

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Transition to NREMT Examination

As of April 2020, the Illinois State EMS Exam will no longer be offered to new providers that have completed a course from an Illinois approved training site. All EMT, AEMT, and Paramedic examinations will be administered by the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT).

Here are some Frequently Asked Questions and their answers to help clear up any misconceptions you may have about this change.

How will this change my current Illinois license if I already have one?

It won't change it at all. The NREMT is not a licensing agency. They only issue a registration and certification that you have met certain requirements. The state, in turn, will issue a state license based on the NREMT certification that you have successfully passed a national standard exam. Being currently licensed, you may still maintain and renew your Illinois license with no relationship to the NREMT.

Will I have to take an NREMT Exam?

If you are currently an EMS student and finish your course after April of 2020, you will be required to take the NREMT exam. If you are currently licensed, nothing about your license will change and you do not have to take the NREMT exam, unless you would like to hold an NREMT card.

Do I need to take an NREMT practical exam?

The practical examination requirements for the EMT level will not change. Illinois requires that EMT practical examinations are completed by the EMS Training Program as part of your initial certification. At the AEMT and Paramedic levels, you must complete an organized practical examination that is administered by a NREMT representative. EMT training programs may hold these scheduled exams, or you may be required to travel to an examination site. Scheduled examinations are listed in the NREMT website under the link marked 'Find a Psychomotor Exam'. Again, this applies only to those individuals that are seeking initial certification. Currently licensed individuals are not required to take a practical exam unless you are seeking an NREMT certification.

Do I have to maintain my NREMT if I obtain it?

The NREMT is not a license to practice, so you have no obligation to maintain it. However, the requirements to maintain an NREMT certification are currently similar to our EMS System requirements for renewal, thus keeping the NREMT current will allow you to obtain licensure elsewhere if you ever move or need to be licensed in another state. Some states require a NREMT certification for licensure, and do not allow state-to-state reciprocity. As a reminder, you are required to be licensed in any state in which you practice.

Do I have to go to a college that is accredited to test for NREMT exams?

Currently, the NREMT has a requirement that you must graduate from an accredited program to test for the NREMT and obtain national certification, however, that only applies to the Paramedic level at this time. There is talk about expanding that to the AEMT, but that has not been put in place yet. There is a way to test at the Paramedic level to obtain Illinois licensure without graduating from an accredited program, however a NREMT certification will not be issued. The NREMT will communicate with the state if you successfully complete the testing process for the state to issue a license.

I've been working for a long time and graduated from a non-accredited program. Can I get an NREMT Paramedic certification if I want?

Only providers that graduated from a program that began prior to January 1, 2013, are eligible to test for the NREMT and obtain an NREMT certification. This opportunity is available throughout your career as long as you meet all other requirements for NREMT certification. Students that attended a program that had an accreditation letter of review, but not full accreditation, may be eligible for NREMT certification and should contact their education program and the NREMT for further guidance.

Please forward any additional questions you may have about this transition to:
DPH.EMTLIC@illinois.gov. We will update this document as necessary.