

Current Scope of Practice for Emergency Care Providers

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The Montana Board of Medical Examiners licenses the various levels of Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's) in accordance with Sections 50-6-201, -202 and -203, MCA. 50-6-201. However, under 50-6-201(1), all EMT types are limited to providing care in an emergency settings only and are not authorized to provide care for non-emergencies.

The Board recognizes four levels of licensure and various specialties/endorsements. These four are Emergency Medical Responder (EMR), Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT), and Paramedic. EMR's and EMT's that have no specialty endorsements are authorized to practice under the Board. Practice by AEMT's, Paramedics, and any specialty endorsements for EMR and EMT must be assigned to a local medical director providing medical direction and supervision at the local community level.

The scope of practice for the licensure levels is determined by the Board. The Board adopted the National Standard Curriculum developed by consensus from the EMS profession and made available from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Office of EMS. In addition, the Board develops and approves state specific protocols by using input from the EMS Medical Director's committee of the Board.

The following describes the four levels with specifics:

Emergency Medical Responder (EMR)

The Emergency Medical Responder's scope of practice includes simple skills focused on lifesaving interventions for critical patients. Typically, the EMR renders on-scene emergency care while awaiting additional EMS response and may serve as part of the transporting crew, but not as the primary care giver. The EMR's scope of practice includes simple, non-invasive interventions to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with acute out-of-hospital medical and traumatic emergencies. After initiating care, the EMR transfers care to higher level personnel. The EMR serves as part of an EMS response system that ensures a progressive increase in the level of assessment and care.

Psychomotor Skills:

- Airway and Breathing
 - Insertion of airway adjuncts intended to go into the oropharynx
 - Use of positive pressure ventilation devices such as the bag-valve-mask
 - Suction of the upper airway
 - Supplemental oxygen therapy
- Pharmacological interventions

Use of unit dose auto-injectors for the administration of life saving medications intended for self or peer rescue in hazardous materials situations (MARK I, etc.)

- Medical/Cardiac Care
 - Use of an automated external defibrillator
- Trauma Care
 - Stabilization of suspected cervical spine injuries (lying immobilization)
 - Stabilization of extremity fractures
 - Bleeding control
 - Emergency moves

Specialties (endorsements) available for EMR Montana licensed individuals:

MONITORING: allows these individuals to operate a pulse-oximeter

NALOXONE: allows these individuals to administer Narcan to suspected overdose

Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)

The Emergency Medical Technician's scope of practice includes basic skills focused on the acute management and transportation of critical and emergent patients. This may occur at an emergency scene until transportation resources arrive, from an emergency scene to a health care facility, between health care facilities, or in other health care settings. A major difference between the EMR and the EMT is the knowledge and skills necessary to provide medical transportation of emergency patients. In addition to emergency response, EMT's often perform medical transport services of patients requiring care within their scope of practice.

Psychomotor Skills in addition to EMR:

- Airway and Breathing
 - Insertion of airway adjuncts intended to go into the oropharynx or nasopharynx
 - Use of positive pressure ventilation devices such as manually triggered ventilators and automatic transport ventilators
- Pharmacological Interventions
 - Assist patients in taking their own prescribed medications
 - Administration of the following over-the-counter medications with appropriate medical oversight:
 - Oral glucose for suspected hypoglycemia
 - Aspirin for chest pain of suspected ischemic origin
- Trauma Care
 - Application and inflation of the pneumatic anti-shock garment (PASG) for fracture stabilization

Specialties (endorsements) available for EMT Montana licensed individuals:

MEDICATIONS: Allows individuals to carry and administer:

- Epinephrine (auto injector or 1 ml vial-adult only)
- Nitroglycerin (tablet or spray)

Albuterol, Isoetharine, Metaproteranol, etc. (inhaler & nebulizer)

Glucagon

Oral Glucose

Aspirin

Benadryl (PO)

Flu Vaccine

Morphine (auto Injector 5 mg/10mg)

Solu Cortef, Solu-Medrol or Decadron (IM/IV/IO)

Narcan

IV/IO INITIATION: Allows individuals to initiate and maintain a peripheral IV/IO site and infuse “clear” fluids.

