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# Standard Guide for Selection and Practice of Emergency Medical Services Instructor for Basic Life Support/Emergency Medical Technician (BLS/EMT) Training Programs<sup>1</sup>

This standard is issued under the fixed designation F1256; the number immediately following the designation indicates the year of original adoption or, in the case of revision, the year of last revision. A number in parentheses indicates the year of last reapproval. A superscript epsilon ( $\epsilon$ ) indicates an editorial change since the last revision or reapproval.

## 1. Scope

1.1 This guide is intended to assist emergency medical services (EMS) agencies and institutions in selecting and utilizing individuals who teach in EMT (emergency medical technician) training programs which include instruction in basic life support knowledge and skills.

1.2 This guide identifies six categories of instructor in a BLS/EMT (basic life support/emergency medical technician) training program: adjunct instructor, clinical/field preceptor, practical skills instructor, associate instructor, course instructor/coordinator (I/C), and course administrator. The guide recognizes that an individual may, depending on his/her level of practice and the training program involved, function in any or all of these categories.

1.3 This guide includes specific guidelines for qualifications, training, education, experience, scope of authority, responsibilities, continuing education, evaluation, and maintenance of competency when applicable.

1.4 This guide does not include specific guidelines for the course administrator or the adjunct instructor. While the guide recognizes, by offering a definition of each category, that these types of individuals function in many BLS/EMT training programs, the limited instructional roles played by these individuals precludes the need for specific selection and utilization guidelines.

1.5 This guide is intended to apply to any individual who teaches in BLS/EMT training programs regardless of the individual's present level of clinical practice.

1.6 This guide intentionally omits references to length of prehospital care experience, teaching experience, and continuing education requirements. This guide also omits reference to waiver or equivalency. These issues should be addressed by the appropriate agency.

1.7 This guide applies only to instructors who teach in basic life support training courses designed to prepare an individual for certification to practice as an EMT (basic) or first responder. It does not apply to instructors who teach in specialized courses that do not in themselves qualify the individual for a level of EMT certification.

1.8 This guide does not establish certification requirements. Such requirements should be established by the certifying agency in the jurisdiction in which the BLS/EMT instructor will function. This guide may be used to provide considerable guidance to the jurisdiction responsible for establishing certification standards.

1.9 *This standard does not purport to address all of the safety concerns, if any, associated with its use. It is the responsibility of the user of this standard to establish appropriate safety and health practices and determine the applicability of regulatory limitations prior to use.*

NOTE 1—Also see Practice F1031.

## 2. Referenced Documents

2.1 *ASTM Standards*:<sup>2</sup>

F1031 Practice for Training the Emergency Medical Technician (Basic)

## 3. Terminology

3.1 *Definitions of Terms Specific to This Standard:*

3.1.1 *adjunct instructor*—an individual with specialized subject matter expertise, who, on occasion, instructs a specific topic of a curriculum under the direction of the course instructor/coordinator.

3.1.2 *associate instructor*—an individual who possesses the qualifications and education/training of a course instructor/coordinator, but, in a specific course, assumes a supportive or assisting role to the course instructor/coordinator. This individual may substitute for the course instructor/coordinator in

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<sup>2</sup> For referenced ASTM standards, visit the ASTM website, [www.astm.org](http://www.astm.org), or contact ASTM Customer Service at [service@astm.org](mailto:service@astm.org). For *Annual Book of ASTM Standards* volume information, refer to the standard's Document Summary page on the ASTM website.

case of necessity or, in other courses, serve as a course instructor/coordinator.

3.1.3 *basic life support*—a level of pre-hospital emergency medical care that includes any or all first responder and EMT-basic procedures as defined by the National Standard Curricula.<sup>3,4</sup>

3.1.4 *basic life support/emergency medical technician (BLS/EMT) training program*—a course of instruction that provides an individual with the knowledge and clinical skills of emergency medical care necessary to function at a level of first responder or EMT (basic) level of care. Such courses include, but are not limited to, first responder and EMT-basic training programs.

3.1.5 *BLS/EMT instructor*—an individual who provides instruction in a training or education program for prehospital BLS/EMT personnel. This term includes any individual who functions as an adjunct instructor, clinical/field preceptor, practical skills instructor, associate instructor, or course instructor/coordinator.

