



Standard Guide for Selection and Practice of Emergency Medical Services Instructor for Basic Life Support/Emergency Medical Technician (BLS/EMT) Training Programs¹

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1. Scope

1.1 This guide is intended to assist emergency medical services (EMS) agencies and institutions in selecting and utilizing individuals who teach in EMT (emergency medical technician) training programs which include instruction in basic life support knowledge and skills.

1.2 This guide identifies six categories of instructor in a BLS/EMT (basic life support/emergency medical technician) training program: adjunct instructor, clinical/field preceptor, practical skills instructor, associate instructor, course instructor/coordinator (I/C), and course administrator. The guide recognizes that an individual may, depending on his/her level of practice and the training program involved, function in any or all of these categories.

1.3 This guide includes specific guidelines for qualifications, training, education, experience, scope of authority, responsibilities, continuing education, evaluation, and maintenance of competency when applicable.

1.4 This guide does not include specific guidelines for the course administrator or the adjunct instructor. While the guide recognizes, by offering a definition of each category, that these types of individuals function in many BLS/EMT training programs, the limited instructional roles played by these individuals precludes the need for specific selection and utilization guidelines.

1.5 This guide is intended to apply to any individual who teaches in BLS/EMT training programs regardless of the individual's present level of clinical practice.

1.6 This guide intentionally omits references to length of prehospital care experience, teaching experience, and continuing education requirements. This guide also omits reference to waiver or equivalency. These issues should be addressed by the appropriate agency.

1.7 This guide applies only to instructors who teach in basic life support training courses designed to prepare an individual for certification to practice as an EMT (basic) or first responder. It does not apply to instructors who teach in specialized courses that do not in themselves qualify the individual for a level of EMT certification.

1.8 This guide does not establish certification requirements. Such requirements should be established by the certifying agency in the jurisdiction in which the BLS/EMT instructor will function. This guide may be used to provide considerable guidance to the jurisdiction responsible for establishing certification standards.

1.9 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

NOTE 1—Also see Practice F 1031.

2. Referenced Documents

2.1 ASTM Standards:

F 1031 Practice for Training the Emergency Medical Technician (Basic)²

3. Terminology

3.1 Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:

3.1.1 *adjunct instructor*—an individual with specialized subject matter expertise, who, on occasion, instructs a specific topic of a curriculum under the direction of the course instructor/coordinator.

3.1.2 *associate instructor*—an individual who possesses the qualifications and education/training of a course instructor/coordinator, but, in a specific course, assumes a supportive or assisting role to the course instructor/coordinator. This individual may substitute for the course instructor/coordinator in

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² *Annual Book of ASTM Standards*, Vol 13.02.

case of necessity or, in other courses, serve as a course instructor/coordinator.

3.1.3 *basic life support*—a level of pre-hospital emergency medical care that includes any or all first responder and EMT-basic procedures as defined by the National Standard Curricula.^{3,4}

3.1.4 *basic life support/emergency medical technician (BLS/EMT) training program*—a course of instruction that provides an individual with the knowledge and clinical skills of emergency medical care necessary to function at a level of first responder or EMT (basic) level of care. Such courses include, but are not limited to, first responder and EMT-basic training programs.

3.1.5 *BLS/EMT instructor*—an individual who provides instruction in a training or education program for prehospital BLS/EMT personnel. This term includes any individual who functions as an adjunct instructor, clinical/field preceptor, practical skills instructor, associate instructor, or course instructor/coordinator.

3.1.6 *certification*—current, formal approval by the appropriate certifying agency to function at a specific level of practice. This may also be referred to as approval or licensure.

3.1.7 *clinical certification*—a standardized process for evaluation and recognition of an acceptable level of competence in a specific aspect of patient care.

3.1.8 *clinical experience*—exposure to and practice in an area of patient care.

3.1.9 *clinical/field preceptor*—an individual who supervises and evaluates the students during clinical or field experiences under the direction of the course instructor/coordinator.

3.1.10 *course administrator*—an individual responsible for managing administrative details of a course, separate from actual instruction of the course.

3.1.11 *course instructor/coordinator (I/C)*—an individual who is authorized by the appropriate entity to present and assess competence in all of the subject matter contained in a curriculum. This person also oversees all instruction in the course and makes final evaluations concerning student competence.

