



**Joint Memorandum from the Florida
Fire Chiefs Association &
Florida Professional Firefighters
Tallahassee, FL**



September 4, 2020

Dr. Scott A Rivkees, M.D., State Surgeon General
4052 Bald Cypress Way
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Re: Florida Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedic Recertification Process

Dr. Rivkees,

We are writing to you today on behalf of the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association and Florida Professional Firefighters regarding a major concern facing Florida's public safety personnel.

The overwhelming majority of Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics in Florida work for the fire service. The Florida Fire Chiefs' Association and the Florida Professional Firefighters represent these Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics and serve as their voice in Tallahassee.

As you know, all current Florida Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedic certificates expire at midnight, Eastern Time, on December 01, 2020. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association and the Florida Professional Firefighters have concerns regarding Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics' ability to obtain all of the required training hours needed for their recertification.

Most fire departments have stopped providing any in-person training classes or programs to prevent COVID-19 within their departments. Also, there has been a significant decrease in classroom education training from colleges and other education providers.

We, the Florida Fire Chiefs' Association, and the Florida Professional Firefighters, are requesting that the State institute a 6-month extension to all current Florida Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedic certificates set to expire on December 01, 2020. This extension would provide fire departments with more time to get their members the training they need for recertification.

We believe that a vaccine is right around the corner, and the fire service wants to play a vital role in delivering this vaccine to our communities. Should that occur, we would also face limits on getting our members the training hours they need for recertification.

We hope you will consider our request and work with the Governor on an Executive Order as soon as possible. There are less than 90 days left before the recertification deadline.

Respectfully,

Chief Ty Silcox - President
Florida Fire Chiefs' Association

Wayne "Bernie" Bernoska - President
Florida Professional Firefighters

Cc:
Steve McCoy, Department of Health - EMS
Dr. Schepke, Department of Health - EMS Medical Director