



EMS Continuing Education Guide for Licensed Personnel and Continuing Education Coordinators

EMS Bureau
New Mexico Department of Health

Revised January, 2010

Purpose of This Guide

This guide has been developed to assist the EMS Service/System Training Coordinators, Medical Directors, and EMS Educators in designing continuing education (CE) programs that will meet the educational needs of EMS personnel and the renewal requirements set forth by the EMS Bureau.

Objectives of this Manual:

1. Provide an understanding of the purpose behind continuing education.
2. Provide a list of the continuing education requirements for all EMS levels.
3. Provide clear definition of the eight categories of continuing education used in New Mexico and nationally.
4. Provide clear instructions for the application to obtain CE approval.
5. Provide assistance in developing stand-alone or service CE programs.
6. Provide a clear understanding for the importance of CE record keeping and program documentation.
7. Provide a clear understanding of the other acceptable forms of CE for licensure renewal.
8. Provide a clear understanding of the process for the CE audit and Enforcement Program for CE Programs and Services.

For questions about this document or for more information contact:

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1. Purpose Behind Continuing Education (CE)

The definition of Continuing Education (CE) is any formal training that relates to the current EMS Scope of Practice, training related to the national standard EMS curricula, New Mexico State EMS curricula or any other subject deemed to be EMS related.

The purpose behind CE is designed to meet three main objectives: to provide exposure to new and current trends in the area of patient care; to review areas of patient assessment and management that are not used on a frequent basis; and to meet licensure renewal requirements.

For many EMS providers, the only exposure that they receive on a recurring basis that pertains to current trends in patient care and equipment usage is through an EMS Service CE Program. Without a well thought out CE program, providers often do not receive information concerning the changes in standards of care or Scope of Practice that occur on a state or national level. The CE program should be used to further the EMS provider's knowledge of patient care and to allow for additional training in areas of specific interest or EMS service needs.

CE programs also provide a means by which providers can maintain proficiency in skill areas that are not used on a frequent basis. For example, an EMS service that does not commonly respond to pediatric cardiac arrests might find it very beneficial to spend an evening where pediatric cardiac arrest scenarios are reviewed. This type of training allows for skill maintenance, as well as re-enforcement of teamwork skills.

For the same reasons outlined above, CE is also a requirement for licensure renewal for all levels of EMS providers. From licensed EMD to EMT-Paramedic, all are required to complete a specified number of CE hours that have been pre-approved by the EMS Bureau. Along with the biennial refresher course requirement, this helps insure EMS providers are competent in knowledge and skill areas, as well as up to date in the dynamic area of medicine.

2. CE Categories

CE's come in one of eight categories: Emergency Medical Dispatch, Preparatory, Patient Assessment, Airway Management, Medical Issues, Trauma Issues, Special Considerations and Operations. These categories follow the EMS continuing education blueprint published by the National Highway Traffic & Safety Administration. Individuals and services can apply for approval of single as well as multiple training sessions that are spread out over a two-year period. When applying for CE approval, it will be necessary for both the requester and the EMS Bureau to categorize the CE content prior to approval being given. With this in mind, it is necessary that the program coordinator understand the level of CE being requested for approval. **It is expected that the refresher and CE content be tailored to the audience's level of licensure.** The eight categories are defined on the following pages:

EMERGENCY MEDICAL DISPATCH CE

Definition: Those topics that primarily address the area of dispatch operations. Examples of topics covered under the Emergency Medical Dispatch CE category:

Dispatch Policy, Procedure, and Protocols	Types of Calls
Roles & Responsibilities	Protocol and Call Classification
Ethics, Values, and Professionalism	In-Progress, Just-Occurred, Past Event calls
Media Relations	Law Enforcement Calls for Service
Confidentiality	Fire Calls for Service
Telephone Technology	Medical Calls for Service
Cellular Phones and PCSs	Radio Frequency and Channel Usage
9-1-1 Technology	Broadcast Rules and Procedures
TDD/TTY Technology	FCC Rules
Manual Dispatching	Legal Liability
Computer-Aided Dispatch	Risk Management
Radio Communication	Stress Management
Active and Passive Listening	Critical Incident Stress
Cultural Diversity and Communication	Verbal and Nonverbal Communication
Call Receiving	Solving Communication/Language Problems
Types of Callers	Interview Techniques and Call Control
High-Risk and Challenging Callers	

