

NOLS WILDERNESS MEDICINE

Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician Course Description

Overview

The month-long Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician (WEMT) course is a nationally recognized program that trains participants to respond to emergencies in urban, rural, disaster, and wilderness environments. Our evidence-informed wilderness medicine curriculum emphasizes skills and information that are practical, accurate and relevant. Our passionate, skilled staff delivers the curriculum through a balance of scenarios, skills practice, and focused lectures that will prepare you to respond to emergencies with newfound confidence. The integrated wilderness and urban medicine approach provides you with opportunities to utilize your skills in multiple applications.

Backcountry topics include, but are not limited to, wound and infection management, reducing dislocations, improvised splinting techniques, long-term patient management, up-to-date information on environmental emergencies, and expedition medications. At every opportunity, your WEMT experience is enriched by scenarios in varied environments—nighttime exercises, extended care scenarios, and multiple-casualty incidents—all enhanced by theatrical moulage to emulate reality. You will also spend time in the emergency room of a regional hospital assisting the Emergency Department staff and providing care to real patients.

The WEMT curriculum surpasses all requirements for EMT certification with the National Registry of EMTs (NREMT). By successfully completing the practical and written exams, you will receive a WEMT certification and meet the eligibility requirements to take the NREMT certification exam. Depending on state-to-state reciprocity protocols, graduates may also sit for their home state exam. WEMT graduates who complete all state requirements may be eligible to work professionally as ambulance, hospital, and backcountry EMTs. For additional information about reciprocity between the NREMT and individual states, contact your [State EMS office](#).

The WEMT program is NOT a search and rescue, technical rescue, or survival course. The program's focus is emergency medical care.

Prerequisites

It is critical that you submit copies of these documents via email to wilderness_medicine_wemt@nols.edu as soon as possible after registering for a WEMT course. All prerequisites are due by the 45-day payment deadline. Failure to submit these prerequisites will result in forfeiting your place on the course.

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Course Statement

This form provides NOLS Wilderness Medicine with important information regarding your dietary restrictions and travel arrangements.

Professional Level CPR certification

Your Healthcare Provider/Professional Rescuer CPR certification must be current for the duration of the WEMT course. Acceptable CPR courses should include the following components: Adult, Child and Infant CPR; foreign body airway obstruction; AED; bag-valve mask; and testing (both written and practical). CPR certifications with titles other than Healthcare Provider or Professional Rescuer are not inclusive of these skills and will not meet the prerequisite.

Unacceptable cards include, but are not limited to: Heartsaver or Heartsaver Plus CPR, Infant and Child CPR, Daycare or Babysitting CPR, Community CPR, and Adult CPR. The CPR certification issued with NOLS Wilderness Medicine courses DOES NOT meet the CPR prerequisite.

Here are some links to help you find a course that will meet our requirements:

- [American Heart Association - Basic Life Support](#) (You will need to take the BLS Instructor-led training or blended classroom/online training)
- [American Red Cross - Basic Life Support for HealthCare Providers](#) (Classroom or blended classroom/simulation learning)

Criminal Background Check

You may use an online service to obtain a criminal background check. Your background check must go back 7 years, cover state and federal jurisdictions, and be issued within 6 months of the WEMT course end date. Costs range from \$20 to \$70 depending on location and personal background. We recommend using [BackgroundChecks.com](#) (*choose Personal, National Criminal Background Check*). Students whose criminal background check does not meet our clinical partners' requirements will be ineligible to attend the course.

Students should also be familiar with the [NREMT's Criminal Conviction Policy](#).

Drug Screen

You must submit the results of a negative 10-panel drug screen, either via urine or blood sample, dated within 6 months of the WEMT course start date. *We highly recommend* you find a drug screening facility near you through [Request A Test](#) (*choose the 10 Panel Urine with Expanded Opiates*). If you decide to go through another facility, please call the Wilderness Medicine office (866) 831-9001.

You must be tested for, and submit results that list, all of the following drugs. No exceptions or substitutions.

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Print and bring this list with you to the drug screening facility to ensure you are tested for all 10 drugs:

Marijuana Metabolite
Cocaine Metabolite
Opiates
Phencyclidine
Amphetamines
Barbiturates
Benzodiazepines
Methadone
Propoxyphene
Methaqualone

Students who fail to submit results that list all 10 panels or results that are negative dilute will be required to provide a valid test. Students who fail to do this will be ineligible to attend the course.

