

Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician Course Description

Overview

The month-long Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician (WEMT) course is a nationally recognized program that trains participants to respond to emergencies in urban, rural, disaster, and wilderness environments. Our evidence-informed wilderness medicine curriculum emphasizes skills and information that are practical, accurate and relevant. Our passionate, skilled staff delivers the curriculum through a balance of scenarios, skills practice, and focused lectures that will prepare you to respond to emergencies with newfound confidence. The integrated wilderness and urban medicine approach provides you with opportunities to utilize your skills in multiple applications.

Backcountry topics include, but are not limited to, wound and infection management, reducing dislocations, improvised splinting techniques, long-term patient management, up-to-date information on environmental emergencies, and expedition medications. At every opportunity, your WEMT experience is enriched by scenarios in varied environments—nighttime exercises, extended care scenarios, and multiple-casualty incidents—all enhanced by theatrical moulage to emulate reality. If local health restrictions allow, you will spend time in the emergency room of a regional hospital assisting the Emergency Department staff and providing care to real patients.

The WEMT curriculum surpasses all requirements for EMT certification with the National Registry of EMTs (NREMT). By successfully completing the practical and written exams, you will receive a WEMT certification and meet the eligibility requirements to take the NREMT certification exam. Depending on state-to-state reciprocity protocols, graduates may also sit for their home state exam. WEMT graduates who complete all state requirements may be eligible to work professionally as ambulance, hospital, and backcountry EMTs. For additional information about reciprocity between the NREMT and individual states, contact your [State EMS office](#).

The WEMT program is NOT a search and rescue, technical rescue, or survival course. The program's focus is emergency medical care.

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Prerequisites

It is critical that you submit copies of these documents via email to wilderness_medicine_wemt@nols.edu as soon as possible after registering for a WEMT course. All prerequisites are due by the 45-day payment deadline. Failure to submit these prerequisites will result in forfeiting your place on the course.

Course Statement

This form provides NOLS Wilderness Medicine with important information regarding your dietary restrictions and travel arrangements.

Professional Level CPR Certification

Your Healthcare Provider/Professional Rescuer CPR certification must be current for the duration of the WEMT course. Acceptable CPR courses should include the following components: Adult, Child and Infant CPR; foreign body airway obstruction; AED; bag-valve mask; and testing (both written and practical). CPR certifications with titles other than Healthcare Provider or Professional Rescuer are not inclusive of these skills and will not meet the prerequisite.

Unacceptable cards include, but are not limited to: Heartsaver or Heartsaver Plus CPR, Infant and Child CPR, Daycare or Babysitting CPR, Community CPR, and Adult CPR. The CPR card issued with NOLS Wilderness Medicine courses **DOES NOT** meet the CPR prerequisite.

Here are some links to help you find a course that will meet our requirements:

[American Heart Association - Basic Life Support](#) (You will need to take the BLS Instructor-led training or blended classroom/online training)

[American Red Cross - Basic Life Support for HealthCare Providers](#) (Classroom or blended classroom/simulation learning)

Criminal Background Check

You may use an online service to obtain a criminal background check. Your background check must go back 7 years, cover state and federal jurisdictions, and be issued within 6 months of the WEMT course end date. Costs range from \$12.50 to \$70 depending on location and personal background. We recommend using [BackgroundChecks.com](https://www.backgroundchecks.com) (*choose Personal, National Criminal Background Check*). Students whose criminal background check does not meet our clinical partners' requirements will be ineligible to

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attend the course. Students should also be familiar with the [NREMT's Criminal Conviction Policy](#).

Drug Screen

You must submit the results of a negative 10-panel drug screen, either via urine or blood sample, dated within 6 months of the WEMT course start date. *We highly recommend* you find a drug screening facility near you through [Request A Test](#) (*choose the 10 Panel Urine with Expanded Opiates*). If you decide to go through another facility, please call the Wilderness Medicine office (866) 831-9001.

You must be tested for, and submit results that list, all of the following drugs. No exceptions or substitutions.

Print and bring this list with you to the drug screening facility to ensure you are tested for all 10 drugs:

- Marijuana Metabolite
- Cocaine Metabolite
- Opiates
- Phencyclidine
- Amphetamines
- Barbiturates
- Benzodiazepines
- Methadone
- Propoxyphene
- Methaqualone

Students who fail to submit results that list all 10 panels or results that are negative dilute will be required to provide a valid test. Students who fail to do this will be ineligible to attend the course.

