

Office of EMS Trauma Systems  
Texas Department of State Health Services  
[dshs.texas.gov/dshs-ems-trauma-systems](https://dshs.texas.gov/dshs-ems-trauma-systems)



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

### Overdose Detection Mapping Application

New program offers the ability to collect suspected fatal and non-fatal overdoses in real-time.

#### From this Side

EMS/Trauma Systems leadership team and staff share their experiences and perspectives to spark conversation on issues important to the EMS and trauma system in Texas.

#### Updates

The Office of EMS/Trauma Systems provides the latest regulatory changes, important programmatic data, and relevant funding information to keep you informed.

#### News and Links

Access current news, initiatives, and publications from national EMS and public health organizations, as well as links to GETAC, rules, and enforcement actions.

#### Texas EMS for Children Program Announces 2023 Crew of the Year Award Recipients

In honor of EMS for Children Day, May 24, 2023, the Texas EMS for Children (EMSC) State Partnership presented the 14th annual Texas EMS for Children Crew of the Year Award.

#### Texas Temps Heat Up

As temperatures rise, remember to stay hydrated to avoid heat related stress and injuries.

#### Five Things You Should Know

Remember these tips when Submitting an EMS Initial Course Application

# FROM THIS SIDE

Insight • Inspiration • Ideas



## SUICIDE IN TEXAS

PREVENTION AND SUPPORT



In 2021, there were 4,191 deaths due to suicide in Texas ([CDC WONDER](#)). The past three years have been especially tough on our communities, with many people finding it hard to get back to a sense of normalcy. We all have moments where we feel lost, sad, stressed, and there are times when we need help.

For adults, it is estimated that for every suicide death, there are 26 reported suicide attempts. For Texas in 2021, that would be 10,686 suicide attempts ([SPRC](#)). Statistics show that men die by suicide 3.9 times more often than women, but women attempt suicide 1.8 times as often as men ([AFSP](#)).

Prevention starts with recognizing the warning signs of suicide, taking them seriously, and having honest, open conversations about suicidal thoughts and feelings. Across the country and here in Texas, training and support resources are being created to help us not only identify the signs of crisis but act as gatekeepers for prevention and initial aid.

### Prevention

**Turn To Check-In** provides a [5-minute check-in](#) designed to help you understand what may be affecting your mood or behavior. It is not intended to diagnose a specific disorder, provide treatment, or connect you to a professional right away. Instead, it will help you make sense of how you're feeling and provide information about resources, services, and tools you can use anytime, anywhere.

### Crisis Support

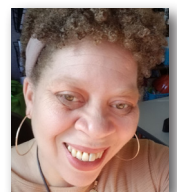
#### The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

**It is free, confidential, and available 24/7.**

- Call or text: **9-8-8**
- Chat online: [988lifeline.org](https://988lifeline.org)
- Support for people who are deaf and hard of hearing: Use your preferred relay service or dial **711 then 988**.

**Crisis Text Line** provides [free, 24/7 crisis support](#) and trains volunteers to support people in crisis. **Text: TX to 741741** for free, 24/7 crisis support in the U.S.

**Heroes Helpline** (1-833-EMS-IN-TX) is available 24/7. It is specifically for Texas first responders and hospital personnel. The [Helpline](#) provides a "FREE, entirely confidential, telephone support and referral service that affords first responders and healthcare workers the opportunity to seek treatment without fear of judgment, stigma, or occupational threats.



Adrienne Kitchen,  
Information Specialist V

## Training

**AS+K? About Suicide to Save a Life Basic Gatekeeper Training** provides a one-hour overview of public health information important to developing suicide prevention gatekeeper skills. Course topics include risk factors, protective factors, warning signs related to suicide, and how to connect to care if you think someone may be struggling.

## Initiatives

**Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council (GETAC) Injury Prevention and Public Education Committee** is creating a tool using the Spectrum of Prevention Framework (adapted from the [Prevention Institute](#)) that will compile evidence-informed suicide prevention strategies and recommendations across a multifaceted spectrum, including:

- influencing policy and legislation,
- changing organizational practices,
- fostering coalitions and networks,
- educating providers,
- promoting community education, and
- strengthening individual knowledge and skills.

This tool will be available for practitioners and leaders to assist in adopting systematic and comprehensive initiatives to prevent suicide.

**Texas Suicide Prevention Collaborative TSPC** developed the [Texas State Plan for Suicide Prevention 2023-2028](#), providing free resources, educational information, phone apps, and training.

**American Foundation for Suicide Prevention AFSP** has local chapters throughout the state that can deliver education programs to schools, workplaces, and communities.