Results from TB/PPd (Tuberculosis) test

Your TB/PPd test must be completed within the 6 months prior to the WEMT course completion date. If you routinely test positive on PPd skin tests, you must also submit a recent (within 6 months) chest x-ray radiology report. Resources for obtaining PPd testing include public health offices, family practice offices, pharmacies, or walk-in clinics.

Verification of Hepatitis B vaccination

Contact with patients' blood or other body fluids may take place during clinical rotations. It is recommended that you begin a Hepatitis B immunization program. This is available through your personal physician, walk-in clinics, public health clinics or your State Bureau of Public Health; prices may vary. You must submit either documentation of the completed Hepatitis B vaccination series or return the Declination Statement.

Verification of Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccination

You must submit documentation of a two-dose MMR vaccine or titers showing immunity.

Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (Tdap) Shot

You must submit documentation of a tetanus shot within the past 10 years. If you are obtaining an initial or booster shot for this course, we recommend you get a combined Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (Tdap) shot.

Chickenpox

You must submit documentation of a chickenpox (varicella) vaccination, history of the disease, or titers showing immunity.

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Flu Shot

A current flu shot is required for courses in session between October and March. This includes courses that end in October and begin in March. It is recommended for all other courses. If you choose not to get a flu shot, you will be required to wear a mask and gloves during your clinical rotations.

Student Independent Clinical Experience

EMT students are required to attend clinical observations in designated clinical settings. NOLS Wilderness Medicine assigns students to clinical rotations that take place on one or more weekends during the course. Students must keep their weekends available for the duration for the course to complete the necessary observation hours for EMT certification. Please remember you are a guest at the clinical facility, observing patients who expect a certain standard of professionalism. You are expected to demonstrate mature, professional dress, hygiene, and behavior during their clinical rotations.

Clinical dress requirements are as follows:

- White shirt with collar (polo or button-down). No T-shirts.
- Dark blue or black pants (slacks or cargo, no jeans).
- Black shoes or boots. No sandals, sneakers, or hiking boots.
- All clothes clean and pressed.
- Watch: analog with second hand or digital with second reference.

Transportation during Clinical Rotations

Students are responsible for their own transportation to clinical rotations. Transportation is not provided and public transportation is not available. Those without transportation are expected to carpool to the clinical sites with fellow students. Students may choose to spend the night near the clinical site, in which case it is recommended that students plan on a shared hotel expense.

Wilderness Medicine and EMT Texts

The urban EMT textbook for the course is *Emergency Care*, 13th edition, by Limmer and O'Keefe. **You must purchase this book in paper or electronic form from the retailer of your choice.** You should begin reading your EMT textbook immediately upon receipt.

The wilderness medicine textbooks for the course are *NOLS Wilderness Medicine* by Tod Schimelpfenig and the *Wilderness Medicine Handbook* by NOLS Wilderness Medicine. The wilderness medicine texts are provided to you on course.

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Testing and Exams

Multiple-choice quizzes and exams are integrated throughout the WEMT course. Successful completion of the course is dependent upon practical and written exam performance. The multiple-choice exams are challenging and long; seriously consider practicing prior to your arrival at the course. Public libraries are good places to find resources for general testing practice. You will receive access to an online platform to support the WEMT course the week before your course begins. This platform has many practice tests you may take to improve your testing skills.

Upon successful completion of the course, students will take the State Practical Exam. Upon successful completion of the practical exam, students are eligible to take the National Registry EMT (NREMT) computer-based exam, which is sometimes available at an off-site location on the last morning of the course. There is an additional fee to take the NREMT exam.

Please come prepared to pay the testing fee by the second week of your course. You can submit this fee to the NREMT by check or online via credit card. We find that online payment is the quickest and most reliable way to ensure that you are eligible for testing at the end of your course. Your instructors will provide information regarding the online payment process. Visit the NREMT website for more information regarding [computer-based testing](#).

Academic Testing Accommodations

Students with documented learning disabilities seeking accommodations for written testing need to submit documentation immediately to the NREMT in order to secure accommodations for their computer-based NREMT exam. Students seeking testing accommodations are required to take their computer-based test at a Pearson VUE Professional Testing Center near their home. The Pearson VUE Testing Center Accommodations Coordinator will assist individuals in finding a center convenient to them.