Results from TB/PPd (Tuberculosis) Test

Your TB/PPd test must be completed within the 6 months prior to the WEMT course completion date. If you routinely test positive on PPd skin tests, you must also submit a recent (within 6 months) chest x-ray radiology report. Resources for obtaining PPd testing include public health offices, family practice offices, pharmacies, or walk-in clinics.

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Verification of Hepatitis B Vaccination

Contact with patients' blood or other body fluids may take place during clinical rotations. It is recommended that you begin a Hepatitis B immunization program. This is available through your personal physician, walk-in clinics, public health clinics or your State Bureau of Public Health; prices may vary. You must submit documentation of the completed three-part Hepatitis B vaccination series or titers showing immunity.

Verification of Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) Vaccination

You must submit documentation of a two-dose MMR vaccine or titers showing immunity.

Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (Tdap) Shot

You must submit documentation of a tetanus shot within the past 10 years. If you are obtaining an initial or booster shot for this course, we recommend you get a combined Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (Tdap) shot.

Chickenpox

You must submit documentation of a chickenpox (varicella) vaccination, history of the disease, or titers showing immunity.

Flu Shot

A current flu shot is required for courses in session between October and March. This includes courses that end in October and begin in March. It is recommended for all other courses. If you choose not to get a flu shot, you will be required to wear a mask and gloves during your clinical rotations.

COVID-19 in the NOLS Wilderness Medicine Classroom

To help mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in our classrooms, NOLS has instituted a set of policies regarding the use of personal protective equipment (masks, gloves, etc) and hygiene practices that all students and staff must follow. [These policies can be read here.](#) Please review this document ahead of your course, as well as watch this short [video on COVID-19 precautions being taken in the NOLS Wilderness Medicine classroom.](#) Willful failure to comply with these practices could result in dismissal from your course.

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Student Clinical Experience

Per communication with local public health and clinical facilities, the clinical experience is temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

~~EMT students are required to attend clinical observations in designated clinical settings. NOLS Wilderness Medicine assigns students to clinical rotations that take place on one or more weekends during the course. Students must keep their weekends available for the duration for the course to complete the necessary observation hours for EMT certification. Please remember you are a guest at the clinical facility, observing patients who expect a certain standard of professionalism. You are expected to demonstrate mature, professional dress, hygiene, and behavior during their clinical rotations.~~

Clinical dress requirements are as follows:

- ~~● White shirt with collar (polo or button-down). No T-shirts.~~
- ~~● Dark blue or black pants (slacks or cargo, no jeans).~~
- ~~● Black shoes or boots. No sandals, sneakers, or hiking boots.~~
- ~~● All clothes clean and pressed.~~
- ~~● Watch: analog with second hand or digital with second reference.~~
- ~~● **Students may not have facial hair that would interfere with the proper use of an N95 or similar respirator mask. The CDC provides these [guidelines](#).**~~

Transportation for Clinical Rotations

~~Students are responsible for their own transportation to clinical rotations. Transportation is not provided and public transportation is not available. Those without transportation are expected to carpool to the clinical sites with fellow students. Students may choose to spend the night near the clinical site, in which case it is recommended that students plan on a shared hotel expense.~~

Wilderness Medicine and EMT Texts

The urban EMT textbook for the course is *Emergency Care*, 13th edition, by Limmer and O'Keefe. **You must purchase this book in paper or electronic form from the retailer of your choice.** You should begin reading your EMT textbook immediately upon receipt.

The wilderness medicine textbooks for the course are *NOLS Wilderness Medicine* by Tod Schimelpfenig and the *Wilderness Medicine Handbook* by NOLS Wilderness Medicine. The wilderness medicine texts are provided to you on course.

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Testing and Exams

Multiple-choice quizzes and exams are integrated throughout the WEMT course. Successful completion of the course is dependent upon practical and written exam performance. The multiple-choice exams are challenging and long; seriously consider practicing prior to your arrival at the course. Public libraries are good places to find resources for general testing practice. You will receive access to an online platform to support the WEMT course the week before your course begins. This platform has many practice tests you may take to improve your testing skills.

Upon successful completion of the course, students will take the State Practical Exam. Upon successful completion of the practical exam, students are eligible to take the National Registry EMT (NREMT) computer-based exam, which is sometimes available at an off-site location on the last morning of the course. There is an additional fee to take the NREMT exam.