3.1.12 *course medical director*—the licensed physician who provides medical direction for all didactic and clinical instruction and clinical practice experience included in a BLS/EMT training program.

3.1.13 *evaluation*—the process of verifying clinical and educational skills and knowledge competencies of a BLS/EMT instructor.

3.1.14 *instructor training program*—an educational program that provides a foundation of essential educational principles to assist individuals to instruct in, or coordinate,

BLS/EMT programs. It must, at a minimum, contain the elements of the DOT EMS Instructor National Standard Curriculum.⁵

3.1.15 *practical skills instructor*—an individual who assists with practical skills instruction under the direction of the course instructor/coordinator.

3.1.16 *qualification*—a requirement which shall be met by a BLS/EMT instructor candidate prior to selection and practice as a BLS/EMT instructor.

4. Significance and Use

4.1 Since the quality of prehospital BLS/EMT training depends, in large measure, on the instructional abilities and competencies of the BLS/EMT instructor, it is imperative that the individual selected and used in this capacity possess the qualifications and capabilities necessary to provide effective instruction.

4.2 A BLS/EMT instructor must possess clearly defined knowledge and skills competencies, have clearly defined responsibilities and scope of authority related to instructional programs, and meet other specific requirements pertinent to the level of instruction.

4.3 Using this guide, EMS institutions and organizations should be able to develop requirements for selection and utilization of BLS/EMT instructors for BLS/EMT training and education programs.

BASIC LIFE SUPPORT INSTRUCTOR GUIDELINES

5. Course Instructor/Coordinator

5.1 An individual shall be considered eligible to serve as a BLS/EMT course I/C (instructor/coordinator) when requirements as outlined in 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 have been met by that individual.

5.1.1 *Qualifications*—Prior to entering the instructor training program, the course I/C candidate shall:

5.1.1.1 Be at least a high school graduate or have a General Equivalency Diploma (GED); preferably a higher education degree in a supportive discipline,

5.1.1.2 Have prehospital patient care experience at least at the level being taught,

5.1.1.3 Be certified at least at the level being taught,

5.1.1.4 Demonstrate, at the level being taught, current competence in and knowledge of emergency care of the acutely ill or traumatized patient to the satisfaction of the appropriate agency, and

5.1.1.5 Demonstrate to the instructor training agency, reading and language skills commensurate with resource materials to be utilized in the BLS/EMT training program.

5.1.2 *Education/Training/Experience*—The course I/C candidate shall:

5.1.2.1 Have served as a practical skills instructor, clinical or field preceptor, and successfully completed a supervised

³ Emergency Medical Services, First Responder Training Course—Instructor's Lesson Plans (U.S. DOT/NHTSA Report No. DOT HS 900–, 1984).

⁴ Emergency Medical Technician—Ambulance: National Standard Curriculum—Instructor's Lesson Plans (U.S. DOT/NHTSA Report No. DOT HS 900–, 1984).

⁵ Emergency Medical Services Instructor Training Program: A National Standard Curriculum—Instructor's Lesson Plans, First Edition, 1986 (U.S. DOT/NHTSA Report No. HS 900–086, February 1986).

probationary teaching experience in a BLS/EMT training program at the level to be taught to the satisfaction of the appropriate agency,

5.1.2.2 Have advanced clinical certifications, provider or instructor, or both, as appropriate for the curriculum being taught,

5.1.2.3 Be certified as a CPR instructor according to the current standards as promulgated by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross,

5.1.2.4 Become familiar with appropriate record keeping processes for students, sponsoring agency, or state EMS agency, or both, and

5.1.2.5 Successfully complete an instructor training program that includes the knowledge and skills objectives contained in the DOT Instructor Curriculum.⁵

5.1.3 *Scope of Authority*—The course I/C shall have the authority to:

5.1.3.1 Conduct BLS/EMT training programs with approval of appropriate EMS agency,

5.1.3.2 Document to the appropriate agency those students successfully completing the BLS/EMT training program, and

5.1.3.3 Regulate student behavior within the scope of the training program under the institutional guidelines for due process.

