
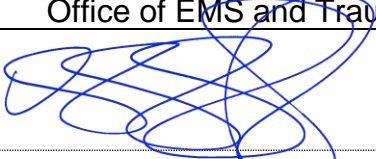




**GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
OEMS-CE-2021-001
EMS CONTINUING EDUCATION**

Approval:		09/01//2021
	Richard Rhodes, State EMS Training Coordinator, Office of EMS and Trauma	Date
		09/01//2021
	David Newton, Director, Office of EMS and Trauma	Date

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish minimum standards and guidelines for educational activities that may be used by EMS personnel (Medics, Instructors and Instructor Coordinators) to earn continuing education (CE) contact hours toward relicensure in accordance with DPH Rules. The EMS continuing education should consist of educational activities designed to promote and enrich knowledge, improve skills, and develop attitudes for the enhancement of professional practice, thus improving the quality of emergency medical services provided to the public.

Nothing in this policy is intended to restrict the authority of EMS agencies, initial education programs or medical directors to establish higher standards and requirements for continuing education activities that must be completed to acquire or maintain authorization to practice within an EMS agency or authorization to teach in an EMS initial education program.

2.0 AUTHORITY

The Georgia Department of Public Health, Office of EMS and Trauma, OEMS-CE-2021-001, EMS Continuing Education Policy is published under the authority of the Department and in compliance with the following:

2.1 Official Code of Georgia Annotated (O.C.G.A.):

- 2.1.1** O.C.G.A. § 31-2A-6,
- 2.1.2** O.C.G.A. § 31-11-5,
- 2.1.3** O.C.G.A. § 31-11-51,
- 2.1.4** O.C.G.A. § 31-11-52,
- 2.1.5** O.C.G.A. § 31-11-58, and
- 2.1.6** O.C.G.A. § 31-11-58.1.

2.2 EMS Rules and Regulations 511-9-2:

- 2.2.1** 511-9-2-.13,
- 2.2.2** 511-9-2-.16,
- 2.2.3** 511-9-2-.17, and

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2.2.4 511-9-2-.18.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1** "Approved Course" means an organized and specific set of learning experiences offered by an approved provider. Courses include credit and continuing education courses, short-term courses, organized clinical learning experiences and other coherent sequences of learning experiences, approved by the Department.
- 3.2** "Approved EMS Provider Educational Activities" refers to workshops, seminars, conferences, short-term courses, credit courses or continuing education courses provided by accredited institutions of higher education, clinical learning experiences, individualized instruction, distributive learning courses, and other learning activities that are related to EMS approved protocols and skills or that enhance the professional EMS practice of licensed EMTs, EMT-Intermediates, Advanced EMTs, Cardiac Technicians, and Paramedics.
- 3.3** "Approved EMS Instructor Educational Activities" refers to workshops, seminars, conferences, short-term courses, credit courses or continuing education courses provided by accredited institutions of higher education, educational learning experiences, individualized instruction, distributive learning courses, and other learning activities that are related to EMS instructional skills or that enhance the professional EMS instructional practice of licensed EMS Instructors and EMS Instructor/Coordinators.
- 3.4** "Continuing Education" means courses intended to improve the knowledge and skills of licensed providers and/or instructors, and are designed to promote and enrich knowledge, improve skills, and develop attitudes for the enhancement of professional practice, thus improving the quality of emergency medical services provided to the public. These courses are granted continuing education (CE) credit based upon the approval or recognition of the Department.
- 3.5** "Contact hour" means fifty (50) consecutive minutes of participation in a learning activity.
- 3.6** "Continuing Education Course Provider" means an individual, partnership, organization, agency, or institution that offers EMS continuing education programs, courses, credit courses, classroom instruction, or other EMS educational activities.
- 3.7** "Credit course" means a specific set of learning experiences offered by an academic institution that is accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education for semester or quarter credit hours.