### Downloadable Informational Flyers

- [Language Matters: Talking About Suicide](#)
- [Suicide prevention wallet card](#)
- [Suicide Prevention for Military Service Members and Veterans](#)
- [Suicide Prevention for Military Families](#)
- [Survivors of Suicide Loss](#)

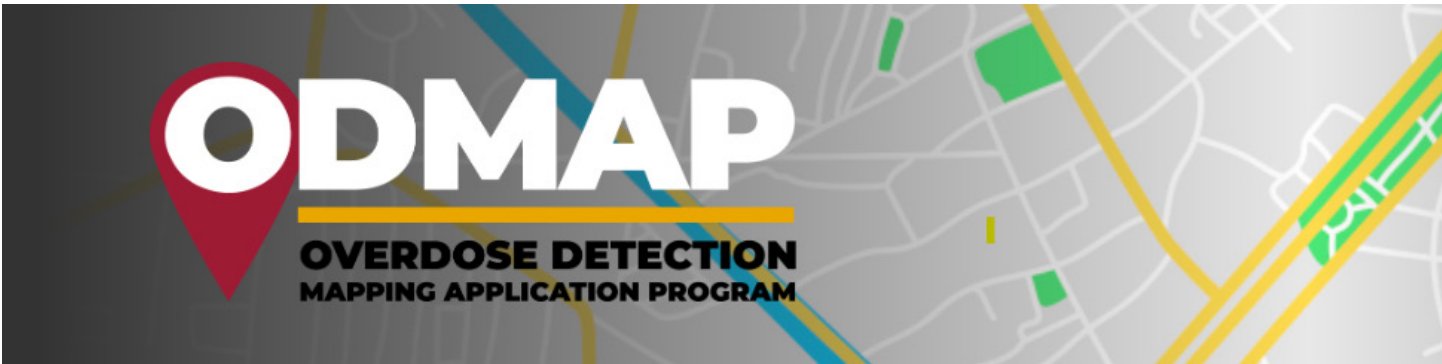
For more information visit the [DSHS Suicide Prevention website](#).

A graphic for the Texas EMS Awards. On the left, a hand holds a golden laurel wreath with the text "Texas EMS Awards" in the center. On the right, a dark blue background features the text "2023 Call for Nominations" in white, and a dark blue rounded rectangle at the bottom contains the text "Deadline September 15" in white.

**2023**  
Call for  
Nominations

**Deadline**  
September 15





The [Overdose Detection Mapping Application Program](#) (ODMAP) offers the ability to collect suspected fatal and non-fatal overdoses in real-time across jurisdictions to mobilize cohesive and collaborative responses to save lives. ODMAP is a free, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant program developed and provided by the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA), and it supports public safety and public health efforts to mobilize an immediate response to a sudden increase in all drug overdose events. ODMAP links first responders and relevant record management systems to a mapping tool to track overdoses and initiate real-time response and strategic analysis across jurisdictions.

Data may be entered manually or via an application program interface (API) to ensure effective data entry. Currently, 104 agencies have signed up with ODMAP, and they have entered a total of 7,919 overdoses into the database for the year. Data entered into the system is not shared but only used for public health and safety strategic planning.

**Note:** This tool is only available to government (state, local, federal, and tribal) agencies serving the interests of public safety and health.

For more information on OD Map please visit [ODMap.org](#) or contact your area HIDTA Drug Intelligence Officer.

**Texoma HIDTA**  
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To sign up for ODMAP, visit [odmap.org/AgencyAccess/RequestForm](https://odmap.org/AgencyAccess/RequestForm)

**2022 PUBLIC-RELEASE RESEARCH DATASET**  
**NOW AVAILABLE**

<b>51,379,493</b> EMS ACTIVATIONS	<b>13,946</b> EMS AGENCIES	<b>54</b> STATES AND TERRITORIES
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The National Emergency Medical Services Information System Technical Assistance Center (NEMSIS TAC) announced the availability of the 2022 Public-Release Research Dataset, the largest publicly available dataset of emergency medical service activations in the United States.

Those interested in requesting a copy of the 2022 Public-Release Research Dataset can contact the NEMSIS TAC and fill out a request form on their [website](#).

A password-protected USB drive containing the dataset, the 2022 NEMSIS Data User Manual, NEMSIS Data Dictionary v3.4.0, and Extended Data Definitions v3.4.0, will be sent via postal service.

# Texas EMS for Children Program Announces the 2023 EMS for Children Crew of the Year Award Recipients

In honor of EMS for Children Day, May 24, 2023, the Texas EMS for Children (EMSC) State Partnership presented the 14th annual Texas EMS for Children Crew of the Year Award.