IV/IO MAINTENANCE: Allows individuals to only maintain a previously started peripheral IV/IO site and monitor “clear” fluids.

AIRWAY: Allows individuals to utilize a KING airway

NALOXONE: allows these individuals to administer Narcan to suspected overdose

Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT)

The Advanced Emergency Medical Technician’s scope of practice includes basic and limited advanced skills focused on the acute management and transportation of critical and emergent patients. This may occur at an emergency scene until transportation resources arrive, from an emergency scene to a health care facility, between health care facilities, or in other health care settings. The AEMT’s scope of practice includes basic, limited advanced and pharmacological interventions to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with acute out-of-hospital medical and traumatic emergencies. The major difference between the AEMT and the EMT is the ability to perform limited advanced skills and provide pharmacological interventions to emergency patients. In addition to emergency response, AEMT’s often perform medical transport services of patients requiring care within their scope of practice.

Psychomotor Skills in addition to EMR and EMT:

- Airway and Breathing
 - Insertion of airways that are NOT intended to be placed into the trachea
 - Tracheobronchial suctioning of an already intubated patient
- Assessment
- Pharmacological Interventions
 - Establish and maintain peripheral intravenous access
 - Establish and maintain intraosseous access in a pediatric patient
 - Administer (non-medicated) intravenous fluid therapy
 - Administer sublingual nitroglycerine to a patient experiencing chest pain of suspected ischemic origin
 - Administer subcutaneous or intramuscular epinephrine to a patient in anaphylaxis
 - Administer glucagon to a hypoglycemic patient
 - Administer intravenous D50 to a hypoglycemic patient

Administer inhaled beta agonists to a patient experiencing difficulty breathing and wheezing

Administer a narcotic antagonist to a patient suspected of narcotic overdose

Administer nitrous oxide for pain relief

Specialties (endorsements) available for AEMT Montana licensed individuals:

MEDICATIONS: Allows individuals to carry and administer:

Benadryl (PO)

Flu Vaccine

Morphine (auto Injector 5 mg/10mg)

Solu Cortef, Solu-Medrol or Decadron (IM/IV/IO)

I-99: This individual may initiate first line cardiac medications for resuscitation purposes, there are very few of these endorsed individuals in Montana.

Paramedic

The Paramedic's scope of practice includes basic and advanced skills focused on the acute management and transportation of the broad range of patients who access the emergency medical system. This may occur at an emergency scene until transportation resources arrive, from an emergency scene to a health care facility, between health care facilities, or in other health care settings. The Paramedic's scope of practice includes invasive and pharmacological interventions to reduce the morbidity and mortality associated with acute out-of-hospital medical and traumatic emergencies. The major difference between the Paramedic and the AEMT is the ability to perform a broader range of advanced skills. In addition to emergency response, Paramedics often perform medical transport services of patients requiring care within their scope of practice.

Psychomotor Skills in addition to EMR, EMT and AEMT:

- Airway and Breathing
 - Perform endotracheal intubation
 - Perform percutaneous cricothyrotomy
 - Decompress the pleural space
 - Perform gastric decompression
- Pharmacological Interventions
 - Insert an intraosseous cannula
 - Enteral and parenteral administration of approved prescription medications
 - Access indwelling catheters and implanted central IV ports for fluid and medication administration
 - Administer medications by IV infusion
 - Maintain an infusion of blood or blood products
- Medical/Cardiac Care
 - Perform cardioversion, manual defibrillation, and transcutaneous pacing

Specialties (endorsements) available for Montana licensed individuals:

CRITICAL CARE: Allows individuals to effectively and safely manage critically ill or injured patients during transfer between facilities under the oversight of a physician.