Preparatory CE

Definition: Those topics that are primarily taught to introduce essential concepts, information and skills. Please refer to an EMS textbook for a more detailed list of topics covered under this category. Examples of topics covered under the Preparatory CE category:

Emergency Medical Services Systems	Medical/Legal and Ethical Issues
Roles and Responsibilities	Anatomy and Physiology
The Well-Being of the EMT	Lifting and Moving Patients
Quality Improvement	Injury Prevention
Scene Safety	Personal Protective Equipment
General Principles of Pharmacology	

Airway and Ventilation

Definition: Those topics that are primarily taught to introduce essential concepts, information and skills concerning airway and breathing management. Please refer to an EMS textbook for a more detailed list of topics covered under this category. Examples of topics covered under the Airway and Ventilation CE category:

Respiratory Physiology	Suction
Respiratory Pathophysiology	Mechanical Adjuncts
Foreign Body Airway Obstruction	Advanced Airway Procedures
Supplemental Oxygen Therapy	Translaryngeal Cannula Ventilation
Ventilation	Cricothyrotomy

Patient Assessment

Definition: Those topics that are primarily teach the steps of assessment and their application to different types of trauma and medical patients, plus the skills of communication and documentation. Please refer to an EMS textbook for a more detailed list of topics covered under this category. Examples of topics covered under the Patient Assessment CE category:

Scene Size-Up	The Detailed Physical Exam
The Initial Assessment	The Ongoing Assessment
The Focus History and Physical Exam	Communications
Therapeutic Communications	Clinical Decision Making
Documentation	

Medical Emergencies CE

Definition: Those topics that primarily teach the pathophysiology and management of illness. Please refer to an EMS textbook for a more detailed list of topics covered under this category. Examples of topics covered under the Medical Emergencies CE category:

Cardiology	Urology
Pulmonology	Toxicology
Neurology	Hematology
Endocrinology	Environmental Conditions
Allergies and Anaphylaxis	infectious and Communicable Diseases
Gastroenterology	Behavioral and Psychiatric Disorders
Gynecology	Obstetrics

Trauma Emergencies CE

Definition: Those topics that primarily teach the kinematics, pathophysiology and management of trauma. Please refer to an EMS textbook for a more detailed list of topics covered under this category. Examples of topics covered under the Trauma Emergencies CE category:

Trauma Systems	Burns
Mechanism of Injury	Head and Facial Trauma
Hemorrhage and Shock	Spinal Trauma
Soft Tissue Trauma	Thoracic Trauma
Abdominal Trauma	Musculoskeletal Trauma

Special Considerations CE

Definition: Those topics that primarily concern patient populations that have special considerations in the areas of assessment, pathophysiology and management. Please refer to an EMS textbook for a more detailed list of topics covered under this category. Examples of topics covered under the Special Considerations CE category:

Neonatology	Abuse and Neglect
Pediatrics	Patients With Special Challenges
Geriatrics	The Home Health Care Patient

Operations CE

Definition: Those topics that primarily teach non-medical operations and special situations related to emergency medical situations. Please refer to an EMS textbook for a more detailed list of topics covered under this category. Examples of topics covered under the Operations CE category:

Ambulance Operations
Medical Incident Command
Rescue Awareness and Operations
Emergency Vehicle Driving

Crime Scene Awareness
Hazardous Materials Incidents
Bioterrorism and WMD

Please Note: Classes that strictly involve firefighting techniques do not qualify for EMS continuing education credits. Examples include:

Fire Streams
Hose Maintenance & Care
Ventilation Techniques
Drafting

Pump Operations
Ladders
SCBA
Building Construction

3. CE Requirements by EMS Levels

All levels of EMS providers must complete renewal requirements every two years, although licensure is for a 27-month period. **Renewal requirements must be completed by December 31st prior to the expiration date of licensure.** CPR and ACLS certifications are exempt from the December 31st deadline and must be current at the time of renewal. The following is a breakdown of licensure requirements by EMS level:

A. Emergency Medical Dispatcher (EMD)

- Current professional BLS Provider CPR Card*
- 24 hours CE (breakdown of)
 - 12 hours of Dispatch related CE, plus an additional
 - 12 hours of medical subjects/skills
- Completed renewal application and fee(s)