This award is granted to an EMS crew or station who has displayed outstanding care for a child in an emergency medical or trauma event, demonstrated exceptional effort in the development of pediatric training or quality improvement programs, or was instrumental in planning and conducting creative injury prevention programs.

## Congratulations

### 2023 EMSC Crew of the Year Wilson County Emergency Service District 4

- Captain EMT Lee Posey
- FTO/EMT Pete Balderas
- LP Kevin Ford, EMT
- EMT Scott Calame
- Paramedic Zachary Ramirez



Pictured left to right: Medical Director Dr. Stephen Harper, Training Captain William Miles, EMT-B Scott Calame, EMT-P Zachary Ramirez, LP Kevin Ford, EMT-B Pete Balderas, Captain EMT Lee Posey, and EMS Director David Adams.

This crew received the award for displaying exceptional effort in the care of a 3-year-old patient with a chronic seizure disorder during their multiple emergency encounters, as well as going above and beyond in helping her family long-term. For the child's birthday this year, the crew fundraised over \$300 to purchase gifts for the patient and her brother and provide HEB grocery cards for her parents. With the family facing extensive hospital expenses, the crew's efforts helped give this patient a special birthday despite her medical challenges. Thinking long-term, this crew has also worked to connect the family with local resources for children with special healthcare needs. Additionally, the crew has worked with the family to coordinate long-term care with the patient's physicians and provided first-aid and CPR instruction to the family.

Present to help with the presentation of the award were State EMS Director Joe Schmider, Tracee Rose, Acute Care Division Director for the Southwest Texas Regional Advisory Council, Yvonne Moseley, Immediate Past President of the Texas Emergency Nurses Association (ENA), and Diane Walcutt, San Antonio ENA Chapter President.

Recipients of the Texas EMS for Children Crew of the Year Award receive individual certificates of appreciation and a plaque for their station or crew quarters, recognizing them as champions in the emergency care of children in Texas.

# Texas Temps Heat Up

As temperatures rise, remember to stay hydrated to avoid heat related stress and injuries.

## Is it hot enough for ya'll?

Seriously, 2023 has had some over the top uncomfortable and dangerous days of heat. As Texans, we expect warm summers, but as the temperatures rise, you need more water to protect your body from heat stress.

Our EMS personnel are well-trained to respond to and treat heat-related emergencies, but we need to ensure that our first responders stay safe and well when making calls during this relentless heat. Here's a great summer mantra: Drink, drink, drink. Drink water in the days before your shift, drink water during your shift, and drink water after your shift. Don't depend on thirst to indicate when you need to start taking on fluids—by this point, you are already experiencing a 1-2% loss of water. Many say, "We carry water on our vehicles in case we are out on a prolonged response." That's a great start, but by the time they decide to crack open that bottle, they are likely already dehydrated somewhat if they have not been proactively preparing days before, during, and after events.

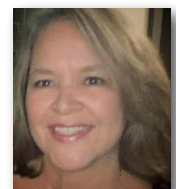
The Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) suggests that personnel at risk of [heat illness](#) (that's you) drink one cup of cool water every 20 minutes, even if you aren't thirsty. If you are going to be on a longer job, such as treating a trauma patient during an extended vehicle extrication, working an outdoor event, or experiencing a high call volume that has you constantly on the go, consider drinks with electrolytes in addition to water. To avoid heat stress, it's vital that you avoid energy drinks and alcohol. Energy drinks are loaded with caffeine which may help keep you alert, but high caffeine levels affect your heart and add stress to your body when working in a hot environment; while alcohol is not consumed at work, you're at greater risk of heat-related illness if drinking it within 24 hours of working in the heat.



You know the saying, though, "You can have too much of a good thing." The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) warns against consuming more than 48 ounces within an hour as it can diminish the salt concentration in your blood to dangerously low levels, so stick with a consistent habit of sipping a cup of water per 20 minutes, and you'll be fine. Check out the CDC's guidance for making sure you're in good shape with water intake to [avoid heat stress](#).

So, while it may be hotter 'n a blister bug in a pepper patch, you can proactively prepare for work in the Texas heat. Focus on hydration every day – before, during, and after your shift. Being minimally dehydrated by as little as 2% can affect your brain's ability to function optimally and even make you a little irritable, so to avoid that dip, keep taking those sips! Texans count on you to be at your best when they need you most, and that requires a well-hydrated brain that's functioning at an optimum level.

[Texas Ready](#) offers additional community information on recognizing signs of heatstroke due to exposure to extreme heat.



