



Standard Guide for Training the Emergency Medical Technician (Basic) in Roles and Responsibilities¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This guide establishes the minimum training standard for emergency medical technicians (basic) as it relates to their roles and responsibilities.

1.2 This guide is one of a series which together describe the minimum training standard for the emergency medical technician (basic).

1.3 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:

- F 1031 Practice for Training the Emergency Medical Technician (Basic)²
- F 1219 Guide for Training the Emergency Medical Technician (Basic) to Perform Patient Initial and Detailed Assessment²
- F 1220 Guide for Emergency Medical Services Systems (EMSS) Telecommunications²
- F 1285 Guide for Training the Emergency Medical Technician (Basic) to Perform Examination Techniques²
- F 1288 Guide for Planning for and Response to a Multiple Casualty Incident²
- F 1328 Guide for Training Emergency Medical Technician (Basic) to Prepare Patients for Medical Transportation²
- F 1329 Guide for Training the Emergency Medical Technician (Basic) in Basic Anatomy and Physiology²
- F 1419 Guide for Training the Emergency Medical Technician (Basic) to Manage Shock²
- F 1420 Guide for Training the Emergency Medical Technician (Basic) to Perform Patient Management Techniques²

F 1421 Guide for Training the Emergency Medical Technician (Basic) to Manage Obstetrical Emergencies²

2.2 Other Documents:

- Centers for Disease Control: Recommendations for Prevention of HIV Transmission in Health-Care Settings³ MMWR (most current recommendation)
- Centers for Disease Control: Update: Universal Precautions for Prevention of Transmission of Human Immunodeficiency Virus, Hepatitis B Virus, and Other Bloodborne Pathogens in Health-Care Settings³ MMWR (most current recommendation)

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions:

3.1.1 *EMSS communications subsystem, n*—comprises those resources and arrangements for notifying the EMS system of an emergency, for mobilizing and dispatching resources, for exchanging information, for remote monitoring of vital indicators, and for transmission of treatment procedures and directions (from F 1220).

3.1.2 *management, n*—refers to the step(s) that constitute action taken by the emergency medical technician (basic) for a patient in need of assistance because of a real or perceived traumatic or medical condition.

3.1.3 *stress, n*—nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it.

3.1.4 *triage, n*—the process of sorting and making priorities for emergency medical care of the sick and injured on the basis of urgency and type of condition present, number of patients and resources available to route them properly to medical facilities appropriately situated and equipped for their care.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 This guide establishes the minimum national standard for training the emergency medical technician (basic) as it relates to his/her roles and responsibilities.

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² *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 13.02.

³ Available from Epidemiology Program Office, Centers for Disease Control, Public Health Service, U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services, Atlanta, GA 30333.

4.2 This guide shall be used by those who wish to identify the minimum training standard for the emergency medical technician (basic) as it relates to his/her roles and responsibilities.

4.3 This guide shall be used as the basis to revise Practice F 1031.

4.4 Every person who is identified as an emergency medical technician (basic) shall have been trained to this standard.

4.5 This guide does not stand alone and must be used in conjunction with all referenced documents cited in Section 2.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The role and responsibilities of the emergency medical technician (basic) shall be patient care which includes:

5.1.1 Providing scene evaluation and control,

5.1.2 Carefully examining the patient for signs and symptoms of illness or injuries,

5.1.3 Communicating with and providing emergency management for victims of sudden illnesses or injuries,

5.1.4 Assuring that the patient receives the available resources appropriate to his condition, for example, advanced life support, heavy rescue, specialized rescue situations, and so forth, in accordance with local protocol,

5.1.5 Careful handling of the patient in moving to transport vehicle,

5.1.6 Safe and efficient transport of the patient while continuously reassessing the patient and providing any appropriate continuing care,

5.1.7 Orderly and expeditious transfer of the patient to the medical facility,

5.1.8 Communication with medical facility for medical direction or to notify of patient's condition, or both,

5.1.9 Documenting the care provided and maintaining accurate records,

5.1.10 Operating and maintaining the emergency vehicle and its equipment and supplies, and

5.1.11 Observing all safety precautions to protect self, patient, and others in all hazardous situations.

5.2 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall be trained to perform the following functions in the event other emergency services are not available at the accident scene:

5.2.1 Use of basic tools and procedures to gain access to and disentangle the patient, and

5.2.2 Control of the incident scene.

5.3 Special responsibilities shall be a component of minimum training standards for the emergency medical technician (basic), such as the following:

5.3.1 Professional manner,

5.3.2 Appearance, and

5.3.3 General conduct.

5.4 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall receive instruction in the organization of the emergency medical services system and the role of the emergency medical technician (basic) within the emergency medical services system.