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- 3.8** “Department” means the Georgia Department of Public Health, Office of EMS and Trauma.
- 3.9** “Dual Credit Course” means a course that is approved for both providers and instructors. This credit may be given to those courses that do not relate directly to any of the education modules of the Guidelines for Educating EMS Instructors. The credit from the CE may only be applied for one license level. (e.g., an instructor cannot apply the CE for both instructor and provider credit.)
- 3.10** “EMS Rules” means the Department’s Rules and Regulations, Chapter 511-9-2.
- 3.11** “Multi-Session Course” means a course that is taught over multiple continuous blocks of time or “sessions” (possibly multiple days) and may include an extended interruption/break between the blocks of time. It is anticipated that every 1 full hour of time for a course session that extends past 60 minutes will have a 10-minute break.
- 3.12** “Self-directed study” means an educational activity in which the learner takes the initiative and the responsibility for assessing, planning, implementing, and evaluating the activity. Self-directed study may include program development, home study, electronically programmed instruction, and authorship.
- 3.13** “Single-Session Course” means a course that is taught in a single continuous block of time without an extended interruption/break. It is anticipated that every 1 full hour of time for a course session that extends past 60 minutes will have a 10-minute break.

4.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all licensed EMS providers (medics), EMS Instructors, and EMS Instructor/Coordinators that attend Department approved continuing education courses.

5.0 POLICY

5.1 Physician Oversight

5.1.1 It is recommended that any continuing education involving clinical care should have physician oversight/involvement.

5.2 Types of Acceptable Continuing Education

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5.2.1 For Medic Licenses:

- 5.2.1.1.** Completion of Provider continuing education contact hours applied toward EMS relicensure may be earned by participating in educational activities that are approved or recognized by the Department, by another state office of EMS or accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Prehospital Continuing Education (CAPCE).
- 5.2.1.2.** Teaching or presenting Approved EMS Provider Educational Activities that have been approved or recognized by the Department.
- 5.2.1.3.** Participating in a self-directed study of an EMS related topic (other than EMS instruction) or issue that results in the participant making written findings and conclusions of the study which becomes published in an EMS related textbook, or in a state or national EMS related journal or magazine, or which results in the presentation of the findings and conclusions of the study in a Department approved workshop, seminar, conference or class, and which is directed toward, or is applicable to, the EMS profession.

5.2.2 For EMS Instructor and EMS Instructor Coordinator Licenses:

- 5.2.2.1.** Completion of Instructor continuing education contact hours applied toward EMS relicensure may be earned by participating in educational activities that are approved or recognized by the Department, by another state office of EMS or accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Prehospital Continuing Education (CAPCE).
- 5.2.2.2.** Teaching or presenting Approved EMS Instructor Educational Activities that have been approved or recognized by the Department.
- 5.2.2.3.** Participating in a self-directed study of an EMS instructional related topic or issue that results in the participant making written findings and conclusions of the study which becomes published in an EMS related textbook, or in a state or national EMS related journal or magazine, or which results in the presentation of the findings and conclusions of the study in a Department approved workshop, seminar, conference or class, and which is directed toward, or is applicable to, the EMS instructor profession.

5.3 Activities Unacceptable as Continuing Education

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- 5.3.1 Education incidental to the regular professional activities of EMS personnel such as learning occurring from experience or personal research which is not published.
- 5.3.2 Orientation programs sponsored by employers to provide employees with information about the philosophy, goals, policies, procedures, role expectations, and physical facilities of a specific workplace.
- 5.3.3 Meetings and activities such as in-service programs that are required as part of employment unless the in-service training is a type of acceptable continuing education specified in this policy.
- 5.3.4 Organizational activity such as serving on committees, councils, or as an officer or board member in a professional organization.
- 5.3.5 Institutions of higher education credit courses that are audited.
- 5.3.6 Courses in basic cardiopulmonary resuscitation or other instructional activities designed for lay persons, including first aid courses.
- 5.3.7 Any experience that does not fit the types of acceptable continuing education specified in this policy for the respective license type.
- 5.3.8 Any identical continuing education repeated more than once during the renewal period.

