

NATIONAL REGISTRY LAUNCHES THE NATIONAL EMS-ID

THE NATIONAL REGISTRY OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS DISTRIBUTES THE FIRST EMS-ID.

COLUMBUS, OH —On Thursday, January 23, the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians made history by officially launching the National EMS-ID number system. The first national EMS-ID was ceremonially issued to the National Registry's Chief Operating Officer, Donnie Woodyard, Jr., a Nationally Registered Paramedic since 1997.

“Launching the EMS-ID is a significant milestone for the EMS profession, the national EMS system, and the National Registry. As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the National Registry, part of our heritage was to facilitate a national EMS system in the United States by keeping a Registry of EMS personnel; the EMS-ID is another way of fulfilling our organization's mission,” said Bill Seifarth, the Executive Director of the National Registry of EMTs.

Woodyard was issued the first EMS-ID because of his work and dedication to the project.

An interview with Donnie Woodyard, Jr., about the EMS-ID.

What is the National EMS ID?

The EMS-ID is a unique 12-digit identification number issued for free to all EMS professionals and students seeking to enter the profession. The EMS-ID number is automatically generated by the National Registry when an individual first creates an account. For the nearly two-million EMS professionals that created an account prior to January 23, 2020, an EMS-ID is being retroactively created.

The EMS-ID is randomly generated and the number does not contain any encoded data about the EMS professional. The EMS-ID was modeled after the National Provider Identifier (NPI) issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for physicians.

What's the difference between an EMS-ID and a National Registry number?

Since 1970, the National Registry has issued a unique National Registry Number (NR Number) when an individual becomes certified. Although National Registry Numbers are unique to an individual, they are not static. For example, all Advanced-EMTs and Paramedics will have multiple valid National Registry numbers issued during their career - first as an EMT, then as a Paramedic. National Registry Numbers are not going away; they are linked to the specific certification earned. However, National Registry numbers were never designed to be a unique identifier and because the numbers change with time, it is difficult to cross-reference databases with only a National Registry number.

The EMS-ID number, is issued once and does not change or expire. The EMS-ID number is like a master account number, individual certification numbers will each be linked to the EMS-ID.

Why is an EMS-ID number needed?

When the Interstate Commission for EMS Personnel Practice requested the National Registry to stand-up a database to meet the needs of the EMS Compact, it was quickly evident that a

mechanism was required to link EMS licensure records across multiple state licensure systems, platforms, and the National Registry. Due to the privacy concerns surrounding the use and transmission of Social Security Numbers, combined with the rare opportunity to build a new database for the EMS Compact, we leveraged the opportunity to create a new, national, unique identifier for the EMS profession.

The implementation of the EMS-ID marks a progression of the EMS profession. In today's work environment, EMS personnel are part of a national EMS system – a system where EMS personnel are mobile and can cross state borders during the progression of their career. During my own career, I trained as an EMT in Virginia, as a Paramedic in Ohio, and have been licensed in five different states. In 2018, the National Registry looked at a sample of 900 EMT students that completed their training in one specific state, and then determined the students had home residency addresses in 26 different states. After completing education and National EMS Certification, we know that EMS personnel are frequently licensed in multiple states. We also know that the EMS Compact – which has been enacted to law in 18 states and is expected to be operational by this summer – facilitates a multi-state privilege to practice for EMS personnel.

All of these examples require states, agencies, educational institutions, employers and the National Registry to share information related to licensure or certification status of the EMS provider. With the EMS-ID, in the near future, employers will have the ability to enter that unique EMS-ID number and not only verify an individual's National Registry status, but also their current EMS licensure status in the 18 states participating in the EMS Compact.

Even for the EMS professional that is not licensed in multiple states or performs cross-border operations, the introduction of the EMS-ID will – in the future – streamline the process of transferring continuing education course information earned in multiple states or while attending regional or national conferences to the National Registry and/or the systems used by states to track continuing education. The EMS-ID will be the key that will enable these databases to share this information. This will eventually eliminate the current practice of duplicate data entry.

The EMS-ID will also provide State EMS Officials a new tool as they protect the public and regulate the EMS system in their jurisdictions. Self-regulation is a fundamental element of any profession, especially that of a medical profession. In the future, the EMS-ID will make it easier for State EMS Officials to search, discover, research and share discipline actions for EMS personnel, including actions recorded in federal databases such as the HHS-OIG exclusion list, the sex-offender registry, and the Social Security Administration's death records information.

In addition to all these uses, the EMS-ID will provide key information on the total EMS Workforce in the United States. For the first time in the history of EMS in the United States, there will be a mechanism to identify and de-duplicate the EMS workforce. Although the National Registry's database provides information on how many people are entering the profession (in 48 states), currently no one knows exactly how many unique EMS providers are currently licensed in the United States (because State EMS licensure data cannot be de-duplicated across states).

An example of how the EMS-ID will link together information from multiple trusted sources is demonstrated in the chart below.

National EMS-ID

National Registry	State A License	State B License	EMS Compact	EMS Education	Federal Data
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EMT Number (Lapsed) • Paramedic Number (Expired) • Paramedic Number (Current) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current License Number • Expired License Number 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current License Number • Expired License Number 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multistate Privilege to Practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAPCE Approve Continuing Education • Initial EMS Education • Conferences • State Specific Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HHS-OIG List of Excluded Individuals • Social Security Death Notification List • Sex Offender Registry

What happens if an individual's National Registry certification lapses or for EMS providers that were never certified by the National Registry?

National Registry certification is not required for an EMS-ID to be issued. When an individual creates an account with the National Registry, an EMS-ID is automatically generated. We are also working with individual states – starting with the EMS Compact states – to de-duplicate the state licensure data against the national EMS database, and then issue EMS-ID numbers for anyone identified in the state system that is not already in the national EMS database.

Is the EMS-ID private? How do you think it will be used in the future?

No, the EMS-ID is designed to a public number. In the future, as the EMS-ID is fully implemented, I would anticipate others to start incorporating the EMS-ID into daily operations. For example, employers may choose to incorporate the EMS-ID as a scannable barcode on name badges: one scan and the employer can identify the individual and verify their current licensure status in multiple states. For regional or national disasters, rapid verification of EMS personnel's licensure and certification status could be nearly instantaneous. For EMS Education programs, students will be issued an EMS-ID number, that could be used by proctors to validate that the student is not only authorized as an EMS Student, but authorized by the program to perform individual procedures or skills. As ET3 (Emergency Triage, Treat, and Transport) and Community Paramedicine models continue to develop in parallel with other funding models, a single national identifier for EMS personnel will certainly play an important role.

How do individuals find or claim their EMS-ID and use it?

EMS-IDs are not ready to be displayed publicly yet. Today is the exciting starting line of this initiative, not the finish line. The process of implementing the EMS-IDs and working with States to incorporate the EMS-ID into their systems will take time. However, in coordination with the anticipated launch of the EMS Compact later this year, we expect the EMS-ID will be part of the National Registry's website and a number of state licensure systems by June (2020).

About the National Registry

For 50 years, since its founding in 1970, the National Registry of EMTs (National Registry) has offered the United States assurance that the men and women providing emergency treatment in the out-of-hospital setting are capable of providing the care that patients and their loved ones deserve. As the Nation's EMS Certification organization, the National Registry provides psychometrically-valid proof of entry-level competence for Nationally Certified EMS personnel through rigorous cognitive and psychomotor examinations. National EMS Certification is offered at four levels and must be maintained biennially by demonstrating continued education and skills competence. To date, the National Registry has certified more than 1.8 million EMS professionals. To learn more about the National Registry please visit www.nremt.org.

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