Please come prepared to pay the testing fee by the second week of your course. You can submit this fee to the NREMT by check or online via credit card. We find that online payment is the quickest and most reliable way to ensure that you are eligible for testing at the end of your course. Your instructors will provide information regarding the online payment process. Visit the NREMT website for more information regarding [computer-based testing](#).

Academic Testing Accommodations

Students with documented learning disabilities seeking accommodations for written testing need to submit documentation immediately to the NREMT in order to secure accommodations for their computer-based NREMT exam. Students seeking testing accommodations are required to take their computer-based test at a Pearson VUE Professional Testing Center near their home. The Pearson VUE Testing Center Accommodations Coordinator will assist individuals in finding a center convenient to them.

Visit the NREMT website and follow the checklist to apply for [accommodations](#). Notify the WEMT Admissions Officer that you are seeking accommodations: (866) 831-9001 or wilderness_medicine_wemt@nols.edu.

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Certification

Successful completion of the course and all testing provides Wilderness EMT certification from NOLS Wilderness Medicine. If eligible, you will receive a NOLS Wilderness Medicine WEMT certificate of completion prior to your departure. National Registry EMT certification is dependent on passing the NREMT test after the course. NREMT cards are mailed directly from the National Registry of EMTs' office.

For More Information

Questions? Contact NOLS Wilderness Medicine via phone 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. MST Monday–Friday at (307)-335-2362 or via email at wilderness_medicine_wemt@nols.edu.



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WEMT READING ASSIGNMENTS

Below is the reading list for your WEMT course. NOLS Wilderness Medicine **strongly recommends** that each student begin reading immediately. The WEMT course is a 200-hour, intensive course, which requires commitment to, and use of good study skills. While we are committed to providing an exceptional course that focuses on developing confident field skills, test-taking skills are an equal part of the curriculum. This can only be accomplished through a dedication to study, reading, and practice. (As all will note, reading assignments are heavy during the first half of the course—read **as much** as you can prior to arrival!)

We **strongly recommend** that each participant initiate this process prior to arrival at class.

- Complete **at least** the preparatory and days 1 – 5 reading assignments prior to arrival. Many graduates recommend reading more.
- Use the pre-chapter objectives and post-chapter assessments as study tools.
- Practice multiple-choice test skills prior to arrival at class.
- You will receive access to an **online platform** with **practice quizzes** ten days before the course starts. Begin taking practice quizzes early! Practice multiple-choice test skills prior to arrival at class!
- The chapters represent the material covered on each day, not the evening homework.
- Complete the COVID assignment on the online platform prior to arrival.

Text: *Emergency Care*, 13th Edition

Preparatory: Ch. 1, 2, 5, 6, 8

Day	1	<u>Ch. 1, 11, 12, 13</u>
	2	<u>Ch. 9, 10, 13, 14, 15, 25</u>
	3	<u>Ch. 7, 9, 10, 25, 27, App B</u>
	4	<u>Ch. 3, 29</u>
	5	<u>Ch. 26, 29</u>
	6	<u>Ch. 28</u>
	7	<u>Ch. 31</u>
	8	<u>Ch. 31</u>
	9	<u>Ch. 16, 18, 19, 22, 37, 38</u>
	10	<u>Ch. 17, 19, 21</u>
	11	<u>Ch. 2, 20, 21, 23</u>
	12	<u>Ch. 4, 26, 27, 32</u>
	13	<u>Ch. 32, 34</u>
	14	<u>Ch. 32, 33</u>
	15	<u>Ch. 36, 37 (Weekend: Ch. 24, 30, 35, 39)</u>
	16	<u>Ch. 36, 37</u>

Additional Course Documents

Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician

Please review these documents thoroughly they describe the policies, procedures and expectations for EMTs. Failure to provide these signed documents will result in not being able to participate in the course. You must be at least 18 years old at the course start date.

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**NOLS WILDERNESS MEDICINE
STUDENTS POLICIES & PROCEDURES
WILDERNESS EMT**

Students enrolling in an EMT course must understand, meet, and complete certain requirements for successful completion of the course:

ATTENDANCE: All students are required to attend all class sessions and all field exercises. No more than 16 hours of excused absence may be missed from the course material. Review of materials/exams missed is the responsibility of the student. Repeated tardiness constitutes unexcused absence. Absence, which is either unexcused or exceeds 16 hours of excused absence, is grounds for dismissal from the course with no refunds of tuition or course costs.

