

EMT and Paramedic Programs

800 W. Central Ave. (EMS Offices in Behavioral Health Center)
Arlington Heights, IL 60005
Phone: 847-618-4482 | Fax: 847-618-4489

EMS and the ADA Essential job functions of an EMS Clinician

An EMS clinician must be a confident leader who can accept the challenges and high degree of responsibility entailed within their scope of practice. They must provide consistent, compassionate and evidence-guided EMS care for everyone and be prepared for any situation: big or small, planned or unplanned, day-to-day or major events (EMS Agenda 2050). This requires excellent knowledge, skills, attitudes, judgment and the ability to rapidly process information, prioritize decisions and act quickly in the best interest of a patient and their team members.

They must be self-disciplined, able to develop rapport, safely and effectively interview patients and bystanders unless impossible to do so based on altered mental status, and use communication aids, tools, or strategies unique to diverse multicultural groups, ages within those groups, as well as persons with a variety of disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). EMS personnel must be able to function independently at optimum levels in a non-structured environment that is constantly changing. They must be lifelong learners; have knowledge with deep understanding for their role; be complex thinkers; creative persons; active investigators; effective communicators; and reflective and self-directed practitioners with the ability to meet the physical, intellectual, psychomotor and affective requirements demanded by their level of licensure/certification. https://one.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/ems/EMT-P/disk_1%5B1%5D/Intro-C.pdf

Applicants to, and students in, the NCH EMT and Paramedic Programs affiliated with Harper College are considered on the basis of individual merit. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin, age, marital status, protected veteran status, or other protected classes under the law as long as the individual is otherwise qualified and able to competently perform the essential job functions and meets essential eligibility requirements for licensure at the time of application and throughout the program.

The Program is guided by Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Civil Rights Act of 1991; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 published under the United States Code at 20 U.S.C. §1681-§1688); the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990; the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008; and other federal laws or Illinois statutes which guarantee equal opportunity to qualified individuals and protected classes within our society.

Under the ADA, a public entity is prohibited from discriminating against qualified individuals with disabilities on the basis of disability in the granting of licenses or certification. A person is a "qualified individual with a disability" with respect to licensing or certification if they can meet the essential eligibility requirements for receiving the license or certification (see {35.104).

The phrase "essential eligibility requirements," is taken from the definitions in the regulations implementing section 504, so case law under section 504 is applicable to its interpretation. In *Southeastern Community College v. Davis*, 442 U.S. 397, the Supreme Court held that section 504 does not require an institution to "lower or effect substantial modifications of standards to accommodate a handicapped person," 442 U.S. at 413. Whether a particular job function requirement is "essential" is listed below. All EMS students and licensed clinicians must meet the qualifications within the functional job analysis. Further eligibility requirements for licensure in Illinois are listed in the EMS Systems Act and the Administrative Code.

Functional Job Analysis: Essential Skills, Abilities, and Aptitudes

Language and communication – verbal and reasoning skills are used extensively

- Communicate effectively (verbal, nonverbal and written) with English language fluency, range, accuracy, and clarity (speak smoothly and freely without the need for extended pauses to think about the grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation needed to communicate).
- Rapidly read, understand, analyze, apply and take action on work-related written messaging, assessments, policies, procedures, forms, publications, and regulations in a time-sensitive manner where there is no extended time or alternate accommodations for receiving, processing or deliberating

on the content. This also includes accurately reading and discerning street names through signage, map or GPS reading, and correctly distinguishing house numbers or business addresses.

- Write factual, accurate, complete, and timely reports and business correspondence that includes all relevant data. This may require a detailed narrative relative to extenuating circumstances or conditions that go beyond what is required on a prescribed form or electronic template.
- Use required communication equipment to concisely and accurately describe verbally to dispatcher, supervisor and on-line-medical control (OLMC) their impression of situation and/or patient's condition.

Reasoning skills

- Strong reasoning ability is required to deal with the complexity and variety of the situations in which an EMS clinician works. This includes providing quality emergency medical care requiring the use of logic and reason to rapidly define problems and arrive at solutions on a practical basis.
- Understand and appropriately apply an extensive variety of complex technical and instructional materials.
- Must think critically and strive for clarity, precision, accuracy, relevance, depth, breadth and logicalness.
- Must solve problems and reach reasonable, ethical, and legally defensible conclusions from abstract variables and information which may be imperfect, ambiguous, conflicting or disjointed.
- Make rapid and accurate independent judgments and assumptions and determine a plan of care within their scope of practice and in a timely manner; while following oral or written directives.

Mathematical skills | Numerical aptitude (Perform arithmetic operations quickly and accurately)

Practical application of fractions, percentages, ratio and proportion, and measurement. Must accurately add, subtract, multiply, and divide in English and metric units of measure using whole numbers, common fractions and decimals; estimate patient weights in kg; determine age from date of birth; calculate accurate drug doses based on the patient's weight, age, and other factors that warrant adjustment of volume; draw up the exact amount of drug for each patient from original packaging, and administer IVF/drugs over time intervals specified by SOP/OLMC including IV drip rates. A Paramedic is legally accountable and responsible for maintaining Class I Medications (opioids) and must keep accurate count and inventory of such items.