5.4 Approval of Continuing Education Courses.

- 5.4.1 No EMS Agency, Fire Department, hospital, clinic, medical center, educational institution, other entity or person shall hold itself/themselves out as offering or teaching an approved EMS continuing education course unless the course has been approved or recognized by the Department or accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Prehospital Continuing Education (CAPCE).
- 5.4.2 Applicants for Continuing Education Course approval shall certify on the application that:
 - 5.4.2.1. The continuing education course offered by the provider for EMS continuing education will comply with the appropriate criteria defined in this policy;
 - 5.4.2.2. The course provider shall be responsible for verifying successful completion by a participant for the continuing education course through the Department's License Management System and/or provide a certificate, or letter of completion to the participants; and

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5.4.3 The Department may require applicants to:

5.4.3.1. Demonstrate they possess the financial, administrative, and educational resources necessary to provide the type(s) of educational activities proposed; and

5.4.3.2. Provide evidence that they are capable of designing and delivering educational activities that comply with the appropriate criteria defined in subsection 5.4 of this policy.

5.4.4 All applications for EMS continuing education course approval must be completed through the Departments License Management System and must be submitted a minimum of ten (10) business days prior to the course start date, except for sessions conducted at a conference which must be submitted a minimum of thirty (30) calendar days prior to the conference start date.

5.4.5 CEU hours will be awarded in increments of ¼ of an hour (0.25 hours), as follows:

Length of Approved Course Session	Hours of CE Awarded	Minimum Attendance Requirement
0 – 12 minutes	No credit	N/A
13 – 24 minutes	0.25 hours	13 minutes
25 – 37 minutes	0.50 hours	25 minutes
38 – 49 minutes	0.75 hours	38 minutes
50 minutes – 1 hour 12 minutes	1.00 hours	50 minutes
1 hour PLUS 13 – 24 minutes	1.25 hours	73 minutes
1 hour PLUS 25 – 37 minutes	1.50 hours	85 minutes
1 hour PLUS 38 – 49 minutes	1.75 hours	98 minutes
1 hour 50 minutes – 2 hours 12 minutes	2.00 hours	110 minutes

Any additional time not expressed here will follow the pattern listed above.

5.4.6 Course Providers must teach/deliver the approved course with all of the objectives and course length as approved by the Department.

5.4.6.1. For any Course that is completed prior to the course length (in hours) that was approved by the Department, the Course Provider must notify the Department in writing of the change in hours, and the Department will make the appropriate modifications to the respective course approval.

5.5 Data Reporting Requirements for Course Providers of Department Approved EMS Continuing Education

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- 5.5.1** All providers of approved EMS continuing education courses shall either record the attendance and course completion status in the Department's License Management System OR issue a certificate or letter of completion to each student who completes the course. If the provider of a Department approved EMS continuing education course is a Georgia licensed EMS Agency or designated EMS Initial Education Program, the provider shall submit a roster of the students who attended and completed the course to the Department using the Department's License Management System.
- 5.5.2** When submitting a roster through the Department's License Management System, the information for each attendee/student must include the following:
- 5.5.2.1.** The specific License Management System user profile of the attendee;
 - 5.5.2.2.** Date of course completion;
 - 5.5.2.3.** Written and practical exam scores, if applicable;
 - 5.5.2.4.** Attendee Status of the respective student/attendee. Available Attendee Statuses for continuing education include:
 - 5.5.2.4.1.** **"CE: Complete"** – to be selected when the respective student completed all the course objectives, exams and skills checkoffs (if appropriate), and met the minimum attendance requirement specified in this policy.
 - 5.5.2.4.2.** **"CE: Did not attend"** – to be selected when the respective student did not show up for the course at all, did not complete the course objectives, or did not meet the minimum attendance requirements specified in this policy.
- 5.5.3** When issuing a certificate or letter of completion, the certificate or letter must include the following:
- 5.5.3.1.** Name of attendee;
 - 5.5.3.2.** License number of attendee if available;
 - 5.5.3.3.** Date(s) of course completion;
 - 5.5.3.4.** Department issued continuing education approval number;
 - 5.5.3.5.** Title of the continuing education activity;

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5.5.3.6. Name of the presenter of the continuing education activity;

5.5.3.7. Name of the Course Provider;

5.5.3.8. Topics covered and hours awarded during the continuing education activity. These topics and hours must match the topics and hours listed in the Department's License Management System for the respective course approval;

5.6 Criteria for Acceptable Continuing Education Activity.

5.6.1 The following criteria have been established to guide EMS personnel in selecting appropriate programs and to guide providers of EMS continuing education in planning and presenting activities. The following criteria shall apply to all activities except those involving self-directed study concluding in a published writing or a presentation, as described in subsection 5.3 of this policy.

