

# NEBRASKA

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DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES



Jim Pillen, Governor

December 31, 2024

Mr. Brandon Metzler  
Clerk of the Legislature  
P.O. Box 94604  
Lincoln, NE 68509

Subject: Review and Evaluation of the Emergency Medical Services Practice Act

Dear Mr. Metzler:

In accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. § 38-1216(4), the Division of Public Health submits the Review and Evaluation of the Emergency Medical Services Practice Act on behalf of the Board of Emergency Medical Services. This report details the efforts made by the Board of Emergency Medical Services to enhance the quality, effectiveness, and timeliness of emergency services in Nebraska as well as its recommendations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charity Menefee".

Charity Menefee  
Director, Division of Public Health

Attachment

# Division of Public Health

## Review and Evaluation of the Emergency Medical Services Practice Act

**December 2024**

**Neb. Rev. Stat. § 38-1216(4)**

# 2024 Review and Evaluation of the Emergency Medical Services Practice Act

## Five Year Review and Evaluation

The Board of Emergency Medical Services consists of seventeen members appointed by the Governor. Currently, the Board of Emergency Medical Services has no vacancies and meets the member requirements outlined in § 38-1215 of the Emergency Medical Services Practice Act. This 5-year review spans calendar years 2019 through 2023. During the past five years, the board has met seven times in 2019, five times in 2020, five times in 2021, six times in 2022, and six times in 2023.

The Board continues to perform the required duties in § 38-1215. Board Members attend conferences and other meetings promoting educational programs to the public. They review current trends in EMS nationally to ensure Nebraska's Emergency Medical Service (EMS) providers practice to the top of their scope in Nebraska. The EMS Board's Scope of Practice Committee reviews the model protocols at every Board of Emergency Medical Services meeting. This ensures the model protocols are up-to-date and correct on a regular basis. In 2023, the Board began a complete rewrite to bring all model protocols into an easier to use format as well as update all protocols, remove obsolete protocols, and add new protocols.

The Board reviews Scope of Practice for all EMS Providers and updates Nebraska's Scope of Practice on a per licensure level to allow Nebraska EMS Providers to take advantage of education changes, allowing for more skills at each EMS Provider level. During this evaluation, the Board identified the need for two additional levels of licensure. The EMS Board completed a 407 Credentialing Review process in 2021. In 2022, the Legislature amended the Emergency Medical Services Practice Act to allow for the licensure levels of Critical Care Paramedic and Community Paramedic. The Board continued to make regulatory changes to implement Critical Care Paramedic and Community Paramedic initial application, renewal, and reinstatement requirements. Regulatory reviews also allow the EMS Board to continue to remove regulatory barriers while maintaining public health and safety.

The Board of Emergency Medical Services approved clearance guidelines for the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to approve and license training agencies, EMS providers, and EMS Services quicker. This allows the Board to only see questionable applications rather than every application presented to the Department. The Board selects a percentage of renewed licenses for the Department to review every renewal cycle.

Current Emergency Care Provider licensure types are Emergency Medical Responder, Emergency Medical Technician, Advanced Emergency Medical Technician, Emergency Medical Technician – Intermediate, Paramedics, and Critical Care Paramedic. The Emergency Medical Technician – Intermediate licensure level is set to sunset on December 31, 2025. The EMS Board and the Department have been collaborating with these licensees to ensure they downgrade their license or receive the education to become a paramedic. Critical Care Paramedic and Community Paramedic are new licensure types that were not fully implemented by the end of 2023; however, they are now. The types of

facilities licensed are Advanced Emergency Medical Service, Basic Emergency Medical Service, and Training Agency. The Department also licenses EMS Instructors.

<b>Licensed Emergency Care Providers</b>		
Source: LIS200 (DHHS Licensing Database)		
<b>License Type</b>	<b>2019 Numbers</b>	<b>2023 Numbers</b>
Emergency Medical Responder	407	345
Emergency Medical Technician	4948	5824
Advanced Emergency Medical Technician	23	56
Emergency Medical Technician – Intermediate	54	36
Paramedic	1554	1651
Critical Care Paramedic	0	0
Community Paramedic	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>6,986</b>	<b>7,912</b>
<b>Licensed Emergency Medical Service</b>		
Source: LIS200 (DHHS Licensing Database)		
<b>License Type</b>	<b>2019 Numbers</b>	<b>2023 Numbers</b>
Advanced Emergency Medical Service	109	116
Basic Emergency Medical Service	320	311
<b>Totals</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>427</b>
<b>Licensed EMS Instructors and Training Agencies</b>		
Source: LIS200 (DHHS Licensing Database)		
<b>License Type</b>	<b>2019 Numbers</b>	<b>2023 Numbers</b>
EMS Instructors	273	293
EMS Training Agencies	22	19

## Recommendations

The Board of Emergency Medical Services makes the following recommendations to the Legislature:

- Constituents would like to see the Legislature expand on EMS as an essential service in Nebraska. The Board recommends the Legislature define EMS as an essential service to ensure statewide provision of EMS coverage, there is an entity responsible for the provision of EMS, and an entity with financial accountability over its provision. To provide for future needs, EMS must have the resources it needs and a seriousness about funding EMS as an essential service.
- Assist with proactive change driven through ideas, leadership, coalitions, and action. Agencies and communities will need assistance seeing beyond the current structures and help navigating the slow process of evolving sustainable models that match local needs, resources, and opportunities.
- Allocate appropriate financial resources so DHHS can complete comprehensive workforce planning and initiatives of future staffing needs and perform an assessment of the actual cost of EMS provision in Nebraska that includes the value of donated labor and resources.
- The Board of Emergency Medical Services would encourage better coordination between the Legislature, the Department, and the Board on EMS-related legislation.
- Support subsidy of communication needs with a state radio system or leverage tools and platforms, such as Pulsara, to support an aging infrastructure for radio communications.