Physical demands and Psychomotor skills

- The job frequently involves very heavy lifting (>125 pounds, no maximum) and requires sufficient strength, stamina, endurance, conditioning, and motor coordination to stand, walk, run, stoop, crouch, crawl, squat, bend, kneel, climb, lift, pull, push, reach, balance, and carry patients/EMS supplies and equipment in all environments and perform all EMS-related skills and tasks.
- Mental alertness, strength, manual and finger dexterity, hand-eye coordination, and sensory perception sufficient to competently perform all EMS-related assessments and skills within their scope of practice with correct technique, sequencing, timing, and without coaching or critical error

Motor coordination (Ability to make a movement response quickly and accurately and coordinate eye-hand movements): Ability to move over rugged, uneven terrain, up and down stairs, in and out of tight spaces and vehicles (private and EMS-related)

Finger Dexterity (Ability to move fingers and manipulate small objects rapidly and quickly)

Manual Dexterity (Ability to move the hands easily and skillfully)

Sensory perception to detect texture, moisture, temperature, thickness, swelling, elasticity, contour, lumps/masses/deformities, consistency/density/tenseness, strength, resistance, size, vibration, pulsatility, fasciculations, crepitation and presence of pain.

- Competently operate all EMS and communications equipment and safely drive an ambulance
- Accurately type assignments and enter data into and retrieve data from an electronic device using System-approved software and meeting System standards of competency
- (Corrected) vision to 20/30 in at least one eye with near and far visual acuity and full visual fields, depth perception, and color discrimination for at least red, amber, and green to drive an EMS vehicle, assess scenes and patients, read small print such as, but not limited to, markings/labels/instructions on medications, medication delivery devices, prescription bottles, and EMS equipment, and the ability to differentiate normal and abnormal skin colors and the color of various body tissues/fluids
- (Amplified) hearing adequate to hear conversational speech, radio/phone communication, equipment alarms, percussion notes, and auscultate a BP, carotid bruit; lung, bowel, heart sounds; and fetal heart tones
- Perform at least two minutes of uninterrupted high quality manual CPR with two minute breaks between compression sets for at least 30 minutes

Psychological/Social/Emotional skills

- Must perform effectively under stress. Frequently experience mental stressors due to the physical and emotional demands of the job, high levels of responsibility, sleep deprivation and fatigue; irregular access to food, workplace culture and conflicts, dynamic working conditions, risks inherent in EMS duties; 24/7 shift work and unintentional overtime disrupting work-life balance; high call volumes; and changing policies, protocols, procedures, and competencies.
These require a survivor mentality, self-confidence, self-regulation; self-compassion; strong emotional and social intelligence; tolerance, and resilience to cope with stress, grief and loss, and the ability to maintain self-care while caring for others. Clinicians must use healthy coping strategies and effectively draw on a reservoir of strength that helps them appropriately respond to stress, hardship and frustration without dysfunctional anxiety, anger, illness, addictions, or harmful behaviors to self or others.
- Flexible and adaptable to meet job demands in a volatile, uncertain, complex, ambiguous, and changing environment.
- Intellectual humility; integrity; fair mindedness; courage; empathy; autonomy; optimism (confidence in reason); and perseverance
- Must deal well with people and function effectively as a team member and leader when required.
- A preference for working for the presumed good of people and to do no harm
- Must conform to all legal, ethical, and moral obligations inherent within their scope of practice.

Work environment

Considerable health and physical strength is necessary to perform the duties of a paramedic. Though safety measures are implemented whenever possible and a culture of safety is embraced, there remain numerous unavoidable aspects of a paramedic's job that may place the individual at risk of personal illness or injury.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Driving an emergency vehicle safely with and without using lights and sirens
- Exposure to hostile or combative patients and other individuals
- Response to violent scenes
- Response to incidents involving chemical, radiological, biologic, and explosive hazards
- Exposure to communicable diseases
- Danger from moving traffic at highway/roadway incidents
- Exposure to contaminated sharps and medical waste
- Performance of certain high-risk procedures in the delivery of patient care
- Noise level is moderate to high
- Temperatures vary from extreme cold to extreme heat
- Moisture level will vary from extremely dry to rain, snow and ice, and may require immersion in water

Abbreviations:

ALS: Advanced Life Support | BLS: Basic Life Support

CPR: Cardiopulmonary resuscitation

OLMC: On-line medical control

BP: Blood pressure

IVF: Intravenous fluids

SOP: Standard Operating Procedures

References:

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Functional job analysis. USDOT 1998 National Standard Paramedic Curriculum Functional Job Analysis. Accessed online: https://one.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/ems/EMT-P/disk_1%5B1%5D/Intro-C.pdf

EMS Agenda 2050: https://www.ems.gov/assets/EMS_Agenda_2050_Guide_to_the_Vision.pdf