

## 7-86-205. Requirements for public safety dispatchers.

---

### (a)

(1) Regardless of agency or governmental jurisdiction, each emergency call taker or public safety dispatcher who receives an initial or transferred 911 call from the public is subject to the training and course of study requirements established by the emergency communications board created pursuant to § 7-86-302.

### (2)

(A) The training and course of study requirements established pursuant to subdivision (a)(1) must include high-quality, nationally recognized, evidence-based emergency cardiovascular care guidelines for T-CPR.

(B) At a minimum, the training and course of study requirements must incorporate recognition protocols for out-of-hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA), compression-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) instructions for callers or bystanders, and continuous education as appropriate.

(C) Emergency call takers and public safety dispatchers who provide dispatch for emergency conditions shall offer T-CPR to a caller or bystander, when deemed necessary.

(D) The emergency communications board shall, by rule, establish a procedure for monitoring emergency call taker and public safety dispatcher adherence to T-CPR training requirements and conduct ongoing quality assurance. The emergency communication board may adjust grants or shared revenue amounts based on failure to comply with the requirements.

(E) As used in this subdivision (a)(2), "T-CPR" means telecommunicator cardiopulmonary resuscitation, which is the dispatcher-assisted delivery of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) instruction by trained emergency call takers or public safety dispatchers to callers or bystanders for events requiring CPR, such as out-of-hospital cardiac arrest (OHCA).

### (b)

(1) The emergency communications board established by § 7-86-302 is the sole authority to implement this section and may determine whether to grant an exception to or to waive the requirements of subdivisions (d)(4) and (5), to the extent authorized pursuant to subdivision (b)(2), for an emergency call taker or public safety dispatcher at the request of a majority of the membership of a board of directors of an emergency communications district. No person may be employed as an emergency call taker or public safety dispatcher, who requires a waiver under this section, until such waiver is granted. The board may establish an advisory committee to hear and review requests for exceptions and waivers, and make recommendations to the board on whether to grant or deny the requests. The meetings of the committee shall be open to the public, recorded and the recording open to public inspection. Any party adversely affected may, within sixty (60) days of the board's decision, initiate a contested case as provided by the Uniform Administrative Procedures Act, compiled in title 4, chapter 5, which shall be heard by an administrative law judge sitting alone.

(2) The board may grant a waiver of pre-employment requirements under the following circumstances:

(A) **Military History.** The board may waive pre-employment requirements relating to the military history for the following separations from military service:

(i) An entry level separation; or

(ii) A general discharge under honorable conditions.

### (B)

(i) **Criminal Activity.** The board may consider a waiver from pre-employment requirements relating to criminal activity if the person has been convicted of or pleaded guilty to or entered a plea of *nolo contendere* to any violation of any federal or state law or city ordinance with the following charges:

(a) Relating to force, violence, theft, dishonesty, gambling, liquor (including driving while intoxicated) if such violation is a misdemeanor and is not classified as a domestic violence offense; or

(b) Controlled substances or controlled substance analogues when the offense was classed as a misdemeanor.

(ii) The employing agency requesting waiver must present a copy of the final court disposition of the case.

(C) **Expunction of Charges.** The board may consider a waiver from pre-employment requirements relating to expunction of misdemeanor charges, except for charges classified as a domestic violence offense, on an individual

basis and depending on the circumstances. It is the responsibility of the requesting agency to present information and court documentation relating to the expunction to the board.

**(c)** Except as provided in subsection (e), beginning July 1, 2006, all emergency call takers or public safety dispatchers subject to this section shall have successfully completed a course of study approved by the emergency communications board created pursuant to § 7-86-302.

**(d)** Except as provided in subsection (f), in addition to the requirements of subsection (c), any such person shall:

**(1)** Be at least eighteen (18) years of age;

**(2)** Be a citizen of the United States;

**(3)** Be a high school graduate or possess equivalency;

**(4)** Not have been convicted or pleaded guilty to or entered a plea of nolo contendere to any felony charge or to any violation of any federal or state laws or city ordinances relating to force, violence, theft, dishonesty, gambling, liquor, controlled substances or controlled substance analogues;

**(5)** Not have been released or discharged under other than an honorable or medical discharge from any of the armed forces of the United States;

**(6)** Have such person's fingerprints on file with the Tennessee bureau of investigation;

**(7)** Have passed a physical examination by a licensed physician; and

**(8)** Have a good moral character as determined by a thorough investigation conducted by the employing agency.

**(e)** All emergency call takers and public safety dispatchers subject to this section employed after July 1, 2006, shall have six (6) months from the date of their employment to comply with this section.

**(f)** Notwithstanding other law to the contrary, the law in effect prior to May 1, 1994, relative to public safety dispatchers shall apply to any person who had more than five (5) years of continuous employment as a public safety dispatcher on May 1, 1994.

## History

---

Acts 1994, ch. 940, § 1; 1997, ch. 257, § 1; 1997, ch. 320, § 1; 1997, ch. 320, § 2; 1998, ch. 1108, § 31; T.C.A., 7-86-201; Acts 2000, ch. 946, § 3; 2003, ch. 254, § 2; 2005, ch. 129, §§ 1-3; 2011, ch. 265, § 1; 2012, ch. 848, § 4; 2020, ch. 575, § 1.