Deidra Lee  
GETAC & RAC  
Program Specialist



# 5 THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW

## Submitting an EMS Initial Course Application



1	You must have access to and be logged into the online licensing system account that has the education program license added to it. If not, it will not link the initial course application to any education program, and we will be unable to process the application.
2	You must submit the initial course application 30 days before the course start date.
3	You must click the "Attach" button for each document you attach to the application. Adding multiple documents at once will not work; the system will only save the first document and no others.
4	If the document(s) that you would like to attach to the initial course application exceed the size limit (5MB per document with an overall upload limit of 30MB), you will not be able to complete and submit the application. If that occurs, you may submit the application without the documents and email the documents, with the education program name and license number, to <a href="mailto:emseducation@dhs.texas.gov">emseducation@dhs.texas.gov</a> .
5	You may only submit an initial course application for the course levels that the education program is approved for.

To find more information on EMS Education Programs and Initial Course applications, including a Course Notification Checklist, please visit our [website](#).

# DATA

Analysis ■ Communication ■ Information



## EMS Application Processing

Turnaround times on applications for the third quarter (Mar, Apr, May) of Fiscal Year 2023.

Type	Applications	Median processing time
EMS personnel	6,797	15 days
EMS educators	551	120 days
EMS providers	102	68 days
First responder organizations	86	72 days



# EMS PROVIDER

### Factors that contribute to processing time

- Renewal applications for EMS personnel and educators are opened six months before the expiration date; the open time contributes to the processing time.
- Initial provider and first responder applicants undergo surveys and inspection before a license is issued.
- Renewal applications for EMS providers and first responders are opened three months before the expiration date; the open time contributes to the processing time.

### A few things to remember when renewing your EMS certification or license:

#### EMS personnel

- Don't wait for your name to appear on the fingerprint list.
- Don't wait until the last day of the month to submit your application.

#### EMS providers

- Don't wait until the last minute to update or obtain your letter of credit from your banking institution. You should obtain your letter 90 days before your expiration date.
- The certificate, license, or approval expires at midnight of the expiration date if the department doesn't receive a renewal application and the correct amount of renewal fee, or it only receives the application but not the full amount of the renewal fee prior to midnight of the expiration date.
- An untimely filed EMS provider renewal application will require the applicant to file an initial application and meet EMS provider license requirements in effect for an initial applicant at that time.



# DATA

Analysis ■ Communication ■ Information



# DESIGNATION

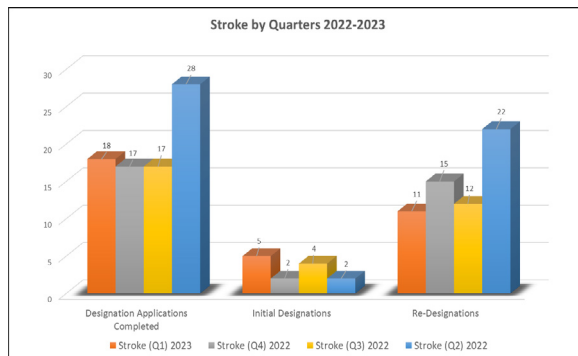
## Facility Designations

The Trauma and Stroke facility designations data represents the total completed designation applications per quarter in 2022 and Q1 of 2023.

The graphs further characterize application types by the number of facilities applying for initial designation and the currently designated facilities seeking re-designation.

[View the full report](#)

### STROKE FACILITIES



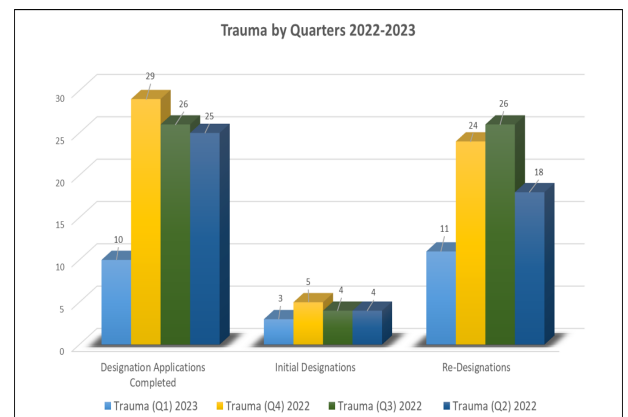
#### Stroke designation program updates:

- DSHS approved [Advanced \(Level II\) Stroke Designation Guidelines](#) posted on DSHS Stroke Designation [website](#).
- Stroke Designated facility calls are held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month.
- A workgroup is in development to assist revision of data collection information on DSHS application

### TRAUMA FACILITIES

#### Trauma designation program updates:

- Implemented ISS Scoring/TQIP Assistance Workgroup.
- Website resources developed:
  - [Trauma Registry Mentorship List](#)
  - [TQIP Mentorship List](#)
  - [Benefits of TQIP](#)
  - [ISS Web-Data Entry](#)
- DSHS Sponsored TOPIC courses.
- Designation Staff provides assistance to facilities with deficiencies.