Visit the NREMT website and follow the checklist to apply for [accommodations](#). Notify the WEMT Admissions Officer that you are seeking accommodations: (866) 831-9001 or wilderness_medicine_wemt@nols.edu.

Certification

Successful completion of the course and all testing provides Wilderness EMT certification from NOLS Wilderness Medicine. If eligible, you will receive a NOLS Wilderness Medicine WEMT certificate of completion prior to your departure. National Registry EMT certification is dependent on passing the NREMT test after the course. NREMT cards are mailed directly from the National Registry of EMTs' office.

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Pre-Course Access to College Credit

Six semester credit hours are available for this course through Western State Colorado University (WSCU) [Recreation and Outdoor Education Department](#) at an additional cost of \$480. The course code is ROE 397. Check with your academic advisor ahead of time to learn if these credits will transfer and apply to your program. Thirty days prior to the course, interested students must initiate registration and payment for credit by requesting the enrollment forms from [WSCU](#).

On-Course Access to College Credit

Nine semester credit hours are available for this course through the University of Utah's Health Education Department at an additional cost of \$550. The course code is HEDU 5980 sec. 30. Check with your academic advisor ahead of time to learn if these credits will transfer and apply to your program. Students can sign up for University of Utah credit in the first two weeks of the WEMT course. **Credits cannot be awarded post-course.** Check with the lead instructor upon arrival at the course to pick up a University of Utah credit application form.

Course Tuition

Tuition includes lodging during the course, meals Monday through Friday, instruction and materials, clinical experience, professional liability insurance, and group medical equipment use. Tuition does not include travel to the course site, weekend meals, expenses associated with clinical experience, or the National Registry EMT computer-based testing fee.

A \$1,000 deposit is required to enroll in the course. Payment in full is welcomed. You can pay your balance by mailing in a check with the Course Statement and prerequisites, calling the office with Mastercard or Visa credit card information, or online through your [nols.edu account](#).

If you do not have an online course account with NOLS, you can create one. The deadline to submit payment for the balance of course fees is 45 days prior to the course start date. If you are registering after this deadline, please call the NOLS Wilderness Medicine Office at (866) 831-9001 so we may assist you.

NOLS Wilderness Medicine Cancellation Policies

If you cancel or leave a WEMT course for any reason:

- Greater than or equal to 45 days prior to the course start date, NOLS Wilderness Medicine will retain a \$35 administrative fee and refund the balance of your tuition.
- Less than 45 days prior to course start date and once the course has begun, there will be no transfers or refunds.

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If you fail to pay the balance of course fees and submit your prerequisites 45 days prior to the course start date, you forfeit both your \$1,000 deposit and your position in the course.

Tuition Protection Program

NOLS offers a Tuition Protection Plan, provided by AON Affinity, for citizens of the USA and Canada who meet certain legal residence requirements at a cost of six percent of the total tuition. The plan helps to protect against tuition loss should you be unable to participate or complete your WEMT or WME course due to an injury or illness to yourself or your immediate family. Additionally, this plan may help to pay for evacuation costs from the course location. The Tuition Protection Plan payment is non-refundable and not transferable.

NOLS strongly recommends the Tuition Protection Plan to safeguard your investment in tuition.

Scholarships and Financial Aid

- NOLS Wilderness Medicine offers a limited amount of scholarship assistance for students in our Wilderness EMT courses. Scholarship aid is available to applicants who show great potential to excel as NOLS Wilderness Medicine students and who would be unable to attend without financial aid. The typical award ranges between \$500 and \$1,000. Students must pay a \$1000 deposit and register for a WEMT course before their application will be considered. For more information, the [Scholarship section](#) of our webpage.
- AmeriCorps funds can be applied toward WEMT courses. For more information, visit the [AmeriCorps section](#) of our webpage. You should take this step *at least* 60 days prior to your course start date.
- If you currently receive federal financial aid and you are interested in applying it toward your WEMT course, please review this [information](#) and contact the WEMT Admissions Officer [at wilderness_medicine_wemt@nols.edu](mailto:wilderness_medicine_wemt@nols.edu) or (866) 831-9001.

For More Information

Questions? Contact NOLS Wilderness Medicine via phone 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. MST Monday–Friday at (866) 831-9001 or via email at wilderness_medicine_wemt@nols.edu.