



State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
PO BOX 360
TRENTON, N.J. 08625-0360
www.nj.gov/health

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

TAHESHA L. WAY
Lt. Governor

JEFFREY A. BROWN
Acting Commissioner

June 11, 2025

Jeffrey Santora

Re: Notice of Revocation of EMT Certification
EMS ID # 619319
Investigation Control # 24-0581

Dear Mr. Santora:

The New Jersey Department of Health (Department) is vested with the responsibility of carrying out the provisions of the Health Care Facilities Planning Act, N.J.S.A. 26:2H-1 to -26, which was enacted, in part, to ensure that all hospital and related health care services rendered in the State of New Jersey are of the highest quality. As defined at N.J.S.A. 26:2H-2(b), health care services include any pre-hospital care rendered by Basic Life Support (BLS) personnel. In addition, the Emergency Medical Services Act, N.J.S.A. 26:2K-7 to -74, authorizes the Department to certify Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). In furtherance of the objectives set forth in the statutes, the Department has adopted regulations that govern the training, certification and professional conduct of EMTs and EMT candidates. (See N.J.A.C. 8:40A-1.1 et seq.)

On November 12, 2024, the Department's Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) received notification that on November 10, 2024, while you were working as an EMT with University Hospital EMS (UHEMS), you may have caused physical injury to a patient who was under your care. Consistent with OEMS regulatory authority and policy, the OEMS opened an investigation in response to this notification.

Upon opening the investigation, the OEMS investigator confirmed that you are currently certified by the OEMS as an EMT and have been certified as an EMT since March 22, 2016. Through its investigation, the OEMS investigator reviewed and analyzed the incident report provided to OEMS by UHEMS, along with witness statements regarding the incident that took place on November 10, 2024, as well as conducted interviews with individuals who were present for the incident in question.

According to the report from UHEMS, you responded to a 9-1-1 call for assistance on November 10, 2024. While transporting the patient in the patient

compartment of the ambulance, the patient became agitated, combative, and uncooperative and attempted to exit the moving ambulance. In response, you struck the patient with a closed fist at least three (3) times, causing facial injuries to the patient. These allegations were corroborated by interviews conducted by OEMS investigators on January 22, 2025, with EMS personnel who responded to and directly witnessed the incident.

While the Department was completing its investigation, it determined that you posed an immediate and serious threat to public health, safety, and welfare. Accordingly, the Department summarily suspended your EMT certification on March 4, 2025.

The Department has now completed its investigation and has determined the following:

1. You and other crewmembers of UHEMS responded to a 9-1-1 emergency initially reported as an overdose, which was later determined to involve a patient experiencing a mental health crisis and requesting crisis intervention services;
2. Due to the patient's current mental state, you and other UHEMS crewmembers determined that allowing the patient to ambulate to the ambulance under their own power, with supervision, was the most appropriate option;
3. At some point during the transport the patient removed themselves from the four-point safety restraint system and attempted to exit the vehicle while the ambulance was still in motion;
4. The patient attempted to strike you with their hands while you were standing in front of the curb side door in the patient compartment of the ambulance;
5. To defend yourself you used a medical bag in the ambulance to create space between you and the patient, ultimately pushing them from the front of the patient care compartment to the back doors of the patient compartment;
6. When the patient reached the back doors of the patient compartment, they fell to the floor, and were subdued, however you then put down the medical bag, and then struck the patient three (3) times with a closed fist to their face;
7. At this point, another crewmember who was at the front of the patient compartment screamed for you to stop assaulting the patient, for which you then stopped, looked at that crewmember, then turned back towards the patient, who was still on the floor and struck them one (1) more time in the face with a closed fist.

All the aforementioned was corroborated through interviews conducted by investigators of the OEMS, with UHEMS crewmembers and leadership, who were directly involved with this incident.