5.6.1.1. The program's content, teaching methodologies, and evaluation methods shall be based on written learning objectives which are specific, attainable, measurable, and descriptive of expected learner outcomes.

5.6.1.2. The target audience shall be identified and there shall be evidence of program planning based on the needs of the potential target audience.

5.6.1.3. **For Provider Continuing Education:** Content shall be relevant to emergency medical services practice and/or health care, shall be related to and consistent with the program's objectives, and shall provide for the professional growth and/or maintenance of the licensee.

5.6.1.4. **For Instructor Continuing Education:** Content shall be relevant to the instruction of topics in emergency medical services practice and/or health care, shall be related to and consistent with the program's objectives, and shall provide for the professional growth and/or maintenance of the licensee.

5.6.1.5. Principles of adult education shall be used in the design and delivery of the program.

5.6.1.6. There shall be documentation of the program developer's expertise in the content area.

5.6.1.7. Learning experiences and teaching methods shall be appropriate to achieve the objectives of the program.

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- 5.6.1.8. Time allotted for each activity shall be sufficient for the learner to meet the objectives of the program.
- 5.6.1.9. The program shall include activities to evaluate participant achievement of the program's learning objectives with clearly defined, stated criteria for successful completion.
- 5.6.1.10. It is recommended that a written or electronic evaluation of the program and instruction be completed.
- 5.6.1.11. The continuing education provider shall timely furnish each participant with a written record of the participant's successful completion of the EMS educational activity, as specified in this policy.
- 5.6.1.12. Program records of a continuing education provider shall be maintained by the provider for a minimum period of five years from the date of the course completion and shall include target audience, objectives, and documentation of instructor qualifications, teaching strategies and materials, evaluation instruments and results, and a list of names of participants.
- 5.6.2 **Classroom Instruction.** In addition to the criteria listed in section 5.4.1 of this policy, courses consisting of or including a component of classroom or laboratory instruction shall meet the following criteria.
 - 5.6.2.1. There shall be documentation of the instructor's expertise in the content area.
 - 5.6.2.2. A schedule of the course shall be provided which describes content with corresponding time frames.
 - 5.6.2.3. Facilities and educational resources shall be adequate to implement the course.
- 5.6.3 **Clinical Instruction.** In addition to the criteria listed in section 5.4.1 of this policy, course consisting of or including a component of clinical instruction shall meet the following criteria.
 - 5.6.3.1. There shall be documentation of a formal relationship between the program's provider and all facilities serving as sites for clinical instruction.
 - 5.6.3.2. Facilities used for clinical instruction must provide access to types of patients in sufficient variety and number to enable students to meet the course's objectives.

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5.6.3.3. Individuals who possess appropriate expertise and credentials shall provide clinical supervision and instruction.

5.6.3.4. Provide a name and contact information for the designated infection control officer and document education for the designated infection control officer based on U.S. Code, Title 42, Chapter 6A, Subchapter XXIV, Part G, §300ff-136.

5.6.4 Individualized Instruction. In addition to the criteria listed in section 5.5.1 of this policy, programs consisting of individualized instruction, including programmed (online) instruction, directed study, or directed research shall meet the following criteria.

5.6.4.1. Instruction shall follow a logical sequence based on the program's stated learning objectives.

5.6.4.2. Instruction shall involve the learner in an active response to the educational materials presented.

5.6.4.3. The amount of instructional time applied shall be appropriate to the learning objectives specified.

5.6.4.4. Provider shall insure that contact hours are awarded to the actual licensee to whom intended.

5.6.4.5. Programmed (online) instruction that includes audio or video recordings of a presentation shall have the ability to ensure that the learner listens/watches the entire length of the recorded presentation.

5.6.5 Individual submission by the participant of study activity for review by the Department. The following information must be submitted for review.

5.6.5.1. A course syllabus defining the content, the learning objectives, the dates and times of presentation, and the number of contact hours.