B. Emergency Medical Dispatcher Instructor

- Verification of good standing through Bureau approved EMD Training Program
- Current Professional BLS Provider CPR Card*
- Current licensure at the EMT-B or higher level
- Completion of all EMD continuing education requirements
- Completed renewal application and fee(s)

C. EMS First Responder

- Current Professional BLS Provider CPR Card*
- First Responder refresher that adheres to the following refresher course blueprint:
 - Preparatory 1 contact hour
 - Airway and Ventilation 2 contact hours
 - Patient Assessment 2 contact hours
 - Medical Emergencies 4 contact hours
 - Trauma Emergencies 4 contact hours
 - Special Considerations 2 contact hours
 - Operations 1 contact hour
- Eight (8) contact hours of **additional** Bureau approved continuing education activity, of which two (2) contact hours must be of pediatric content.
- Completed renewal application and fee(s)

D. EMT Basic

- Current Professional BLS Provider CPR Card*
- EMT-Basic refresher that adheres to the following refresher course blueprint:
 - Preparatory 1 contact hour
 - Airway and Ventilation 2 contact hours
 - Patient Assessment 3 contact hours
 - Medical Emergencies 6 contact hours
 - Trauma Emergencies 6 contact hours
 - Special Considerations 4 contact hours
 - Operations 2 contact hours
- Twenty-four (24) contact hours of **additional** Bureau approved continuing education activity, of which four (4) contact hours must be of pediatric content.
- Completed renewal application and fee(s)

E. EMT Intermediate

- Current Professional BLS Provider CPR Card*
- EMT-Intermediate refresher that adheres to the following refresher course blueprint:
 - Preparatory 1 contact hour
 - Airway and Ventilation 2 contact hours
 - Patient Assessment 3 contact hours
 - Medical Emergencies 6 contact hours
 - Trauma Emergencies 6 contact hours
 - Special Considerations 4 contact hours
 - Operations 2 contact hours
- Thirty (30) contact hours of **additional** Bureau approved continuing education activity, of which five (5) contact hours must be of pediatric content.
- Completed renewal application and fee(s)

F. EMT Paramedic

- Current Professional BLS Provider CPR Card*
- Current Advanced Cardiac Life Support Card
- EMT-Paramedic refresher that adheres to the following refresher course blueprint:
 - Preparatory 3 contact hours
 - Airway and Ventilation 4 contact hours
 - Patient Assessment 4 contact hours
 - Medical Emergencies 18 contact hours
 - Trauma Emergencies 10 contact hours
 - Special Considerations 6 contact hours
 - Operations 3 contact hours
- Twenty-four (24) contact hours of **additional** Bureau approved continuing education activity, of which six (6) contact hours must be of pediatric content.
- Completed renewal application and fee(s)

As you can see from the above breakdown, each group has a specific refresher course blueprint requirement. This has been developed to provide balance in the content of the refresher course. Whether you decide to take a formal refresher course from an approved training institution or opt to provide your own refresher course content through the CE equivalent program, all refresher courses must follow the blueprint for each specific licensure level. We will talk in more detail about refresher courses shortly. The **additional** CE requirement for each level does not require any specific category but must be EMS related and approved by the Bureau. **We must reiterate this point..... individuals must insure that all renewal requirements, except for CPR and ACLS certifications which must be current at the time of renewal, be completed by the December 31st that occurs prior to expiration of licensure.**

***The following are approved CPR courses:**

- American Heart Association "**BLS Healthcare Provider**"
- American Red Cross "**CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer**"
- Emergency Care and Safety Institute "**Professional Rescuer CPR**"
- National Safety Council "**CPR and AED**"
- Medic First Aid "**Basic Life Support for Professionals (BLSPRO)**"
- American Safety & Health Institute "**CPR for the Professional Rescuer**"
- Military Training Network "**BLS Healthcare Provider**"

4. Refresher Course Options

Before we look at the options for completing a refresher course, it is important to discuss acceptable methods of content delivery. With the proliferation of electronic media, you probably have noticed that many universities and colleges are now offering web-based courses in lieu of the traditional classroom. This has been a major convenience for hard working people and their families in obtaining a formal education through **distributive or distance education**. For our purposes, we will define **distributive or distance education** as "training and education accomplished outside the classroom through computer-based-training, self study modules, web-casts via the internet and other methods of out-of-classroom didactic education that includes an evaluation component." Thinking about it, you probably see that there would be many advantages to recognizing "*distributive or distance learning*" content delivery in our EMS refresher courses in New Mexico. But there also are concerns; concerns of the quality of material used in the distributive component of the refresher course and the degree of effort put forth by the individual completing this type of education. Therefore, it has been determined by the EMS Bureau that the following elements must be incorporated in **formal refresher courses** that use a substantial distributive component:

1. All formal refresher courses must receive approval from the EMS Bureau.
2. All formal refresher courses must be conducted through an approved EMS training institution.
3. All formal refresher courses must include a psychomotor component requiring attendance in a classroom setting. **A minimum of four hours per 24-hours of refresher training is required. For example, at least 8 hours of classroom psychomotor components must be included in a 48-hour paramedic refresher course.**
4. All formal refresher courses must include an examination that evaluates the individual's comprehension of the distributive learning material.
5. Carded courses, such as ACLS, PALS or CPR, received as part of a Bureau approved, formal refresher course *or* as part of your CE equivalent / blueprint (used in lieu of a formal refresher course) can be used to fulfill a renewal requirement (example: provide evidence of current bureau approved CPR certification at the EMT-B level) but cannot be applied toward any of the additional CE hour requirement. Please see the section on "Required Carded Courses" for information on carded courses taken for a second time during the renewal period.

The other refresher course option that a licensed individual may use for renewal purposes is the **CE equivalent** to a formal refresher course. To utilize this option, an individual must provide documentation of CE classes that fulfill the refresher course blueprint. **A word of caution needs to be made here.** It may be difficult to find all of the continuing education classes in your region necessary to meet the refresher course blueprint. Don't be caught short at the time of renewal! This may cause you to go through the re-entry process to regain your license. Another important point; only ten (10) hours of distributive or distance education will be accepted for the CE equivalent program.

5. Forms of CE

The following is a brief outline of forms of continuing education that are currently recognized by the Bureau. The Bureau reserves the right to approve additional forms of continuing education as necessary:

A. **Classroom Instruction:** traditional instructor-student relationship in the classroom or field setting.

B. **Authorship:** EMS articles written by EMS personnel for newspapers, magazines, and journals can be approved for CE if the article is written during the licensure period. The article must be written and submitted to the State EMS Training Coordinator for approval during the current licensure cycle. Upon review, the State EMS Training Coordinator will determine whether the specific article shall receive CE credit and will notify the author in writing. **Only 12 hours of CE credit for authorship may be used for licensure renewal.**

C. **Preapproved Courses:** The EMS Bureau continually updates and publishes the New Mexico "CE Coordinator's Guide to Standardized EMS Continuing Education" (Appendix D) throughout the year. This list of national and statewide recognized courses are pre-approved for CE credit. There is no need to apply to the EMS Bureau for approval of these courses. Individuals completing any of these courses need only to submit their course completion certificate when they renew their license. Courses that are approved by CECBEMS are pre-approved for credit in New Mexico. Additional courses may be reviewed and approved by the Bureau. Contact the Bureau for an up-to-date listing of courses that have been granted standing approval

D. **Required Carded Courses:**

1. Bureau approved CPR certification course: Bureau approved CPR certification is required at all levels of EMS licensure for renewal. Additional CPR courses taken during the renewal period may be applied toward the **additional CE requirement** at all levels but only for a maximum of four (4) hours per renewal period.

2. Bureau approved ACLS certification is required at the EMT-Paramedic level. Additional ACLS courses taken during the renewal period may be applied toward the **additional CE requirement** at the EMT-P level but only for a maximum of eight (8) hours per renewal period.

E. **Instructors:** Instructors who instruct CPR courses may receive 4 hrs of **additional CE** credit toward relicensure for teaching one (1) CPR course or a total of eight (8) hours per renewal period. ACLS and PALS instructors may receive eight (8) hours of **additional CE** credit toward licensure renewal for teaching one (1) ACLS or PALS course or a total of twelve (12) hours per renewal period. Instructor-Coordinators, employed by an approved EMS training institution, may receive hour for hour credit for teaching an approved course (EMS First Responder, EMT-Basic, EMT-Intermediate or EMT-Paramedic). Documentation of such activity submitted for renewal must be on letterhead from the training institution and signed by the director.

