New York State EMS Written Exam Contract Expires

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Already widely circulated in the fireEMS rumor mill is word that the New York state EMS written testing contract expires April 1, 2014, and may not be reinstated in time to prevent an interruption in the monthly EMS testing schedule.

Before you run screaming from the room in panic and incite a riot amongst your fellow fire and EMSers, take note of the whole story. Yes, indeed the contract does expire April 1 and no, it does not appear that New York state will have a new contract in place prior to April 1.

Several things could happen including approval of a proposal from the Bureau of EMS to allow a five-month “no cost extension” of the current contract. This would essentially use monies remaining in the current contract that have not been expended to extend the contract with the present testing vendor. The Office of the State Controller (OSC) might actually approve a new testing contract in time to avoid any gaps. The State EMS Council has sent a letter to the health commissioner advising that any lapse in the testing contract would create a public health emergency.

NYSAFC is in the process of bringing this potential issue to the attention of our legislators. If all else fails and there is no written exam contract after April 1, the Department of Health would send students who complete courses a SAPA (State Administrative Procedures Act) letter allowing them to test as soon as a new contract is in place. Students whose cards expire after the written test date originally planned for their refresher courses would have their certification extended until such time as a test became available.

DOH estimates that there are 14,000 students who need to recertify between April and September this year. Students in original courses and refreshers who expired prior to their courses’ planned test dates would have to wait for certification until a testing contract is in place and they receive their scores. Stay tuned...