3.1.6 *certification*—current, formal approval by the appropriate certifying agency to function at a specific level of practice. This may also be referred to as approval or licensure.

3.1.7 *clinical certification*—a standardized process for evaluation and recognition of an acceptable level of competence in a specific aspect of patient care.

3.1.8 *clinical experience*—exposure to and practice in an area of patient care.

3.1.9 *clinical/field preceptor*—an individual who supervises and evaluates the students during clinical or field experiences under the direction of the course instructor/coordinator.

3.1.10 *course administrator*—an individual responsible for managing administrative details of a course, separate from actual instruction of the course.

3.1.11 *course instructor/coordinator (I/C)*—an individual who is authorized by the appropriate entity to present and assess competence in all of the subject matter contained in a curriculum. This person also oversees all instruction in the course and makes final evaluations concerning student competence.

3.1.12 *course medical director*—the licensed physician who provides medical direction for all didactic and clinical instruction and clinical practice experience included in a BLS/EMT training program.

3.1.13 *evaluation*—the process of verifying clinical and educational skills and knowledge competencies of a BLS/EMT instructor.

3.1.14 *instructor training program*—an educational program that provides a foundation of essential educational principles to assist individuals to instruct in, or coordinate,

BLS/EMT programs. It must, at a minimum, contain the elements of the DOT EMS Instructor National Standard Curriculum.<sup>5</sup>

3.1.15 *practical skills instructor*—an individual who assists with practical skills instruction under the direction of the course instructor/coordinator.

3.1.16 *qualification*—a requirement which shall be met by a BLS/EMT instructor candidate prior to selection and practice as a BLS/EMT instructor.

#### 4. Significance and Use

4.1 Since the quality of prehospital BLS/EMT training depends, in large measure, on the instructional abilities and competencies of the BLS/EMT instructor, it is imperative that the individual selected and used in this capacity possess the qualifications and capabilities necessary to provide effective instruction.

4.2 A BLS/EMT instructor must possess clearly defined knowledge and skills competencies, have clearly defined responsibilities and scope of authority related to instructional programs, and meet other specific requirements pertinent to the level of instruction.

4.3 Using this guide, EMS institutions and organizations should be able to develop requirements for selection and utilization of BLS/EMT instructors for BLS/EMT training and education programs.

### BASIC LIFE SUPPORT INSTRUCTOR GUIDELINES

#### 5. Course Instructor/Coordinator

5.1 An individual shall be considered eligible to serve as a BLS/EMT course I/C (instructor/coordinator) when requirements as outlined in 5.1.1 and 5.1.2 have been met by that individual.

5.1.1 *Qualifications*—Prior to entering the instructor training program, the course I/C candidate shall:

5.1.1.1 Be at least a high school graduate or have a General Equivalency Diploma (GED); preferably a higher education degree in a supportive discipline,

5.1.1.2 Have prehospital patient care experience at least at the level being taught,

5.1.1.3 Be certified at least at the level being taught,

5.1.1.4 Demonstrate, at the level being taught, current competence in and knowledge of emergency care of the acutely ill or traumatized patient to the satisfaction of the appropriate agency, and

5.1.1.5 Demonstrate to the instructor training agency, reading and language skills commensurate with resource materials to be utilized in the BLS/EMT training program.

5.1.2 *Education/Training/Experience*—The course I/C candidate shall:

5.1.2.1 Have served as a practical skills instructor, clinical or field preceptor, and successfully completed a supervised

<sup>3</sup> Emergency Medical Services, First Responder Training Course—Instructor's Lesson Plans (U.S. DOT/NHTSA Report No. DOT HS 900–, 1984).

<sup>4</sup> Emergency Medical Technician—Ambulance: National Standard Curriculum—Instructor's Lesson Plans (U.S. DOT/NHTSA Report No. DOT HS 900–, 1984).

<sup>5</sup> Emergency Medical Services Instructor Training Program: A National Standard Curriculum—Instructor's Lesson Plans, First Edition, 1986 (U.S. DOT/NHTSA Report No. HS 900–086, February 1986).