

Revisions under Consideration

CECBEMS should clarify its requirements:

- Be more specific about the person qualified to write the letter of support and the intent of this letter. The current text reads, “someone who is authorized to sign contracts and binding agreements.” The intention is to document the support of someone in the organization with the authority to bridge the gaps among departments, etc., in the interest of maintaining CECBEMS standards. This wording is recommended: “someone with sufficient authority to ensure compliance across all CECBEMS requirements.”
- Clarify the requirement for a letter from the state EMS office. In the early 1990’s, there were almost no CE providers who were not known to their respective state EMS offices. Currently, such national organizations as NAEMSE, ACEP, NAEMT, and a number of online providers have no relationship with a state EMS office. Currently, in these situations CECBEMS waives the requirement in favor of a recommendation from another source. Should CECBEMS be more specific and consistent with this requirement.
- Provide very specific requirements for collecting the required data and storing, uploading and maintaining course completion records, and require CE providers to sign an attesting statement saying that they will meet these requirements.
- Clarify what constitutes the required course content and how extensively each objective should be addressed.
- Require that references for an activity support current national EMS standards at a minimum. CE providers are required to review and update their materials at least every three years. A tip-off that they may not have done the required review and update is that there are no recent references from journals and other periodicals and reference to outdated practices such as MAST trousers.
- Make the requirement for the location of citations of references more flexible. The current requirement is that references be cited using a superscript number in the text of the content with a numbered list of references at the end of the activity or at the bottom of the page. When almost 100% of CE was print material either on paper or online, it was reasonable to require that references appear within the text. With the current trend toward more flexible, creative, interactive formats, it is sometimes more appropriate to provide a numbered reference list at the end of the topic or even use some other way of documenting references.
- Review the *CECBEMS CEH Assignment Guidelines* for distributed learning activities to determine whether or not these guidelines allow for equitable assignment of CEH to all distributed learning activity formats. These guidelines were adopted in 2005. In the last seven years, the technology has advanced to allow a number of new formats. These guidelines may not take into consideration some current formats.
- Require that the response to a student’s request for information about the content or test must occur within two business days. Given the inconsistency among the definitions of “instructor led” we need to define this requirement more precisely to make it clear that CECBEMS does not

define “instructor led” in terms of how quickly a student receives an answer to a question from an online CE provider.

- Give CE providers a minimum number of standard questions that must appear on student evaluation forms. Reviewers find the quality of evaluation instruments to be “all over the map” in terms of quality. Give CE providers a set of questions using a Likert Scale that must be included on evaluation forms. They may place other items on the form, but the minimum set furnished by CECBEMS should be required.
- Provide specific requirements for CE providers to use in investigating complaints from students and faculty and for acting on information gained from student evaluations.
- Provide more specific requirements about how an organizationally accredited provider and its program committee should conduct a course review before awarding accreditation. Consider requiring that the medical director sign off on each course.

Determine whether or not CECBEMS requirements meet the needs of the EMS community as a whole.

- Survey state directors, training coordinators, NREMT, etc. to determine whether or not the value of accreditation is affected by the current lack of clear-cut assignment of the CECBEMS category (First Responder, Basic, Advanced). For instance, we currently allow CE providers to assign multiple categories to the same activity if it contains information for all of the levels they assign rather than insisting that all content in an activity address the SOP for one distinct level of practice, no more and no less.
- Accredite advanced practice activities that do not fall within the SOP for any level of practice—critical care, community paramedic, flight paramedic, etc. Although many states and NREMT may not accept these courses for recertification or license renewal, employers and third-party payers will be looking for qualified advanced practice EMS providers who have completed accredited CE.
- Distinguish between CE provider and student user equipment. Vendors, however cutting edge their I/T may be, cannot ensure that their customers’ equipment is adequate. When writing requirements for technology for online courses, remember that all users do not have computers and software that are cutting edge and some rural areas still do not afford the latest internet connection services.
- Require that the name and/or signature of the EMS medical director appear on course certificates and on the CE Provider’s Web site.
- Require that faculty and authors complete and sign a conflict-of-interest document designed by CECBEMS.

Revise CECBEMS requirements adequately to address cheating in distributed learning formats

- Require CE providers to program their site in a way that does not allow students to access the test before they have spent a reasonable amount of time in the content.
- Require randomization of a standard set of test items and of answer choices with a one-year deadline.

- Require that CE providers develop a bank of questions for each topic from which a randomized test is created with a three-year deadline. For instance, 20 test items are randomly selected from a bank of at least 30 test items.
- Require CE providers to insist that students “sign” an attesting statement at end of the test saying that they completed the course and test without the assistance of another person.
- Require CE providers to maintain a record of the amount of time a student spends in the lesson and how much time the student spends in the test. This practice provides important information when a regulator is checking for fraud.
- Require CE providers to block printing of a certificate if student did not spend the required amount of time in the lesson. This is another important step in fraud prevention.
- Phase out print materials with a pencil-and-paper, nonrandomized test. This format has outlived its usefulness and provides an easy opportunity for fraud.
- Require CE providers to describe within their application for accreditation the steps the student must complete to print a certificate. This will help reviewers and CE providers to make a careful assessment of how easy or difficult it is for a student to complete a lesson fraudulently.

Make the *Standards & Requirements* document and the application more user friendly.

- Collect all standards and requirements for accreditation of organizations and for accreditation of individual courses into a single well organized document.
- Delete current restatements of standards and requirements that appear in various application forms and provide references to the single standards and requirements document mentioned above. Some years ago, staff copied text from the standards and requirements and policy documents into application forms in appropriate places to help the applicant complete the form accurately. At this point, it would be more efficient to remove the copied text and simply refer the applicant to a specific item in the standards and requirements document.
- Design an application form in a program that is more user friendly than Word—a form that will automatically expand space as needed and that can be filled out by the applicant and saved to allow for multiple work sessions—possibly include links to specific information in the standards and requirements document.
- Design a way to capture repetitive information such as contact information in the CECBEMS system so that applicants do not have to duplicate it with each application (applies mostly to applicants for individual course accreditation; organizational applicants apply once every three years).