5.6.5.2. A description of the presenters' qualifications and expertise.

5.6.5.3. Verification by the presenter of successful participation.

5.7 Additional Criteria for Specific Continuing Education Programs. In addition to those listed in subsection 5.4 of this policy, the following guidelines shall apply to the selection **and/or planning and implementation of specific CE programs.**

5.7.1 Semester or quarter credit hour courses.

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5.7.1.1. For Medics:

5.7.1.1.1. The course shall be within the framework of a curriculum that leads to a degree in emergency medical services or any credit hour course relevant to emergency health care as determined by the Department.

5.7.1.1.2. CEU contact hours from completed college coursework under this section may be claimed with the “CEU: Provider - OTHER-GENERAL” topic, and given the following guidelines:

5.7.1.1.2.1. 1 semester credit hour may be claimed for a maximum of 8 contact hours.

5.7.1.1.2.2. 1 quarter credit hour may be claimed for a maximum of 5 contact hours.

5.7.1.2. For Instructors and Instructor/Coordinators:

5.7.1.2.1. The course shall be within the framework of a curriculum that leads to a degree in education or any credit hour course relevant to EMS instruction.

5.7.1.2.2. CEU contact hours from completed college coursework under this section may be claimed with the “CEU: Instructor - Instructional Techniques - GENERAL” topic, and given the following guidelines:

5.7.1.2.2.1. 1 semester credit hour may be claimed for a maximum of 8 contact hours.

5.7.1.2.2.2. 1 quarter credit hour may be claimed for a maximum of 5 contact hours.

5.7.1.3. Licensed EMS personnel, upon audit, shall be able to present an official transcript or official evidence indicating successful completion of the course with a passing grade (“C” or better).

5.7.1.4. Licensed EMS personnel, upon request by the Department, shall provide documentation on the accredited institution's letterhead giving the name of program, location, dates, subjects taught, and total clock hours of teaching or instruction for all continuing education activity, including credit hour courses. Documentation may include course completion certificates, diplomas, and/or transcripts.

5.7.1.5. Credit courses claimed under this section must have been

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completed during the license renewal cycle for the respective license (medic or instructor) at an academic institution that is accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education.

5.7.2 Authorship.

- 5.7.2.1.** Licensed EMS personnel may receive EMS continuing education contact hours for participating in an approved self-directed study that results in the participant making written findings and conclusions of the study which becomes published in an EMS related textbook, or in a state or national EMS related journal or magazine, or which results in the presentation of the findings and conclusions of the study in a Department approved workshop, seminar, conference or class, and which is directed toward, or is applicable to, the EMS profession.
- 5.7.2.2.** Continuing education contact hours shall be awarded only once to the licensee making written findings and conclusions that result from a Department approved self-directed study that becomes published or presented as described above.

5.7.3 Out of state programs.

- 5.7.3.1.** A continuing education activity successfully attended and completed or undertaken in a jurisdiction outside Georgia may be accepted for continuing education if all criteria are met and if it is approved by the Department or approved by another state's respective Office of EMS.

5.8 Responsibilities of licensed Medics, Instructors and Instructor/Coordinators.

- 5.8.1** It shall be the responsibility of the licensed EMS personnel (Medics, Instructors and Instructor/Coordinators) to select and participate in continuing education activities that meet the criteria listed in subsection 5.4 and 5.5 of this policy and those specified in the Department's Rules.
- 5.8.2** The licensed EMS personnel shall be responsible for maintaining documentation of successful completions of EMS continuing education courses or educational activities for five (5) years after the dates of completion. These records shall document successful completion, specifying the name of the EMS continuing education provider, the title, description, date, and location of the educational activity, a description of the content area, the number of contact hours awarded, and the organization granting approval.

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5.8.3 All courses used for re-licensure must have complete and accurate copies of this documentation submitted to the Department in electronic format (PDF file), uploaded to the Department's License Management System.

5.8.4 Single-Session Courses - Any attendee of a single-session provider or instructor continuing education course must:

- 5.8.4.1.** Meet all of the objectives of the course as set forth in the approval by the Department;
- 5.8.4.2.** Successfully complete all exams prescribed in the course request; and
- 5.8.4.3.** Meet the minimum attendance requirement as specified below based on the assigned CE hours for the respective continuing education course. Partial credit will not be awarded for incomplete attendance.