F. **EMS Related College Courses:** Credit may be awarded to individuals who are attending college courses during a licensure cycle that are relevant to EMS. Individuals who are interested in receiving credit must submit a copy of their unofficial student transcripts. A course syllabus may be required for submission.

G. **EMS Video Presentations:** EMS video presentations may be used for continuing education. In order to do so, the "Notification of Intent to Conduct a Continuing Education Program" application form must be submitted, along with a list of the videos intended for presentation with their corresponding copyright dates. No more than one-half of the **additional CE** requirement for any given level may be accomplished by EMS video presentation. Currently, the only pre-approved EMS video presentations are recognized from the following organizations:

New Mexico Air Medical Transport Advisory Committee Videos
C.I.S.D/Stress Management Training Videos
EMS Region III Video Training Library

H. **State Skill Evaluator:** A maximum of twenty (20) hours of **additional CE** credit can be used for skill evaluation at a State licensing examination site. These credits cannot be applied toward refresher course blueprint requirements.

I. **Field or clinical preceptorship:** A maximum of twenty (20) hours of **additional CE** may be allowed for EMS preceptor activities. Documentation of preceptor activities must be on letterhead from an approved New Mexico EMS training institution or EMS service director. These credits cannot be applied toward refresher course blueprint requirements.

J. **Distributive learning programs:** Examples of internet CE programs include:

CE Solutions	www.ems-ce.com
Emcert	www.emcert.com
Healthstream	www.healthstream.com/ems
My Web CE	www.mywebce.com
Medic-CE	www.medic-ce.com

A maximum of ten (10) hours of CE credit from a distributive learning program may be applied toward a **refresher course blueprint** and a maximum of twelve (12) hours of CE credit applied toward the **additional** CE requirement. This provision does not apply to refresher courses sponsored by Bureau approved training institutions.

A word for individuals requesting CE approval: Individuals can be granted CE approval for other types of training not listed in this guide, such as EMS related conferences and other training that has not received prior approval. In order for approval to be given, the individual must submit a course completion certificate or other documentation verifying attendance, along with course syllabus and other supporting documentation, as deemed necessary. Notification of approval will be accomplished by letter from the State EMS Training Coordinator. A copy of this letter must be submitted when applying for licensure renewal.

FOR EMS CE COORDINATORS ONLY

Developing a CE Training Program

Once the decision has been made to develop a CE training program, there are several steps that will need to be accomplished in order to get it started. The first item to be addressed will be the selection of the CE Coordinator. Services can designate a maximum of two (2) CE Coordinators. The CE Coordinators do not need to be instructors in order to hold this position, nor are they required to physically teach the courses. Primarily they are required to provide the organizational skills necessary to establish the service's CE program and to ensure its success. In part they will be accountable for the required record keeping and administration of CE certificates. They will also be responsible for ensuring the quality and integrity of the CE offerings.

Once a CE Coordinator(s) has been designated, the service will need to fill out an application for CE approval. A section of the application will specifically address who has been designated as the Coordinator and this information will then be placed into the Bureau's CE Database. (See Appendix A for the application)

Filling Out the Application

In Appendix A of this manual, you will find the CE application entitled "Notification of Intent to Conduct a Continuing Education Program". The application has been developed to allow for electronic filing on your computer and for transmission via email to the Bureau for approval. The application may also be printed for hardcopy use in cases where e-mail is unavailable. All email requests should be sent to:

charles.schroeder@state.nm.us

Basically, the application needs to be attached to every batch of CE class requests that you apply for. The application is not needed for each individual class. In other words, if you file for ten (10) classes in a batch, you only need to attach one (1) application.

The EMS Bureau uses the application in a variety of ways. First of all, the application identifies the *Program Sponsor*. The *Program Sponsor* is the agency or individual entity that is responsible for maintaining and storing the CE records. Next, the Bureau uses the information on the application to update the program sponsor database. It is not necessary to notify the Bureau, in writing, of any changes

concerning the program sponsor or CE Coordinator. This information will be gleaned from the application. Thirdly, the application asks whether or not your classes are open to outside participants. You are not obligated to open your classes to outside participants. However, if you do allow outside participants, the CE Coordinator name, contact phone and email address will be posted on the EMS website so that participants can obtain location, dates and times of your classes. Any classes open to outside participants will be listed on the EMS Bureau website at:

www.nmems.org

Finally, the application tells the Bureau what type of program you are applying for, whether for conference/course approval or annual service approval. A description of these two types of program approval is summarized below:

- A. **Conference/Course Approval:** Conference coordinators can obtain CE approval for conferences by using the CE application (Appendix A) and providing the following program documentation: conference brochure, specified contact time frames, and CE category that the lecture will be targeted for. Please note that all conferences must be reviewed and approved by the State EMS Training Coordinator prior to the presentation of the conference. In order to allow adequate time for review and processing of the requested material, the application should be submitted at least thirty (30) working days prior to the event. The Conference coordinator will be notified in writing of the approval of the request along with an approval number.