COURSE COMPLETION: EMT students must successfully complete all of the criteria of EMT course completion in order to be eligible to take the State EMS Department approved practical exam. Students must pass the practical exam to be eligible for the National Registry written exam. The EMT student must demonstrate proficiency in the following areas:

Written Testing:

- ◆ Quizzes and Exams will be administered throughout the course.
- ◆ Minimum academic requirement for successful course completion is 80% cumulative on all of the above quizzes and exams.
- ◆ Students who do not have a cumulative score of 80% will not have successfully fulfilled course completion criteria and will not be eligible for practical testing or NREMT written testing.

Skills:

- ◆ Hands-on skills check-offs will occur at various times during the course (skills sheets are provided for student practices). It is the student's responsibility to assure all final skills check-offs have been done in order to satisfy course completion requirements. Students must demonstrate adequate proficiency in all required skills.
- ◆ Students who have not obtained final skills check-offs will not have successfully fulfilled course completion criteria.

Clinical Rotation:

- ◆ Students are required to complete course-approved emergency medicine clinical rotations. Multiple shifts may be required to accommodate state requirements.
- ◆ Documentation of clinical experience must be provided by each student, to include the Clinical Verification Form and State EMS-mandated patient reports.
- ◆ Students who have not successfully fulfilled the clinical requirements will not have successfully fulfilled course completion criteria.

Self-Withdrawal:

- ◆ Any student choosing to withdraw from the course prior to course completion accepts that no refunds of tuition will be awarded. NOLS will consider exceptions on a case by case basis.

CONDUCT:

Professional conduct is required of all EMT students at all times. Inappropriate comments regarding a person's race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, genetics information, disability or veteran status will not be tolerated and may result in dismissal from the course without refund of tuition or course costs. Communication of a threatening nature or the use of obscene or profane language will not be tolerated.

As an EMT, you will often be the first healthcare professional to assess and treat the patient. You will be required to work with a variety of other healthcare professionals in both pre-hospital and hospital settings. Part of your training is learning to interact with both patients and other healthcare providers in a professional manner. As an EMT student, you will be expected:

- To make sure that patient care is given a high priority, but not at the risk of your own safety, or the safety of others.
 - To participate fully in all aspects of the course. This includes classroom lectures, practical sessions, scenario-based exercises, facility and classroom clean-ups and kitchen duties as defined by the caterer.
 - To participate fully in NOLS Wilderness Medicine’s strategies to decrease the risk of infectious disease spread in our classrooms.
 - To adhere to the rules and regulations of the program and facilities:
 - No storage or consumption of alcohol or drugs in or near the lodging or classroom facilities. No use of alcohol within 12 hours of a course related activity.
 - Tobacco, e-cigarette, vaping or nicotine use will only be allowed in designated areas.
 - Quiet hours respected after 10:00pm and before 7:00am in the lodging facility.
 - Respectful use and maintenance of all equipment provided.
 - To maintain a professional appearance and manner at all times. This includes maintaining good personal hygiene throughout the course and at clinical rotations, wearing appropriate clothing and PPE for classroom and clinical situations, and keeping hair and beards clean and neatly contained.
 - To treat patients (both real and simulated), instructors, co-workers and other students with respect.
 - To maintain patient confidentiality when discussing the particulars of patient interactions during clinical rotations.
 - To demonstrate commitment to obtaining the knowledge and skills required to successfully complete the course.
- ◆ Any off-site conduct that affects a student’s performance at a course related activity may be grounds for immediate dismissal.
 - ◆ Any conduct deemed unprofessional by the instructional staff will result in immediate dismissal from the course with no refunds of tuition awarded.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION:

Any questions, problems, or unresolved issues should initially be taken up with the lead EMT Instructor or Program Supervisor. If not resolved, they may be taken up with the EMT Director.

COURSE RECORDS:

Course files and records are confidential and not available to anyone outside of the course staff, NOLS Wilderness Medicine administration, the student, and representatives of the State Health Dept. EMS Division and the National Registry of EMTs. Course files and records will be kept by NOLS Wilderness Medicine and will consist of: Student files (Registration forms, Risk and Release Forms, exam scores, skills check-off sheets, practical exam skills sheets, signed Policies and Procedures Forms, signed Functional Position Descriptions, Remediation Forms, additional State-Mandated forms as directed) and Course files (course rosters, fee rosters, attendance rosters, exam masters with keys).

