

The Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services is establishing an accreditation program for 911 public safety answering points (PSAP) and emergency dispatch centers. This is to promote implementation of emergency medical dispatch (EMD) protocols and continued training and education in this area. This will not be a certification, but an acknowledgement from the Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) of a PSAP's effort to implement guidelines set for communications involving EMS.

**VIRGINIA OEMS ACCREDITATION GUIDELINES:**

A: Implementation of an emergency medical dispatch system meeting or exceeding standards established by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and accepted and recognized by the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM). Examples of approved systems include, but are not limited to, programs offered by the Association of Public Safety Communications Officers, International (APCO), Powerphone®, Priority Dispatch® or National Emergency Communications Institute®.

B: One hundred percent (100%) of communications personnel, whose job description include call taking, shall be certified as an emergency medical dispatcher through an approved EMD program (as described in section A) within 2 years of employment.

C: Emergency Medical Dispatchers must be trained and certified by an OEMS recognized emergency dispatch training organization meeting or exceeding standards established by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and accepted and recognized by the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM). Examples of approved systems include, but are not limited to, programs offered by the Association of Public Safety Communications Officers, International (APCO), Powerphone®, Priority Dispatch® or National Emergency Communications Institute®.

D: Minimum one person with EMD certification (as described in section A) on duty at the PSAP or EMS dispatch center at all times.

E: A minimum 20 hours training, annually, of continuing EMD/EMS communications education per PSAP or 911 Center. This may include in-house training and/or sending of communications personnel for outside training. Cooperative training with other OEMS accredited agencies count as completion of requirement.

F: A Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement process to assure EMD system compliance. This will consist of call review and/or call monitoring. An emergency dispatch agency or public safety answering point will provide an annual Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement report to the Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services, in a format approved (or prescribed) by the Virginia Office of EMS, demonstrating a minimum average yearly score of 85% total compliance of emergency medical dispatch protocols being employed. (Effective January 1st, 2012)

G: An annual report submitted to OEMS documenting compliance with all guidelines set by OEMS for accreditation. This will include program implementation and training documentation.

H: These standards must also be accepted by a currently endorsed EMS Physician (as defined in Virginia EMS Regulations; 12 VAC 5-31-1800 & 1810). A letter signed by same EMS Physician must accompany the initial application for accreditation and all subsequent documentation submitted for recurring approvals.

**TO SUBMIT APPLICATION:**

Please complete [application](#), print a copy for your records, then submit electronically. Also attach a copy of the application with copies of EMD training certifications for all qualified communications officers and a copy of all MOU's to the Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services for confirmation. Items may be faxed to (804) 371-3108 . Insure title page is "Attention: EMD Accreditation".

This information may also be mailed to:

Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services  
1041 Technology Park Dr.  
Glen Allen Va. 23059

Note: Applications will not be considered until all documentation has been received by OEMS.

Contact [Ken Crumpler](#), EMS Communications Coordinator, at (804) 888-9100 with any questions.