- B. **Annual Service Approval:** Annual service CE approval can be obtained for any EMD agency, EMS service, hospital, or individual entity that provides in-service training for EMS personnel. Whether you are conducting a class one time or a multiple of times, annual service CE will be approved for a period ranging from eighteen (18) to twenty-four (24) months. **Please note that all CE training programs must be reviewed and approved by the State EMS Training Coordinator prior to the beginning of training.** In order for this to occur, applications should be submitted at least thirty (30) working days prior to the presentation of the course. Once reviewed by the State EMS Training Coordinator, the designated CE coordinator will receive in writing, a letter of approval for the CE program. In addition, the CE coordinator will also receive one CE approval number that will be applicable to all CE classes or courses applied for and conducted during the approved time period.

In Appendix B of this manual, you will find the "Continuing Education Program Schedule" form. It was developed to assist in the listing of classes that you want approved. Simply fill in the title of the class, the total hours that particular class will take to conduct, and the category of CE credit you want to award. **It is not mandatory that you use this form.** You may list your classes in your own format but the essential information on the form must be included in your class listings. **Please note that class presentations must contain material appropriate to the highest license level of your audience in all CE categories except preparatory, assessment and operations.**

Conducting the CE Course or Conference

Upon completion of the CE Course or Conference, a certificate of completion must be given to each participant. A sample CE certificate is shown in Appendix C. CE Coordinators do not have to use this certificate, but should they choose to design their own CE form, the following information is required be included on the form:

1. Location and date of the CE class or course

2. Title of the class or course
3. Number of actual contact hours (half hour increments are acceptable)
4. CE category designation
5. Name of the participant
6. Your name with the designation of "CE Coordinator" placed after your name
7. Your signature (See note 1)
8. EMS Approval number
9. EMS Bureau statement (See note 2)

Note 1: The signature of the CE Coordinator must be on each certificate issued. The CE Coordinator is the person who has been designated by the service to handle the CE program. This person is placed into the Bureau database as the responsible party for issuing certificates, as well as maintenance of all CE records for the department.

Note 2: Each CE certificate should include the following statement: *"Reviewed and approved by the New Mexico EMS Bureau for continuing education."* This statement identifies that the CE program has received approval from the IPEMS Bureau.

Record Keeping and Documentation

Record keeping and documentation are probably the most important aspect of any CE program. If precise records are not maintained, there is the potential for misuse that may result in licensure action. The system by which you keep your records should be one that you are comfortable using, as long as it contains certain elements. In other words, if you are comfortable using a computerized database, by all means use it. On the other hand, if computers are foreign to you and you still like keeping a handwritten record, that is just as acceptable. Regardless of how you decide to keep your documentation, there are still certain things you will need to keep track of. These are outlined below:

- A. **Attendance Sheets:** At the beginning of every CE class or course, an attendance sheet should be completed. This sheet should have a place where the attendees write and sign their name. Attendance sheets provide the CE Coordinator with a back up mechanism to verify course participation should a provider need to have a certificate re-issued. Occasionally, the Bureau receives complaints with regards to CE attendance for a particular program. The attendance sheet provides the coordinator with official documentation that the course was held, the instructor and who attended on a particular date. The only other requirement is that attendance sheets are in written or computer format, with no extra spaces between lines. Each line with a participant listed must have a space for the signature of the attendee next to the name. At the bottom of the list of names, there should be an entry that states "Last Entry".
- B. **Copy of Handouts:** For each course that is held, a copy of the course outline, learning objectives, course handouts, and post-test (if given) should be placed into the course file. Many services also keep a copy of the post-test completed by the individual attendees. Again, this is a good mechanism for verification of attendance. These records can also be used as a resource when developing a topic schedule for the following year.
- C. **Time Period for Keeping Documents:** All documentation should be kept in an orderly fashion for at least thirty-six (36) months. This will allow service personnel access to information throughout the licensure cycle as well as the initial period following licensure renewal. Many services have adopted an ongoing composite record of the number of CE's each individual has accumulated during their licensure cycle. At about six (6) months prior to licensure expiration, the coordinator should give each provider a sheet with all of his or her documented CE hours. Other EMS Services leave the responsibility for the accumulation of CE hours up to each member of the department. **The bottom line is that the responsibility for meeting the requirements for licensure renewal ultimately falls on each individual EMS provider, not the CE Coordinator or service agency.**