Length of Approved Course	Hours of CE Awarded	Minimum Attendance Requirement
0 – 12 minutes	No credit	N/A
13 – 24 minutes	0.25 hours	13 minutes
25 – 37 minutes	0.50 hours	25 minutes
38 – 49 minutes	0.75 hours	38 minutes
50 minutes – 1 hour 12 minutes	1.00 hours	50 minutes
1 hour PLUS 13 – 24 minutes	1.25 hours	73 minutes
1 hour PLUS 25 – 37 minutes	1.50 hours	85 minutes
1 hour PLUS 38 – 49 minutes	1.75 hours	98 minutes
1 hour 50 minutes – 2 hours 12 minutes	2.00 hours	110 minutes

5.8.4.4. It is anticipated that every 1 full hour of time for a course that extends past 60 minutes will have a 10-minute break.

5.8.5 Multi-Session Courses – For each session of a multi-session provider or instructor continuing education course that an attendee is requesting to claim credit for, the attendee must:

- 5.8.5.1.** Meet all of the objectives of the course session as set forth in the approval by the Department;
- 5.8.5.2.** Successfully complete all exams prescribed in the course request for the specific course session; and

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5.8.5.3. Meet the minimum attendance requirement as specified below based on the assigned CE hours for the respective continuing education course session. Partial credit will not be awarded for incomplete attendance.

Length of Approved Course Session	Hours of CE Awarded	Minimum Attendance Requirement
0 – 12 minutes	No credit	N/A
13 – 24 minutes	0.25 hours	13 minutes
25 – 37 minutes	0.50 hours	25 minutes
38 – 49 minutes	0.75 hours	38 minutes
50 minutes – 1 hour 12 minutes	1.00 hours	50 minutes
1 hour PLUS 13 – 24 minutes	1.25 hours	73 minutes
1 hour PLUS 25 – 37 minutes	1.50 hours	85 minutes
1 hour PLUS 38 – 49 minutes	1.75 hours	98 minutes
1 hour 50 minutes – 2 hours 12 minutes	2.00 hours	110 minutes

5.8.5.4. It is anticipated that every 1 full hour of time for a course session that extends past 60 minutes will have a 10-minute break.

5.9 Partial Course Completions

5.9.1 Partial credit may be given for courses that are greater than 6 hours in length. If a provider is offering partial CE credit they must give the attendee a certificate, or letter of completion that includes the topic categories, and the amount of time that each topic was covered. The certificate or letter of completion must reference the course number that the topical hours were obtained in. The provider **MUST NOT** list the attendee in the LMS roster.

5.9.2 Audit.

5.9.2.1. The Department may audit the records of individuals seeking relicensure.

5.9.2.2. The Department may audit specific licensed EMS personnel through random selection, in response to a complaint, or if there is reason to suspect that the licensed EMS personnel may have given false or inaccurate information about the continuing education requirements completed.

5.9.2.3. An audit shall be automatic for licensed EMS personnel who have been found non-compliant in an immediately preceding audit.

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- 5.9.2.4.** Failure to notify the Department of a current mailing address or email address shall not absolve the licensee from audit requirements.
- 5.9.2.5.** Within 30 days following notification of audit, licensed EMS personnel shall submit documentation as specified in subsection 5.6 of this policy and any additional documentation the Department determines is necessary to verify compliance with continuing education requirements.
- 5.9.2.6.** The Department may use on-site observation, audits of records, and other appropriate methods to evaluate the performance of continuing education providers. Evaluation of a continuing education provider may take place randomly, in response to a complaint, or if there is reason to suspect that a continuing education provider is not complying with the criteria established by this policy.
- 5.9.2.7.** Falsification of continuing education documentation or official evidence of completion of continuing education shall be cause for reprimand, probation, suspension, or revocation of a license as described in DPH Rule 511-9-2-.18.
- 5.9.2.8.** Falsification of CE documentation or official evidence of completion by a course provider or failure to comply with the criteria established by this policy shall be cause for reprimand, probated suspension, suspension, or revocation of approval.

6.0 REVISION HISTORY

Revision #	Revision Date	Revision Comments
0	06/23/2021	Initial issue.