

UTILIZATION OF THE EMS WORKFORCE TO SUPPORT COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMS

EMS agencies are an important component of the healthcare system and provide out-of-hospital emergency medical care to ill and injured patients. Paramedics and EMTs are trusted and respected in the community. When emergency medical services (EMS) knocks on the door, people willingly open the door.

Local EMS agencies are valuable community resources which often serve the community by accepting walk-in medical assessments and consultations. EMS agency personnel – our nation's 1,000,000 licensed and credentialed Paramedics and EMTs - have training in disease processes and infection control, along with patient interviewing and assessments.

EMS practitioners are uniquely qualified, ready and willing to help with vaccination distribution and administration solutions in local communities. Many EMS agencies conducted vaccine administration during the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic. Further, many EMS agencies currently administer influenza vaccines, and states have tapped EMS as a valuable resource to enhance vaccine administration. In addition, EMS agencies serve the communities of inequity that would otherwise not have access to vaccines and other non-emergency healthcare.

The [National Association of State EMS Officials](#) recently surveyed state EMS offices regarding their state's policies for EMS administering vaccinations. 45 states responded to the survey.

- 28 states allow EMS agencies to vaccinate.
- An additional 10 states allow EMS agencies to vaccinate during a public health emergency.
- Only 6 states do not *currently* allow EMS agencies to vaccinate.

Of those states that reported allowing EMS agencies to vaccinate (76% of all states):

- 100% allow paramedics to administer vaccines.
- 89% allow EMT Intermediates or Advanced EMTs to administer vaccines.
- 11% allow EMTs to administer vaccines.
- 71% of states reporting indicated that they require some level of additional training or test before approving EMS practitioner vaccine administration.

Additionally, 86% of states reported that their EMS agencies are conducting COVID-19 testing. Interestingly, only 13% of states reported that their EMS agencies were being used for contact tracing.

EMS is, and will be, a cornerstone of the response to the current public health crisis, and those in the future. EMS agencies and practitioners are ready and willing to assist state and local health departments to fully utilize this valuable resource in the fight against COVID-19.

National organizations representing our nation's EMS workforce and leadership – the [National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians](#), the [National Association of State EMS Officials](#), the [American Ambulance Association](#), the [International Association of Firefighters](#), the [International Association of Fire Chiefs](#), and the [National Volunteer Fire Council](#) - support the use of licensed and credentialed EMS practitioners in the administration of COVID-19 vaccination programs.