



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
PO BOX 360
TRENTON, N.J. 08625-0360

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

www.nj.gov/health

JUDITH M. PERSICILLI, RN, BSN, MA
Commissioner

December 23, 2022

Rashawn Covington

**Re: Notice of Revocation of EMT Certification
Investigation Control # 21-0425
EMS ID # 556636**

Dear Mr. Covington:

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 -27, 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), healthcare 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 -69, 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 June 22, 2021, the Department's Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) received a notification that you assaulted an individual while you were working as an EMT. Consistent with OEMS's regulatory authority and policy, an investigation was opened in response to this notification.

Upon opening the investigation, the OEMS investigator confirmed that you have been certified as an EMT since May 19, 2014. Additionally, the investigator confirmed that there was an ongoing external investigation into the above allegations. It was alleged that while you were working as an EMT you caused bodily injury to an employee at a healthcare facility where you were dropping off a patient for medical care. Specifically, it was alleged that you grabbed the collar of the victim's lab jacket, elevated her from the ground, and pushed her into the automatic doors behind her, which caused the victim to sustain injuries including a concussion, a contusion to the head and back and a strained neck muscle. OEMS investigators also obtained video surveillance from the healthcare facility capturing the incident. The video clearly shows you assaulting the victim.

On February 18, 2022, you were interviewed by OEMS investigators. The OEMS investigator asked you where you were currently working. In response, you stated that you were not working as an EMT. This was a false statement as OEMS investigators discovered that you were in fact working as an EMT at the time of your interview.

Recently, OEMS investigators learned that the external investigation into this matter concluded. OEMS has also completed its investigation. From its investigation, OEMS has determined that your EMT certification should be revoked.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:40A-10.2(b), the Department may revoke the certification of an EMT for violation of any of the Department's rules, including but not limited to:

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;
20. Making verbal and/or physical threats against any person while acting in the capacity of an EMT; and
24. Any other action deemed by the Department to pose a threat to the public health, safety or welfare.

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. In order to effectively care for all patients, EMTs must exercise good judgment to maintain the confidence of the public and treat patients and fellow medical providers with dignity and respect. It is imperative that EMTs be able to trust each other and to be relied on by police officers, firefighters, doctors, and other professionals. In short, EMTs must be trusted to care for all patients, co-workers, bystanders, and people in an appropriate and safe manner.

As stated above, video footage captured you acting in a threatening and assaultive manner toward an individual working at a healthcare facility while you were working as an EMT. Indeed, the video footage clearly shows you grabbing the collar of the victim's lab jacket, elevating her from the ground, and pushing her into the automatic doors behind her. Such behavior demonstrates that you not only have poor judgment and a lack of trustworthiness but that you pose a serious threat to public health, safety, and welfare. Indeed, causing or attempting to cause bodily injury to another or putting someone in fear of bodily harm while acting in the capacity of an EMT is never an appropriate reaction to any situation and constitutes a physical threat, in violation of N.J.A.C. 8:40A-10.2(b)(20).

Even more, an EMT who interferes with and obstructs an OEMS investigation is not only violating N.J.A.C. 8:40A-10.2(b)(17), which prohibits such behavior but also displays a lack of trustworthiness. In this matter, you provided false information to investigators, which obstructed and hindered their investigation and further placed into question your trustworthiness. **Therefore, the Department proposes to revoke your certification as an EMT.**

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 the charges contained herein. If you request a hearing, then the proposed revocation shall be held in abeyance until such time as the hearing has been concluded and a final decision rendered. If you wish to request a hearing, please include the control number **21-0425** on 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 forfeiting all appeal rights and converting this action into a final agency decision. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Daniel Kazar at (609) 633-7777 or Daniel.Kazar@doh.nj.gov.

Sincerely,

Candace Gardner, Paramedic
Acting Director
Office of Emergency Medical Services

c: Daniel Kazar, Chief, Education, Licensure, Enforcement, OEMS
Zachary Raab, Investigator, OEMS
NREMT
File

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