5.1.4 *Responsibilities*—The course I/C:

5.1.4.1 Should provide a positive role model by:

(a) Maintaining personal mental and physical health,

(b) Maintaining appropriate personal hygiene and appearance,

(c) Actively pursuing personal and professional development,

(d) Recognizing personal limitations and seeking assistance when appropriate,

(e) Demonstrating competent, respectful, and caring interactions with students, coworkers, and patients at all times, and

(f) Demonstrating professional behavior in the classroom or in the presence of students.

5.1.4.2 Shall ensure a safe and effective learning environment,

5.1.4.3 Shall ensure competent training staff,

5.1.4.4 Shall maintain appropriate training records,

5.1.4.5 Shall teach the curriculum as adopted and defined by the appropriate certifying agency,

5.1.4.6 Shall inform students of the criteria for successful course completion,

5.1.4.7 Shall consistently monitor student progress toward terminal course objectives and provide appropriate feedback to the students within guidelines established by the appropriate certifying agency,

5.1.4.8 Shall uphold state and national clinical standards for practice at the appropriate BLS/EMT level,

5.1.4.9 Shall evaluate the students for safe and effective performance,

5.1.4.10 Shall orient, supervise and evaluate adjunct, practical skills, associate instructors, and clinical/field preceptors,

5.1.4.11 Shall coordinate student field or clinical activities with the clinical/field preceptors,

5.1.4.12 Shall ensure that practical skills training equipment is maintained in a safe and acceptable operating condition,

5.1.4.13 Shall protect the privacy of students and the confidentiality of training course records as required by applicable laws and standards,

5.1.4.14 Should have knowledge of the administrative and legislative processes affecting the local, regional, or state prehospital EMS system, or combination thereof, and

5.1.4.15 Should have knowledge of the laws and regulations affecting the local, regional, or state prehospital EMS system, or combination thereof.

5.1.5 *Evaluation*—The evaluation of a course I/C shall include:

5.1.5.1 Analysis of student outcomes,

5.1.5.2 Classroom observation of the I/C, and

5.1.5.3 Review of students' course evaluations.

5.1.6 *Maintenance of Competency*—In order to maintain competency, the course I/C shall:

5.1.6.1 Maintain certification at least at the level being taught,

5.1.6.2 Teach BLS/EMT related curriculum,

5.1.6.3 Participate in continuing education programs, which may include:

(a) Practice-related topics, for example, management or administration, vehicle maintenance, or communications,

(b) Clinical topics, and

(c) Educational methods and materials.

6. Associate Instructor

6.1 The associate instructor shall possess the same qualifications, training and education as the course I/C.

6.2 The associate instructor differs from the course I/C in that the associate instructor assumes a supportive and assisting role to the course I/C in a specific BLS/EMT training program.

7. Practical Skills Instructor

7.1 *Qualifications*—The practical skills instructor candidate:

7.1.1 Should be at least a high school graduate or have a General Equivalency Diploma (GED),

7.1.2 Shall have pre-hospital care experience or approval by course I/C and course medical director, or both, and

7.1.3 Shall demonstrate to the satisfaction of the course I/C and course medical director current competence in and knowledge of the skill(s) being taught.

7.2 *Education/Training/Experience*—The practical skills instructor candidate shall:

7.2.1 Demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills objectives contained in lessons 1, 8, and 9 of the DOT Instructor Curriculum,⁵

7.2.2 Successfully complete a supervised probationary teaching experience for the skill(s) to be taught to the satisfaction of the appropriate agency,

7.2.3 Be certified as a CPR instructor according to the current standards as promulgated by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross, if CPR is among the skills to be taught, and

7.2.4 Become familiar with appropriate record keeping processes for students, sponsoring agency, or state EMS agency, or both.

7.3 *Scope of Authority*—The practical skills instructor shall have authority to:

7.3.1 Conduct practical skills sessions under the direction of the course I/C,

7.3.2 Verify successful achievement of course skill objectives, under the direction of the course I/C, and

7.3.3 Regulate student behavior within the scope of the practical skills training program under the institutional guidelines for due process.

