

Paramedics Working as Occupational First Aid Attendants

1. OFA 3 equivalency
2. Paramedic in Industry course
3. BC certification for out of Province Paramedics.

1) OFA Level 3 equivalency

Background:

Some years ago, the License that was issued by the Emergency Medical Assistants Licensing Board (EMALB) to the Emergency Medical Responder (EMR) was granted equivalency to Occupational First Aid (OFA) Level 3 Certification. No additional training or certification was required. This was due to a revision in the Justice Institute of BC EMR curriculum that allowed the necessary OFA skills to be included in that EMR course. The Primary Care Paramedic (PCP), Acute Care Paramedic (ACP) and Critical Care Paramedic (CCP) Licenses were not granted equivalency as the OFA skills were not included in the course curriculum and those courses were not undergoing revisions.

Current Status:

The EMALB and WorkSafeBC have been advised that EMRs working under the EMR License as a first aid attendant in industry were at risk of putting their Licenses in jeopardy. The two occupations, EMR and OFA, are deemed to be two separate occupations and they are governed by two separate *Acts*.

The scope of practice for EMR License holders enables the holder to “treat and transport” the injured party whereas the OFA Level 3 Certification’s scope of practice requires the holder, when appropriate, to be able to “treat and return to work”. Requiring the EMR License holder to treat and return to work violates that License’s scope of practice.

In addition, with the advent of Paramedics from other provinces obtaining licenses in BC under the TILMA and AIT legislation, it is possible that in the future the holder of a BC EMR License will not have been trained in the necessary OFA skills required to be competent as a first aid attendant in industry. In other words, **it cannot be assumed that an EMR License holder has been trained in the required OFA duties.**

Conclusion:

- On **January 1st, 2010** WorkSafeBC eliminated the granting of EMR to OFA Level 3 equivalencies.
- All licensed Paramedics who intend to work in BC as an OFAA must successfully complete a Paramedic in Industry course.

2) Paramedic in Industry Course

WorkSafeBC has designed a “Paramedic in Industry” (Pii) course that is comprised of a home study component plus a 4 hour, in class, practical workshop. The Pii workshop includes the competencies that are not included in paramedic training but are required by an occupational first aid attendant in industry.

EMA License holders may apply for the OFA Level 3 Paramedic in Industry Certificate at any participating OFA Level 3 First Aid Training Agency in BC by presenting picture ID and their valid EMA License. License holders should call OFA training agencies in their area to determine if this service is offered [First Aid Training Agencies](#) (PDF 617 KB).

Upon successful completion of the Pii course an EMA license holder will be granted an OFA Level 3 Paramedic in Industry Certificate and will qualify for 20 CME credits. The duration of a Paramedic in Industry Certificate is three years from the date of successful completion of the course. Pii Certificates are only valid and recognized in industry if the Paramedic License issued by the EMALB remains current and valid. Upon request by an Officer of the Board a valid EMA licence *and* Pii certificate must be produced by the Paramedic First Aid Attendant.

3) BC certification for out of province Paramedics

As stated previously, the two occupations, Paramedic and OFAA, are deemed to be two separate occupations and they are governed by two separate *Acts*. Therefore, paramedics from other provinces **do not qualify** under TILMA or AIT legislation when it comes to First Aid Certification in BC, (they do qualify when it comes to paramedic licensing).

The exception to this is the Red Cross Emergency Medical Responder certificate which is accepted in industry by the province of Alberta at the Advanced First Aid level. Holders of this certificate qualify for an OFA Level 3 out-of-jurisdiction certificate if the course was conducted outside of the province of BC. Samples of first aid certificates that are issued in BC may be viewed at the following link. <http://www2.worksafebc.com/Topics/FirstAid/Certificates-BC.asp>

The options for paramedics that come to BC from other Canadian provinces who intend to work as an OFAA in BC are as follows:

1. If they are trained in another province:

If the out of Province paramedic has provided proof of completion of a minimum 70-hour pre-hospital care course, they are eligible to challenge the OFA Level 3 or equivalent examination without any additional training. After successful completion of the OFA level 3 or equivalent examinations, they will receive OFA Level 3 or equivalent certification.

2. If licensed by another province:

If the out of Province paramedic has provided proof of licensing, they are eligible to take the Paramedic in Industry course (home study component and 4-hour practical workshop). After successful completion of the Pii course they will be granted an OFA Level 3 Paramedic in Industry certificate valid for three years. As long as the Paramedic License remains valid, the Pii certificate will be recognized in industry.