5.4.1 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall be familiar with state and local EMS laws, codes, regulations, and policies.

5.4.2 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall be familiar with the role of medical direction in the delivery of prehospital emergency medical care.

6. Legal Issues

6.1 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall receive instruction in the following legal issues.

6.1.1 *Standard of Care*—Shall include the review of relevant federal, state, regional, and local customs, statutes, ordinances, case law, or administrative orders.

6.1.2 *Duty to Act*—Shall be reviewed in regard to the responsibilities relative to responding to the need for patient care according to the federal, state, regional, and local regulations, laws, or administrative orders.

6.1.3 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall have the responsibility to handle and report special situations according to the state, regional, or local laws or ordinances, as follows:

6.1.3.1 Child, adult, or elder abuse,

6.1.3.2 Injury as a result of criminal act,

6.1.3.3 Drug-related injuries,

6.1.3.4 Childbirth,

6.1.3.5 Animal bites,

6.1.3.6 Attempted suicides,

6.1.3.7 Assaults and rape,

6.1.3.8 Scene of a crime,

6.1.3.9 The deceased, and

6.1.3.10 Communicable disease.

6.1.4 *Patient Consent*—Shall be taught according to federal, state, regional, and local regulations, laws, or ordinances and shall include the following concepts:

6.1.4.1 Implied consent,

6.1.4.2 Informed consent,

6.1.4.3 Actual/express consent,

6.1.4.4 Minor's consent,

6.1.4.5 Consent of the mentally ill/diminished mental capacity,

6.1.4.6 Patient's right to refuse treatment,

6.1.4.7 Use of restraint,

6.1.4.8 Do not resuscitate orders and living wills, and

6.1.4.9 Voluntary/involuntary commitment.

6.1.5 Legal liability for the emergency medical technician (basic) shall be taught according to federal, state, regional, and local statutes, laws, and ordinances and shall include the following:

6.1.5.1 Malpractice insurance,

6.1.5.2 Torts,

6.1.5.3 Abandonment,

6.1.5.4 Negligence,

6.1.5.5 Good samaritan laws, and

6.1.6 Patient confidentiality.

7. Certification and Licensure

7.1 Licensure, certification and recertification shall be reviewed according to national, state, regional, and/or local requirements and shall include the following:

7.1.1 EMT statutes and

7.1.2 Exemption from Medical Practices Act.

8. Stress Management/Critical Incident Stress

8.1 The occupation of an emergency medical technician (basic) is highly stressful and the minimum training shall include the identification and management of stress.

8.2 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall be taught the concept of critical incident stress, its long-term consequences and how critical incident stress debriefing is used to mitigate its effects.

9. Patient Communication Problems

9.1 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall be trained in the principles of effective communication techniques and be aware of the following types of patients/situations that may have specific communication needs that include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 9.1.1 Geriatric,
- 9.1.2 Speech/hearing-impaired,
- 9.1.3 Blind,
- 9.1.4 Non-english speaking,
- 9.1.5 Confused,
- 9.1.6 Mentally handicapped,
- 9.1.7 Sudden death crisis,
- 9.1.8 Terminal disease,
- 9.1.9 Abuse/assault,
- 9.1.10 Suicide, and
- 9.1.11 Pediatric patients.

10. Universal Blood and Body Fluid Precautions

10.1 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall be trained to implement current Center for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations when caring for all patients and when cleaning all equipment and supplies (see the latest MMWR recommendation).