My signature here attests that I have read and understand the preceding Policies and Procedures statement and that I agree to abide by such.

Student Name

Student Signature

Date

FUNCTIONAL POSITION DESCRIPTIONS FOR EMTS

QUALIFICATIONS

Each candidate must successfully complete the state approved training curriculum and achieve a passing score on practical and written certification examinations.

The candidate must be at least eighteen (18) years of age by the course start date.

The candidate must possess the ability to hear and respond to radio/telephone instructions; auscultate using a stethoscope; and respond to verbal prompts from an automated external defibrillator (AED).

The candidate must possess the ability to interpret written and oral instructions; must possess the ability to use good judgment and remain calm in high-stress situations; must possess the ability to be unaffected by loud noises and flashing lights; must possess the ability to function efficiently throughout the entire work shift without interruption.

The candidate must possess the ability to calculate weight and volume ratios; possess the ability to read English language manuals and road maps; accurately discern street signs and address numbers.

The candidate must possess the ability to interview patients, family members and bystanders; possess the ability to document, in writing, all relevant information in prescribed format in light of legal ramifications of such; possess the ability to converse in English with coworkers and hospital staff as to the status of patients.

The candidate must possess good manual dexterity with the ability to perform all tasks related to the delivery of the highest quality of patient care, must possess the ability to bend, stoop and crawl on uneven terrain; possess the ability to withstand varied environmental conditions such as extreme heat, cold and moisture; and must possess the ability to work in low light and confined spaces.

COMPETENCY AREAS

EMT

The candidate must demonstrate competency assessing a patient, handle emergencies utilizing Basic Life Support equipment, possess the ability to perform CPR, control hemorrhage, provide non-invasive treatment for inadequate tissue perfusion, splinting and spinal immobilization, use of a semi-automatic defibrillator, possess the ability to administer self-assisted medications, manage environmental emergencies, and emergency childbirth.

Description of Tasks

Receive call from dispatcher, responds verbally to emergency calls, read maps, may drive vehicle to emergency site, uses most expeditious route, and observes traffic ordinances and regulations.

Determines nature and extent of illness or injury, takes pulse, blood pressure, visually observes changes in skin color, makes determination regarding patient status, establishes priority for emergency care, renders appropriate emergency care (based on competency level), may administer intravenous drugs or fluid replacement if certified and as directed by medical control. May use equipment (based on competency level and certification) such as, but not limited to, defibrillator, electrocardiograph, perform endotracheal intubation to open airways and ventilate patient, applies, inflates pneumatic anti-shock garment as per protocol, and administers medications as authorized.

Assists in lifting, carrying and transporting patient to ambulance and on to a medical facility. Reassures patients and bystanders, avoids mishandling patient(s) and undo haste, searches for medical identification emblem to aid in care. Extricates patient(s) from entrapment, assesses extent of injury, uses prescribed techniques and appliances, radios dispatcher for additional assistance or services, provides light rescue service, provide additional emergency care following established protocols.

Complies with regulations in handling deceased, notifies authorities, arranges for protection of property and evidence at scene. Determines appropriate facility to which patient will be transported, reports nature and extent of injuries or illness to that facility, asks for direction from medical control or emergency department. Identifies diagnostic signs that require communication with medical facility.

Assists in removing patient(s) from ambulance and into emergency facility. Reports verbally and in writing observations about and care of patient at the scene and en route to medical facility, provide assistance to emergency staff as required.

Replaces supplies, send used supplies for sterilization or appropriate disposal, checks all equipment for future readiness, maintains emergency vehicle in operable condition, ensures vehicle cleanliness and orderliness of equipment and supplies, decontaminates vehicle interior, determines vehicle readiness by checking all oil, gas, water in battery and radiator, and tire pressure, and maintains familiarity with all specialized equipment.

CERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY

Each student and/or candidate for EMT certification must sign one (1) of the two (2) following statements:

I have read and understand the Functional Job Description of an EMT. I have no conditions which would preclude me from safely and effectively performing all the functions of the level of EMT for which I am seeking certification.

Candidate Name (Please print)

Signature

Date

OR

I have read and understand the Functional Job Description of an EMT. I will be submitting a request for an accommodation for the EMT Certification Examination(s). I understand that if I am enrolled in a training course, I must contact the training agency and the National Registry of EMTs as soon as possible for this purpose.

Candidate Name (please print)

Signature

Date