



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
Office of Emergency Medical Services
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ADVISORY 20-06-02

TO: MA Accredited EMT Training Institutions, Licensed Ambulance Services and Chief Examiners
CC: EMCAB Members
FROM: W. Scott Cluett III, Director, OEMS
DATE: June 29, 2020
RE: Lifting of Suspension of Clinical and Field Internship Components of EMS Courses

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The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (Department) continues to work with federal, state and local partners on the outbreak of novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19), caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2, and we continue to appreciate the essential role you have in responding to this evolving situation.

In response to the Governor's order on social distancing and restricting gatherings, and the Governor's order on essential services, to include "instructors supporting academies or training facilities and courses or assessments for the purpose of graduating or certifying, during the duration of the state of emergency, healthcare personnel, cadets, and other workers who are critical to the ongoing response to COVID-19," on May 23, 2020, in Advisory 20-05-01, the Department lifted the suspension of in-person EMS courses and psychomotor exams. Effective immediately, the portion of Advisory 20-05-01 that continued the suspension of clinical and field internship components of EMS courses, is rescinded.

Clinical and field internship components of EMS courses may operate, as long as they can do so in accordance with the requirements below, which are based on current Department and U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Social Distancing guidelines, until the Governor's declared state of emergency is terminated. All EMS courses, including their clinical and field internship components, must also meet the Governor's Mandatory Safety Standards for Workplaces, issued as part of the Reopening Massachusetts process, and available at: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/reopening-mandatory-safety-standards-for-workplaces>.

In addition to ensuring the above standards are met, ATIs wishing to resume sending their students, during the Governor's declared State of Emergency, to clinical and field internships, in accordance with their affiliation agreements for the entities that host their students at these internships, must also ensure that the host sites comply with the following requirements:

- Individuals who are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 according to the CDC (e.g., due to age or underlying conditions) are encouraged to stay home and not participate in clinical or field internships.
- Clinical and field internship sites must implement a symptom-monitoring program, to

include:

- Before entering the facility daily, the site must document symptom checks for all instructors, students and staff on site, which should include queries about exposure risk to COVID-19 patients, presence of symptoms, and presence or absence of fever.
- Use CDC guidance for risk assessment for healthcare providers, available at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assesment-hcp.html>.
- If any student presents with a fever, or any symptoms, they must be excluded from the premises.
- ATIs must ensure the host site provide education to all students on the donning, use, and doffing of protective personal equipment (PPE) the host site provides.
- ATIs must ensure groups of students, staff and patients within a room to no more than 10 individuals total, and distance individuals at least 6 feet apart, as training duties permit.
- All students must wash their hands immediately upon entering the internship site, upon donning or doffing PPE, and frequently throughout their stay. Alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol may be used when handwashing facilities are not available.
- All students must wear surgical masks at all times when at the ATI site.
- All students must wear non-latex procedure gloves at all times when performing psychomotor skills, including patient assessment.
- All internship sites must thoroughly decontaminate all spaces and equipment used on a regular basis (at least daily), using EPA-registered agents.

Thank you all for your patience and flexibility. For any questions, please contact Susan Lewis, NRP/IC, Deputy Director, at Susan.K.Lewis@mass.gov.