

Emergency Medical Assistants Licensing Board

EMALB 2016-16 EMA's Duty to Report Responsible Branch: Emergency Medical Assistants (EMA) Licensing Branch Contact: Board Officer makeacomplaint@gov.bc.ca	Reference Information (Manual, page number, chapter):
	Replaces former policy: n/a
	Date Effective: January 1, 2017
	Last Update: March 1, 2023
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Keywords	E.g. examinations, regulation, licensure etc.

1. Policy Rationale & Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to describe the responsibility of an emergency medical assistant's (EMA) duty to report to the EMA Licensing Board conduct by any EMA that puts the well-being and safety of a patient at risk.

Section 6 of the *Emergency Health Services Act* empowers the Licensing Board to investigate complaints. On receipt of a complaint or on its own motion and after a hearing, the Licensing Board may determine that an EMA or former EMA has incompetently carried out the duties of an EMA, has breached a term or condition of his or her licence, or suffers from a physical ailment, emotional disturbance or an addiction to alcohol or drugs that materially impairs his or her ability to act as an EMA.

It is a condition of every licence that an EMA must comply with *the Act* and the Regulations, including but not limited to the Code of Ethics set out in [Schedule 3](#). The Code of Ethics provides general principles of ethical conduct to guide emergency medical assistants in meeting their duties to the public and the profession. For the purpose of determining an EMA's duty to report, the Licensing Board refers to the following section of the EMA Code of Ethics:

- (f) provides that an EMA must "report to the appropriate authorities any incompetent, illegal or unethical conduct by colleagues or other health care personnel"

2. Policy Scope

This policy applies to all EMAs that hold a valid EMA licence in British Columbia.

3. Policy Statement:

The EMA Licensing Board is the "appropriate authority" to report any conduct including one's own, which may affect an EMA's licence. While EMAs should report any incompetent, illegal or unethical conduct to the Licensing Board, this policy is not intended to restrict the responsibility of an EMA to also report to other agencies, (e.g., employers, police etc.). Some examples of incompetent, illegal or unethical conduct are:

- Providing service beyond an EMA's licence category
- Incompetence within an EMA's licence category
- Practicing while impaired by alcohol or drugs (including prescription drugs that impairs an EMA's judgement)
- Criminal Code Offences

An EMA should report to the Licensing Board, conduct by any EMA, including themselves, that puts the well-being and safety of the patient at risk through illegal or unethical conduct, incompetence to practice, or practicing outside of the services the EMA is authorized to provide by contacting makeacomplaint@gov.bc.ca.

An EMA should also report to the Licensing Board, conduct by any EMA, including themselves, that puts the well-being and safety of a patient at risk by practicing with a physical ailment, emotional disturbance, or an addiction to alcohol or drugs that materially impairs their ability to act as an emergency medical assistant.

NOTE:

It is not the Licensing Board's intention to be punitive regarding EMAs suffering from physical ailments, emotional disturbances or addictions; however, the Board must ensure that EMAs "consider, above all, the wellbeing of the patient in the exercise of their duties and responsibilities" as per the Code of Ethics.

The Licensing Board works closely with EMAs suffering from physical ailments, emotional disturbances, or addictions to ensure minimum impacts to their licence while they are undergoing medical treatment or a rehabilitation program.

Due to the sensitive and personal nature of reporting physical ailments, emotional disturbances, or addictions these can be reported directly to the Board Officer by email at makeacomplaint@gov.bc.ca.

The Licensing Board may find that an EMA has breached a term or condition of their licence under Section 11 of the Emergency Medical Assistants Regulation and may impose disciplinary action under Section 7 of the *Emergency Health Services Act* if the Licensing Board determines that an EMA had knowledge of any EMA, including themselves who has engaged in any incompetent, illegal or unethical conduct, or that suffers from physical ailments, emotional disturbances, or addictions and failed to report that knowledge to the Licensing Board, resulting in risk to the well-being and safety of a patient.

4. Legal Authority:

- [*Emergency Health Services Act Sections \(6\), \(7\), and \(8\)*](#)
- [*Emergency Medical Assistants Regulation Section 11*](#)
- [*Emergency Medical Assistants Regulation Schedule 3*](#)

5. Key Stakeholders:

- *Licensed EMAs*
- *Employers of EMAs*

Reviewed by the EMA Licensing Board on: December 16, 2016

Approved:



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Drafted by: Kim Fiege

Change Index

Date	Author	Details
2023-03-01	Sam Creamer	Updated pronouns
2023-11-03	Screamer	Policy reviewed, no changes