

AMERICAN BOARD OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR CERTIFICATION

The Emergency Medical Services (EMS) certification program, developed by the American Board of Emergency Medicine, is designed to standardize physician training and qualifications for EMS practice, to improve patient safety and enhance the quality of emergency medical care provided to patients in the prehospital environment, and to facilitate further integration of prehospital patient treatment into the continuum of patient care.

As part of their clinical practice, EMS physicians are responsible for medical oversight of the whole EMS team. EMS physician practice combines direct patient care in the field with supervisory and other functions that ensure an effectively functioning response system. This includes daily direct medical decision-making and control of care provided by EMS personnel. Some examples of this include verbal medical treatment orders based on clinical information provided by allied health personnel, transport modality and destination appropriate patient care decisions, developing and deploying written patient treatment guidelines for the EMS team, and ensuring procedural competency training of allied health personnel. EMS physicians also lead quality management activities relating to medical care delivered by the entire EMS system.

Certification in the subspecialty of EMS is available to diplomates of any ABMS member board who meet the eligibility criteria established by the [American Board of Emergency Medicine](#) (ABEM).

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Physicians seeking certification in EMS must fulfill the following eligibility criteria:

Primary Board Certification

The physician must hold current primary board certification issued by an ABMS member board.

Medical Licensure

The physician must fulfill the ABEM Policy on Medical Licensure.

APPLICATION PATHWAYS

There are three application pathways for certification in EMS: a practice pathway, a practice-plus-training pathway, and a training pathway. The EMS practice pathway and practice-plus-training pathway will be available for the first five years after the Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) begins accrediting EMS fellowships. A specific closure date for these two application pathways will be published at least five years in advance of the closure date.

EMS Practice Pathway

Physicians who apply through the EMS practice pathway must demonstrate that within the six years immediately preceding the date on which they submit their EMS certification application they have completed a minimum of 60 months of EMS practice (of at least 400 hours per year)

as Assistant, Associate, or Medical Director of an EMS agency with patient care responsibility, or as a direct provider of prehospital emergency care.

ABEM will independently verify the EMS practice a physician submits to fulfill the eligibility criteria.

EMS Practice-Plus-Training Pathway

Physicians who apply through the EMS practice-plus-training pathway must have:

- Successfully completed an acceptable, unaccredited fellowship in EMS, **and**
- Within the six years immediately preceding the date on which they submit their EMS certification application, have completed a minimum of 24 months of EMS practice (at least 400 hours per year) as Assistant, Associate, or Medical Director of an EMS agency with patient care responsibility, or as a direct provider of prehospital emergency care.

ABEM will independently verify the EMS practice a physician submits to fulfill the eligibility criteria.

Physicians must submit the following information on the unaccredited fellowship they completed for review by ABEM:

- Documentation that the fellowship was at least one year in length.
- Documentation that the fellowship curriculum was based on the Core Content of EMS medicine.

ABEM will request independent verification directly from the program director that a physician successfully completed the EMS fellowship.

EMS Fellowship Training Pathway

The EMS fellowship training pathway requires that physicians successfully complete an ACGME-accredited EMS fellowship.

ABEM will request independent verification directly from the program director that a physician successfully completed the EMS fellowship.

Physicians seeking certification in more than one subspecialty may not apply the same subspecialty fellowship training period toward fulfillment of requirements of more than one specialty or subspecialty.

CERTIFICATION

A candidate who has met the eligibility criteria and who passes the subspecialty examination is recognized as being certified in the subspecialty of EMS. Certification is for a period of ten years. To renew certification a physician must fulfill the requirements of the EMS Maintenance of Certification program.