# Updates

Regulations • Programs • Funding



## SENATE BILL 8

### Senate Bill 8 Incentive Project

Due to the overwhelming support of the Texas Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Recruitment and Retention Initiative by Texas EMS Providers, EMS Education Programs, Regional Advisory Councils (RACs), and many stakeholders, I am excited to report the following:

**1,861** scholarships have been processed since October 2022, totaling **\$10,756,400** dollars.

- RACs have supported scholarships for **1,152** Paramedic students, **112** for Advanced Emergency Medical Technician students (AEMT), and **607** for EMT students.
- Today, we have **2,078** more certified EMS personnel than we did on September 30, 2022.
- Comparing the initial education classes begun to date in 2023 to those started in 2022, we had **36** more classes in 2023.

The challenge we are now facing is that we have obligated over 80% of the available funds for scholarships, and four RACs have already obligated all their scholarship allotment. To increase the available funds for scholarships, beginning September 1, 2023, we will stop the incentive program for having EMS education students who pass the NREMT exam on the first attempt. Ending the incentive payment will provide additional available funds in each RAC to allow for more scholarships.

### Uncompensated Trauma Care Fund Distribution June 2023

The Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), EMS & Trauma Systems is pleased to announce that the Uncompensated Trauma Care Fund distributions to designated trauma facilities occurred the week of June 19, 2023.

#### Details

#### Fund 5111

**\$8,863,350.77** from the Designated Trauma Facilities and Emergency Medical Services Account (Fund 5111) was distributed to 297 eligible designated and IAP trauma facilities. As reminder and for reference, see New Process for Hospitals receiving SDA "Trauma Add-On" below for more information. See more at: [FY 2021 Uncompensated Trauma Care Fund Distribution \(5111\)](#).

#### Funds 5108 & 5007

**\$576,262.00** from the Emergency Medical services, Trauma Facilities, and Trauma Care Systems Account (Fund 5108/1131) and **\$555,561.90** from the Commission on State Emergency Communications Account (Fund 5007/911) were distributed to 294 eligible hospitals. See more at: [FY 2021 Uncompensated Trauma Care Fund Distribution \(Funds 5108 & 5007\)](#).

## FUNDING

# NEWS AND LINKS

Local • National • Resources

## NHTSA's EMS Update

Learn more about current projects and efforts in EMS from NHTSA and its Federal partners.

[Learn more](#)

## CDC Newsroom

View the latest CDC public health news and press releases.

[Learn more](#)

## The Bulletin

The Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons.

[Learn more](#)

## Washington Update

Bi-monthly newsletter of the National Association of State EMS Officials.

[Learn more](#)

## EMSC Pulse

A digest of information about the pediatric emergency medical care community.

[Learn more](#)

## Integrated Healthcare

Focuses on improving the patient experience of care through inter-professional collaborations.

[Learn more](#)

## EMS/Trauma Systems Links

### GETAC

Visit the Governor's EMS and Trauma Advisory Council web page to view council, committee, and meeting information.

### Rules

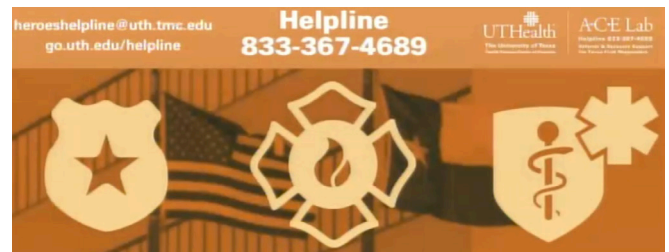
Links to the Texas Administrative Code rules pertaining to EMS/Trauma Systems.

### Disciplinary actions

Public notice of disciplinary action by the Department of State Health Services and the Consumer Protection Division, Consumer Safety Unit.

### Staff Contacts

Contact information for the Office of EMS/Trauma Systems staff and programs.



Texas Department of State Health Services



Questions, comments, or suggestions about *Texas EMS Trauma News*? Contact us at [EMSTraumaNews@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:EMSTraumaNews@dshs.state.tx.us).

External links to other sites are intended to be informational and do not have the endorsement of the Texas Department of State Health Services.