On March 3, 2025, you were interviewed by OEMS investigators. During your interview, you stated to investigators, which was also corroborated by the interviews with other UHEMS crewmembers, that the patient did not have any facial trauma prior to your physical contact with them and that you were the only crewmember that had physical contact with the patient. You further stated to investigators that the patient experienced the facial trauma by you pushing them with the medical bag, but that you did not strike them with any part of your body. You also claimed that you were bitten and punched by the patient, prior to you pushing them, but that was not corroborated during any interview and you further confirmed that at no point did you advise UHEMS leadership that you yourself were assaulted. Additionally, you and the other crewmembers stated to investigators that you had blood on you, mostly on the dorsal aspect of your right hand.

Following the incident, you and all crewmembers involved were required to complete a Fast Track (Agency Incident Report). When asked by the OEMS investigators if you reviewed any other crewmember's Fast Track prior to it being submitted you stated you did not. However, video surveillance proved that you in fact guided crewmembers D.J. and L.P on what to write. When OEMS investigators asked you about this interaction, you denied assisting D.J. and L.P., however the interview with a crewmember corroborated that you in fact did attempt to tell them what to write in their Fast Track.

As you are aware, EMTs must make important medical assessments and carry out appropriate medical interventions in difficult field locations for patients young and old, combative, and docile. To effectively care for all patients, EMTs must exercise good judgment and treat patients with dignity and respect. They are entrusted by the public to be there in times of need. Indeed, striking D.S. multiple times with a closed fist is never an appropriate response to a situation and is deemed abuse of a patient, a prohibited act under N.J.A.C. 8:40A-10.2(b)(5). Additionally providing false information to willfully obstruct an investigation and attempting to coach others to provide false information is a prohibited act under N.J.A.C. 8:40a-10.2(b)17.

N.J.A.C. 8:40A-10.2(b) provides that "[t]he Commissioner, or his or her designee, may issue a formal written warning, impose a monetary penalty, place on probation, suspend, revoke and/or refuse to issue or renew the certification of any EMT or EMT-Instructor for violation of any of the rules set forth in this chapter. This includes, but is not limited to:

5. Abuse or abandonment of a patient;

17. Willful obstruction of any investigation and/or representative of the Department or other agency empowered to enforce the provisions of this chapter or any applicable law, rule and/or regulation;
24. Any other action deemed by the Department to pose a threat to the public health, safety or welfare."

Based upon the foregoing, the Department has determined that your EMT certification must be **revoked**. The above actions demonstrate that you not only have poor judgment and a lack of trustworthiness but that you pose a serious threat to vulnerable patients. Indeed, patient abuse is an offense that cannot be tolerated. Moreover, instructing fellow EMTs on how to document the events of the situation in an effort to conceal the truth, followed by willfully misrepresenting facts to OEMS investigators, demonstrates poor judgment and a lack of trustworthiness. **Therefore, it is the intention of the Department to revoke your EMT certification.**

Pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:14B-11 and N.J.A.C. 8:40A-10.3(b) you may request a hearing before the Office of Administrative Law to contest this Department's decision to revoke your EMT certification. Your request for a hearing on this matter must be submitted in writing and must be accompanied by a response to charges contained herein. **You are also reminded that your EMT certification remains under summary suspension and, as a result, you are PROHIBITED from acting in the capacity of an EMT.** If you wish to request a hearing, please include the control number **24-0581** in your correspondence, and forward your request to:

New Jersey Department of Health
Office of Legal & Regulatory Compliance
P.O. Box 360
Trenton, NJ 08625-0360

Failure to submit a written request for a hearing within 30 days from the date of this Notice shall be interpreted as an acceptance of this Department's decision to revoke your EMT certification, thereby negating any further appeal rights and converting this action into a final decision. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Investigator Daniel Kazar at (609) 633-7777 or via email at Daniel.Kazar@doh.nj.gov.

Sincerely,



Candace Gardner, Paramedic
Director
Office of Emergency Medical Services

c: Daniel Kazar, Chief, Education, Licensure, and Enforcement, OEMS
Zachary Raab, Investigator, OEMS
Kirsten Posselt, Investigator, OEMS
Marlin Bullock, Investigator, CIU
Donald Nelsen, Senior Planner, DFS
Jason Brady, Director, University Hospital EMS
David Stangreciak, Associate Director, University Hospital EMS
NREMT
File

SENT VIA REGULAR U.S. MAIL AND CERTIFIED MAIL #
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED