



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

KAITLAN BASTON, MD, MSc, DFASAM
Commissioner

March 4, 2025

Jeffrey Santora

Re: Notice of Summary Suspension 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. To date, the OEMS investigator has 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 ambulance's

patient compartment, 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.

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. Thus, EMTs must trust each other and be trusted by police officers, firefighters, doctors, and other professionals. In short, EMTs must be law-abiding and must be trusted to care for all patients in an appropriate, safe manner. Indeed, striking a patient is never an appropriate response to a situation and constitutes patient abuse, which is prohibited under N.J.A.C. 8:40A-10.2(b)(5).

Based upon the foregoing, the Department has determined that your EMT certification must be **summarily suspended**. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:40A-10.2(a), “[t]he Commissioner, or his or her designee, may summarily suspend a person’s EMT-Basic and/or EMT-Instructor certification when, in his or her opinion, the continued certification of that person poses an immediate or serious threat to the public health, safety or welfare.” Your above alleged actions demonstrate not only poor judgment and a lack of trustworthiness but also pose a threat to vulnerable patients. These alleged behaviors and actions are incompatible with the duties of an EMT, and the Department finds that your continued certification as an EMT constitutes an immediate and serious threat to public health, safety, and welfare. **Therefore, your certification as an EMT is immediately suspended. You may not, under any circumstances, act in the capacity of, or perform the duties of an EMT in New Jersey during this period of suspension.**

In the interim, the OEMS will continue to investigate this matter. After OEMS completes its investigation, you will be advised of what action, if any, the OEMS will take with respect to your EMT certification.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:40A-10.3(a)(1), you may appeal to the Commissioner of the Department of Health for emergency relief to contest this summary suspension. 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. Please include the control number **24-0581** 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 emergency relief within 30 days from the date of this Notice shall be interpreted as an acceptance of this Department's decision to summarily suspend your EMT certification pending completion of its investigation, thereby forfeiting all rights to emergency relief. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact 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
Kirstin 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