7.4 *Responsibilities*—Under the direction of the course I/C, the practical skills instructor:

7.4.1 Should provide a positive role model by:

7.4.1.1 Maintaining personal mental and physical health,

7.4.1.2 Maintaining appropriate personal hygiene and appearance,

7.4.1.3 Actively pursuing personal and professional development,

7.4.1.4 Recognizing personal limitations and seeking assistance when appropriate,

7.4.1.5 Demonstrating competent, respectful, and caring interactions with students, co-workers, and patients at all times, and

7.4.1.6 Demonstrating professional behavior in the classroom or in the presence of students.

7.4.2 Shall ensure a safe and effective learning environment,

7.4.3 Shall provide consistent and competent training assistance to students,

7.4.4 Shall maintain appropriate student skills training records,

7.4.5 Shall teach the skills contained in the curriculum as adopted and defined by the appropriate certifying agency,

7.4.6 Shall consistently monitor students' progress toward established course skill objectives and provide appropriate feedback to the course I/C and the students within guidelines of the appropriate certifying agency,

7.4.7 Shall evaluate, according to the curriculum, and differentiate among students for safe and effective performance,

7.4.8 Shall uphold state and national clinical standards for practice at the level being taught,

7.4.9 Shall ensure that practical skills training equipment is maintained in a safe and acceptable operating condition, and

7.4.10 Shall protect the privacy of students and the confidentiality of training course records as required by applicable laws and standards.

7.5 *Evaluation*—The evaluation by the course I/C of a practical skills instructor shall include:

7.5.1 Analysis of student practical skills outcomes,

7.5.2 Classroom observation of the practical skills instructor, and

7.5.3 Review of students' course evaluations.

7.6 *Maintenance of Competency*—In order to maintain competency, the practical skills instructor shall:

7.6.1 Maintain, to the satisfaction of the course I/C and course medical director, current competence in and knowledge of the skill(s) being taught.

7.6.2 Teach the skills contained in a BLS/EMT related curriculum.

8. Clinical/Field Preceptor

8.1 *Qualifications*—The clinical/field preceptor candidate shall:

8.1.1 Be certified in his/her area of practice,

8.1.2 Have experience in his/her area of expertise, and

8.1.3 Demonstrate to the satisfaction of the course I/C a willingness and competence to work with students to assist them in meeting pertinent course objectives in the setting in which the clinical/field preceptor will function.

8.2 *Education/Training/Experience*—The clinical/field preceptor shall complete an orientation that includes:

8.2.1 Roles and responsibilities of the BLS/EMT,

8.2.2 Roles and responsibilities of the clinical/field preceptor, and

8.2.3 Guidelines for carrying out, meeting or accomplishing assigned responsibilities and duties.

8.3 *Scope of Authority*—The clinical/field preceptor shall have authority to:

8.3.1 Supervise student activities in the clinical/field setting as determined by stated course objectives,

8.3.2 Document student performance in the clinical/field setting, and

8.3.3 Regulate student behavior within the scope of the clinical/field setting under the institutional guidelines for due process.

8.4 *Responsibilities*—Under the direction of the course I/C, the clinical/field preceptor:

8.4.1 Should provide a positive role model,

8.4.2 Shall provide a safe and effective learning environment,

8.4.3 Shall provide consistent and competent supervision to students,

8.4.4 Shall maintain appropriate training records,

8.4.5 Shall assist the students in meeting the clinical/field skills objectives,

8.4.6 Shall consistently monitor students and provide appropriate feedback to the course I/C and the students,

8.4.7 Shall assess students for safe and effective performance, and

8.4.8 Shall protect the privacy of students and the confidentiality of training course records as required by applicable laws and standards.

8.5 *Evaluation*—The evaluation by the course I/C of a clinical/field preceptor in a BLS/EMT training program shall include:

8.5.1 Quality of training records,

8.5.2 Clinical/field observation of the preceptor, and

8.5.3 Review of students' clinical experience evaluations.

8.6 *Maintenance of Competency*—In order to maintain competency, the clinical/field preceptor shall:

8.6.1 Maintain certification in his/her area of practice, and

8.6.2 Maintain, to the satisfaction of the course I/C and course medical director, current competence in and knowledge of the areas precepted.

9. Keywords

9.1 basic life support; emergency medical services instructor; emergency medical technician; training programs

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