manner satisfactory to the Department and EMS System Medical Director.
- Shall not violate any rules promulgated by the Medical Care Commission.
- Must sign valid releases and must submit all required documentation (AA/NA Attendance, Self, Sponsor and Work Performance Reports) to the Monitoring Coordinator bi-monthly.

- Must submit Counselor reports monthly until discharged by therapist/counselor.
- Must submit any additional reports, evaluations and verifications as requested by the Program and the Office of Emergency Medical Services.



## EMS Credentialed Personnel Chemical Dependency Recovery and Rehabilitation Program

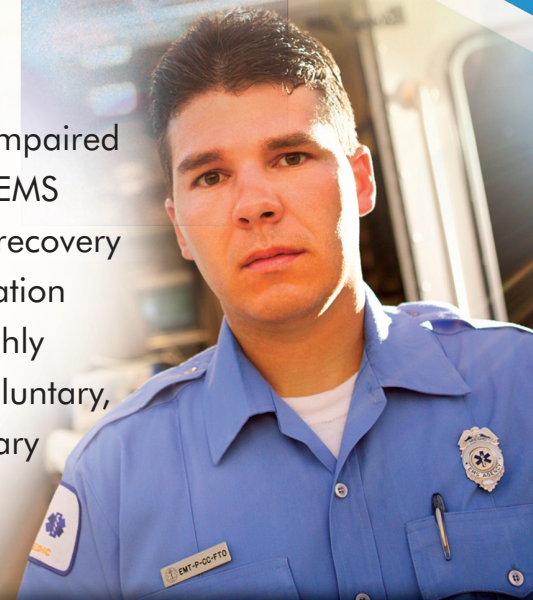
Following completion of one (1) successful year of employment in either a paid or volunteer capacity, an individual's file will be reviewed for possible lifting of restrictions. Issues of non-compliance may delay the lifting of conditions. An individual must continue to work or volunteer under the one (1) year conditions until notified by the Monitoring Coordinator.

The **North Carolina Office of Emergency Medical Services**, in collaboration with its partners, protects the health and safety of the citizens of North Carolina.

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"...assisting impaired credentialed EMS personnel in recovery and rehabilitation utilizing a highly structured, voluntary, non-disciplinary program."



## History and Authority

The Department of Health and Human Services is required pursuant to North Carolina General Statute §143-509(13) to establish programs for aiding in the recovery and rehabilitation of emergency medical services (EMS) personnel who experience chemical addiction or abuse and programs for monitoring these EMS personnel for safe practice. Through the rules of the North Carolina Medical Care Commission {10A NCAC 13P .1401}, the Office of Emergency Medical Services is identified as the entity responsible for the provision of the services authorized by this statute.

In order to comply with the statutory and regulatory requirements, as the Department's duly recognized agent, the Office of Emergency Medical Services has entered into a contractual agreement with the North Carolina Board of Nursing to allow eligible EMS personnel entry and participation in their Alternative Program for Chemical Dependency.

If you would like additional information about the EMS Credentialed Personnel Chemical Dependency Recovery and Rehabilitation Program, contact the Compliance Manager at:

### North Carolina Office of Emergency Medical Services

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## About the Program

The program is a highly structured, voluntary, non-disciplinary program requiring total abstinence. The program is designed to enlist the voluntary participation of credentialed EMS personnel whose capacity to practice EMS care with a reasonable skill and safety has been or may be compromised by chemical dependence.

This treatment program provides structure, support, monitoring and guidance for impaired credentialed personnel sanctioned for use of drugs and/or alcohol such that the use of these substances interferes with their ability to practice safely by offering a program for recovery through a therapeutic and non-punitive process. Participation in this program is not published unless disclosure is necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public or as ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction.

### Program objectives are:

- Ensure the health and safety of the public by closely monitoring EMS credentialed personnel impaired by drugs and/or alcohol.
- Achieve earlier intervention with intent to decrease the time between the credentialed EMS personnel's acknowledgement of chemical dependency and entry into the recovery process.
- Return the credentialed EMS personnel to safe and effective practice in a more efficient manner while minimizing financial impact on the individual.
- Provide an opportunity for EMS credentialed personnel to recover from impairment in a therapeutic, non-punitive and non-published process.

## Criteria for Admission

### An individual must:

- Acknowledge, in writing, the actions which violated the performance requirements.
- Receive recommendation by the North Carolina EMS Disciplinary Committee for participation in the treatment program.
- Voluntarily agree to participate.
- Cease in the direct delivery of any patient care and surrender all EMS credentials until such time an individual is eligible for issuance of an encumbered EMS credential.
- Accept responsibility for any and all cost associated with the program to include treatment and drug screening.

### An individual is not eligible for participation in the program when:

- An individual has been charged or convicted of diverting chemicals for the purpose of sale or distribution or dealing or selling illicit drugs.
- An individual is under investigation or subject to pending criminal charges by law enforcement.

## How the Program Works

### Components of the Program include:

- An individual's EMS credentials shall be voluntarily surrendered to the Office of Emergency Medical Services for a minimum of three (3) months from the date the individual has entered treatment. After three (3) months, the individual may petition for issuance of an encumbered EMS credential in order to become eligible to return to restricted practice.
- Individuals shall be monitored for a minimum of three (3) years from the date of return to practice.
- Program participants shall be required to submit to witnessed random drug screenings.
- Reports and evaluations from an individual's treatment facility shall be due monthly and an individual is required to participate in one (1) year of aftercare following initial treatment.
- Participants must attend a minimum of three (3) approved self help recovery meetings each week for the first year of the Contract and two (2) per week for the remainder of participation in the program.
- Work performance reports shall be required once an individual returns to practice.
- Relapse must be reported immediately and may result in termination from the Contract.

