Intent

This policy is to establish the covered circumstances for which time extensions, additional attempts or other considerations that are a variance to established policies are considered for all initial certification pathways and recertification.

Scope

This policy applies to circumstances related to:

- Recertification dates, two-year cycle ending March 31 (EMT, AEMT, Paramedic) and September 30 (EMR).
- Time since initial course completion training, two-year eligibility period.
- Time since last continuing education course completion for Re-entry and State Licensed Entry, two-year eligibility period.
- Time since last successful computer-based examination result if results have expired, two-year period for all examination types.
- Additional attempts for certification examination at all levels.

Not in scope: Certification examination Authorization to Test (ATT) letter deadline to test modification. See separate policy.

Definitions

Designated Authorizing Agency – Agencies that authorize National Registry activities under the Designated Authorizing Agency policy outside the jurisdiction of State EMS Offices.

Extenuating Circumstances - any circumstance beyond the control of a candidate or provider and has an unforeseen impact on a deadline.

Policy

The National Registry has several requirements for which candidates or certificants occasionally request a variance to policies related to course eligibility deadlines, examination results, and maximum number of attempts allowed under the certification schemes. A variance is only granted for Extenuating Circumstances that significantly affect the consideration of the entire time period – not just the final portion of it (e.g., an emergency in the last week of a two-year eligibility period).

A variance request must be submitted prior to the designated deadline associated with the specific type of variance. Requests made after the expiration of the deadline will only be considered if circumstances prohibited prior notification.

This policy covers circumstances related to National Registry certification. Requests for variances related to proficiency evaluations or recertification for state licensure only (in states that use the National Registry database to track non-registered state-licensed personnel) will be forwarded to the State EMS Office for determination.

This policy does not allow for the following to be used as extenuating circumstances:

- Financial hardships
- Voluntary commitments. Examples include, but are not limited to, missionary trips, search and rescue groups
- Extended travel outside of the United States; examples include, but are not limited to, military spouses and non-government work trips.
- Examinations revoked due to policy violations.
- Leave of absence of any kind (e.g., personal leave, Worker's Compensation, etc.)

The following extenuating circumstances considered for variances under this policy include:

- Military or Federal Deployments: Military deployments that are in areas or conditions in which training, education, or testing cannot occur for a substantial period (more than one third of the applicable timeframe) with the submission of appropriate documentation and the confirmation of the Designated Authorizing Agency. The extension would begin on the day of return from deployment.
- Short Term Military or Federal Deployments: If a short-term deployment occurs within the last month of a recertification cycle, an extension may be granted to file the recertification application while training must have been accomplished within the regular cycle. This requires submission of appropriate documentation and the confirmation of the Designated Authorizing Agency. The extension would begin on the day of return from deployment.
- Direct contact from a state EMS office or Designated Authorizing Agency requesting a variance due to extenuating circumstances.
- Legal Requirements: Legal obligations or proceedings in which training or testing cannot occur for a substantial period (more than one third of the applicable timeframe;) with the submission of appropriate documentation and the confirmation of the State EMS Office or Designated Authorizing Agency. The extension would begin on the day that the legal obligation ended.
- Incapacitating health conditions that require extensive in-patient treatment, or other care, or rehabilitation in which training or testing cannot occur for a substantial period of time (more than one-third of the applicable timeframe) with the submission of confirming documentation of inability to train or test from the advanced care clinician or physician. Elective or preventative procedures do not qualify. The extension would begin on the day on which training or testing can resume. Extreme cases in which a candidate is unable to test in order to care for an immediate family member may qualify as a medical condition.

- National Registry Error: Errors or substantial delays by the National Registry which directly cause a significant delay in the ability to test. This circumstance requires a finding by the appropriate Director of Certification that (1) the error directly caused the delay and (2) the delay was substantially longer than communicated expectations or normal performance.
- Pearson Professional Assessments (Pearson) Error: Errors or substantial delays by Pearson which directly cause a significant delay in the ability to test. This circumstance requires a finding by designated staff that (1) the error directly caused the delay and (2) the delay was substantially longer than communicated expectations or normal performance.
- Interference with a Planned Examination: If the event that an examination is scheduled within the normal deadlines, and a circumstance covered by this policy (or the No Show Policy) suddenly occurs and prevents the candidate from attending that examination, an ATT extension of up to 90 days may be granted to allow an opportunity to schedule and attend an examination.
- Additional time or an examination attempt due to technical issues that prevent the completion of the examination and are not the fault of the candidate or certificant.
    - If technical difficulties affect an examination attempt at Recertification by Examination (RBE) within the final two weeks of the recertification period, late submissions of continuing education, in accordance with the Accepted Education & Documentation policy, may be considered for acceptance.

Determination

The Chief Assessment Officer or designated proxy determines eligibility for variances under this policy. Each case will be documented with the specifics of the variance granted and rationale. All requests are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Requesting a Policy Variance

If you believe you qualify for a policy variance, please send an email to support@nremt.org for consideration.

Rationale

Because each time-based requirement is based upon a carefully developed rationale, application of policy requires that variances be rare and consistent with National Registry goals, mission, and the respective National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) and International Organization for Standardization (ISO) accreditation standards.

Related Policies and Procedures

Policy Variance Procedure
Timeline for Valid Examination Results

Certification Schemes – EMR, EMT, AEMT, NRP
Examination Retesting Policy
Live Remote Proctored Examinations Policy

References

Institute for Credentialing Excellence (I.C.E.) NCCA Standards
ISO 17024-2012

Document History

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