11. Records and Reports

11.1 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall be trained to make and maintain run reports and records on each patient according to state, regional, or local protocol. The training shall include the use of reports for the following:

- 11.1.1 Providing for continuity of care,
 - 11.1.2 Inclusion in the patient's permanent medical record,
 - 11.1.3 Furnishing source of information for evaluating the quality of care,
 - 11.1.4 Furnishing legal evidence,
 - 11.1.5 Providing administrative information, and
 - 11.1.6 Research purposes.
- 11.2 The emergency medical technician (basic) should assure that the following information is recorded:
- 11.2.1 Patient's name, sex, date of birth, and address,
 - 11.2.2 Nature of illness or type and mechanism of injury,
 - 11.2.3 Location of patient upon arrival to the scene,
 - 11.2.4 Rescue and treatment measures provided by bystanders and first responders before the EMT's arrival,
 - 11.2.5 Findings of initial and detailed survey,
 - 11.2.6 Care given at the site and during transport,
 - 11.2.7 Vital signs, patient condition, and any changes of either during transport,
 - 11.2.8 Source of on-line medical direction and the receiving hospital,

11.2.9 Disposition of patient's valuables,
11.2.10 Signature of patient or legal guardian if patient care is refused, or notation and witnessed if patient refused to sign,

11.2.11 Circumstances involved in special situations identified in 6.1.3, and

11.2.12 Unusual circumstances that affected patient care.

11.3 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall consider all patient information confidential and shall release it only to the proper authorities as defined by state or local laws, regulations, or protocols.

12. Multiple Casualty Incidents

12.1 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall be able to perform triage in a multiple casualty incident in accordance with Section 9.3 of Guide F 1288.

12.2 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall be trained in the concept and application of the incident command system.

13. Hazardous Materials

13.1 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall be aware of national, state, and local standards or regulations regarding hazardous materials incidents.

13.2 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall be trained to provide emergency care to patients exposed to hazardous materials including radiation.

14. Quality Assurance

14.1 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall receive instruction in the purpose and importance of quality assurance programs.

14.2 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall receive instruction in how to participate in quality assurance activities.

15. Vehicle and Equipment Maintenance

15.1 The emergency medical technician (basic) will assure routine vehicle and equipment preventive maintenance, regular inspections, and inspections after each run.

16. Ground Emergency Vehicle Driving

16.1 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall be trained to identify the risks associated with ground emergency vehicle operations.

16.2 The minimum training standard for ground emergency vehicle driving shall include a review of state, regional, and local laws, regulations, or ordinances or protocols that specifically address the following:

- 16.2.1 Vehicle parking or standing regulations,
- 16.2.2 Intersections,
- 16.2.3 Speed limits,
- 16.2.4 Multilaned highways,
- 16.2.5 Standard emergency or disaster routes,
- 16.2.6 Traffic signals and control/warning signs and devices,
- 16.2.7 Use of audible warning devices,
- 16.2.8 Use of emergency lights,
- 16.2.9 Right-of-way,

16.2.10 Exemptions from direction-of-movement regulations or specified turns,

16.2.11 Safer following distances,

16.2.12 Interactions with other emergency vehicles, and

16.2.13 Common distractions.

16.3 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall receive instruction regarding the effects of vehicle operation on patient care, comfort, and safety.

16.4 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall receive didactic instruction in defensive driving, accident avoidance, and principles of vehicle control.

17. EMSS Communications Subsystem Use

17.1 The emergency medical technician (basic) shall be trained regarding the EMSS communications subsystem. Such training shall include:

17.1.1 Relevant FCC regulations,

17.1.2 Channel and frequency allocation,

17.1.3 The functions, procedures, and equipment used in the emergency medical dispatch process,

17.1.4 Notifying hospital emergency departments of incoming patients,

17.1.5 Typical communications equipment and protocol used for state, regions, or local areas,

17.1.5.1 Introduction to analog/digital/satellite communication.

17.1.6 Communicating pertinent patient information,

17.1.7 Receiving medical direction in accordance with local protocol,

17.1.8 Detection and reporting of motor vehicle crashes to the dispatcher,

17.1.9 Altering other emergency resources,

17.1.10 Maintaining contact between the vehicle, dispatcher, and hospital, and

17.1.11 Communicating with other emergency services.

18. Keywords

18.1 emergency medical technician (basic); EMT (basic); EMT; training; EMT; roles; EMT; responsibilities

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