It may be a good idea to keep the above information on a continuing basis, as it can be of assistance in doing service QA, as well as provide documentation of training if a lawsuit or service audit should occur. Just as in documenting patient care, if there isn't adequate documentation to support an event, it probably didn't occur.

CE Audit Program

As mentioned in previous sections, EMS Bureau does periodically perform audits of CE programs. These audits are usually provided as a way for services to evaluate their current program, identify areas in which the program excels, as well as areas that may be problematic. The service then receives direct feedback from the Bureau concerning the audit findings, at which time suggestions can be made concerning any issues that may have arisen during the audit. Also, the Bureau will conduct an audit if they receive a complaint or knowledge of falsification of CE documents. Should such an incident occur, the Bureau would notify the EMS Licensing Commission and initiate a preliminary investigation. All parties involved in the investigation would be notified and interviewed, and an audit of the service records in question would be performed. The Bureau would then forward its findings from the investigation to the EMS Licensing Commission. Should the allegations be substantiated, the Commission may recommend that the Bureau issue a *Notice of Contemplated Action* to take disciplinary action against the individual(s) and service agency involved, up to and including loss of EMS licensure or service certification.

- A. ***Preparing for an audit:*** Prior to an audit, services will be given at least five (5) days advance notification by either mail or telephone. In preparing for an audit the CE Coordinator should have a record for each CE course that was conducted. Each record should contain the following items for review:
- Original copy of attendance sheet.
 - Copy of course outline or learning objectives
 - Copy of handouts that were given to participants
 - Original copy of post-test as well as completed post-test for each participant (if a post-test was used)
 - CE approval letter and approval number from the Bureau
- B. Remember, the time period for keeping these records is no less than thirty-six months (3 years). At the time of the audit, the State EMS Training Coordinator will review the records with the CE Coordinator. Should any discrepancies be found, they will be reviewed and an action plan developed to assist the CE Coordinator in correcting the discrepancy. Upon completion of the audit the CE Coordinator will receive a follow-up letter detailing the outcomes and actions, as discussed during the audit.

In closing, please feel free to contact the Bureau at the address, telephone number or email address below to discuss CE programs, issues or problems.

**EMS Bureau
1301 Siler Road, Bldg. F
Santa Fe, NM 87507
505-476-8200**



State of New Mexico
Department of Health
Emergency Medical Systems Bureau
1301 Siler Road Building F
Santa Fe, NM 87507
505-476-8200

NOTIFICATION OF INTENT TO CONDUCT A CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAM

This notification must be received by the State EMS Training Coordinator at least 30 days prior to the start of the first class listed in this notification. Failure to complete and submit this form as prescribed may result in a disapproval. The EMS Bureau may monitor and evaluate approved continuing education offerings. This may include site visits and audits of sponsor records with full knowledge of the sponsor. A roster of those individuals who attended each continuing education offering must be kept on file with your permanent records for at least 36 months.

Program Sponsor:
Mailing Address:
City, State, Zip Code:

Physical Address of class:

CE Coordinator Name and Contact Phone:
Email Address:
Type of Program: <input type="checkbox"/> Conference/Course <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Request
Are your classes open to outside participants? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
If yes, CE Coordinator name, contact phone and email address will be posted on EMS website.

CE Coordinator Signature: _____

APPENDIX C
SAMPLE
CE CERTIFICATE

Continuing Education Certificate

has attended the class titled "Chest Trauma"
held at the EMS Institute, Santa Fe, NM
on

May 1, 2003

Sam Splint CE Coordinator

EMS Approval: **222715**
2.0 hrs Trauma

Reviewed and Approved by the New Mexico EMS Bureau for Continuing Education