

**Policy Statement:**

Each EMS agency must have a process for screening the criminal conviction histories of its members, employees, and other sponsored personnel. This process must include background checks on the Vermont Adult Abuse Registry and the Vermont Child Protection Registry and the Vermont Crime Information Center (VCIC) database. Agencies based in another state must check their home state crime history database or the National Crime Information Center database.

Prior to a person's enrollment in an EMS course leading to a state certification or license, the person's primary EMS agency must screen the person's background as described above and disclose their findings to the Vermont Department of Health's EMS Office (the Department).

**Authority:**

EMS Rule 4.5.2.4

EMS Rule 5.4.3.4

**Procedure:**

No more than three (3) months prior to a person's enrollment in a course leading to state EMS certification or licensure, an EMS agency must screen the potential student's background for a crime history and substantiated reports in the Vermont adult abuse and child protection registries.

All students enrolling in a course leading to state EMS certification or licensure must submit a *Course Enrollment Notification to EMS Office* application in LIGHTS, the Department's online licensing system. Upon submission, the application will be forwarded to the primary agency's Head of Service.

The Head of Service of the person's primary agency must verify on the application that the person is affiliated with the agency and attest that the required background checks were completed within the previous three (3) months. If the background checks reveal a crime history or substantiated report of abuse, the Head of Service will report the findings to the Department on the application.

If a prospective student is not affiliated with a Vermont-licensed EMS agency at the time of enrollment, the Department will conduct the background checks.

The Agency of Human Services requires the applicant to grant permission to check the Adult Abuse Registry and the Child Protection Registry. If the student refuses to give permission for these background checks, the checks may not be conducted. The student's record on the course roster in the LIGHTS system will reflect that they did not permit the background checks, and they will be directed to ask the course instructor whether background checks are a requirement for course enrollment. They will also be informed that they will not be eligible for an EMS license until the background checks are completed.

**Rationale:**

A person participating in a clinical internship as part of an EMS course is authorized to provide patient care without a license or certification, so it is incumbent upon the person's primary EMS agency and the course instructor to ensure their criminal involvements and reports of abuse against vulnerable populations are discovered and reported to the Department.

Failure to adequately assess a student's potential risk factors erodes the public's trust and diminishes the system's ability to deliver safe, effective emergency medical care.

**Effective Date: June 1, 2023**