



45th Annual EMS Conference & Tradeshow

Questions and answers regarding the North Dakota EMS Association Annual Conference

How did you arrive at the decision to postpone the conference to October 2-4, 2020?

The North Dakota EMS Association (NDEMSEA) began to explore all options for the conference early in the week of March 9th. NDEMSEA met with the Bismarck Event Center and Ramkota Hotel on Tuesday, March 10th and at that time were given assurances both were following all recommended CDC and ND Health Department guidelines. Rapid developments over the week with recommended closures and cancelling of mass gatherings progressed, and on Thursday, March 12th NDEMSEA began to explore options of either canceling, postponing, or hosting a virtual online conference. At a 10am meeting on Friday, March 13th it was determined to postpone the conference if a fall date could be secured. Late Friday afternoon the new date and venue was acquired.

This decision was not done hastily, or taken lightly as NDEMSEA ultimately wants to ensure that our citizens of North Dakota continue to receive a healthy front line of Emergency Medical Service personnel.

With the uncertain future of COVID-19 should the conference been simply cancelled?

The annual conference brings together nearly 700 attendees and over 70 exhibitors as we gather to share resources, network, and obtain necessary continuing education. Meetings are also held to bring together service leaders and medical directors. We feel this networking is very much important, as well as EMS providers continue to need ongoing continuing education. NDEMSEA is cautiously optimistic that COVID-19 concerns will improve by October, however if ongoing restrictions on gatherings remain in place a decision to ultimately cancel the 45th annual conference will be made on or around September 1st.

How much will the pre-conference sessions and conference topics change?

The NDEMSEA conference committee is doing their best to keep the pre-conference sessions, national presenters, and topics selected the same for the October 2-4, 2020 conference. We were unable to secure two of our national presenters, but will do our best to replace their topics with similar content. The pre-conference sessions will see some slight changes as the early demand for the EVOC and Mental Health were low, but currently we are determining what sessions will work best given current national trends. Please contact our office or any conference committee member if there is something relevant that you would like to suggest.



When do you anticipate a brochure along with participant and exhibitor registration to open?

While much of the presenters and topics will remain the same, due to the uncertainty of COVID-19 we will not be publishing a brochure and opening registration until the situation improves and it is no longer deemed a global pandemic. While we anticipate having a more complete schedule later this spring, we do not foresee releasing a revised brochure and fully opening registration until mid to late July.

This conference is scheduled for Friday, October 2nd through Sunday, October 4th. Isn't the annual conference typically scheduled from Thursday to Saturday?

Due to limited availability at the Bismarck Event Center and Ramkota Hotel, NDEMSA selected the best option. We typically select our April dates four years in advance so we felt very fortunate to be able to secure an October weekend with just six months' notice. Other available dates were either weekdays, early in July, Labor Day weekend, or the first weekend in November. We felt October 2nd through the 4th was our best option and while it will be a bit different schedule for us, as EMS providers we will embrace a schedule change. There are a number of decisions to make but as of mid-March anticipated changes include;

- All pre-conference sessions on Friday will be held at the Bismarck Event Center.
- Hotel headquarters will remain at the Ramkota Hotel (however, no classroom availability).
- We anticipate the exhibit hall will open Friday afternoon with a vendor social on Friday evening. It is doubtful that the exhibit hall will be open on Sunday.
- The awards banquet and table of honor ceremony will likely be held at the Bismarck Event Center. The exact location, day, and time is still being determined along with any entertainment that may follow.

Will there be other impacts to other North Dakota EMS Association events?

- Management Conference scheduled for June 1-2, 2020 in Bismarck is still on as scheduled.
- Instructor/Coordinator refresher course scheduled for June 5, 2020 in Jamestown is still on as scheduled.
- SW Conference in Medora for September 25-27, 2020 will still be held. However the conference may be shortened to two days or other slight modifications based on classes offered at the annual conference.
- The 46th Annual EMS Conference will be held on April 8-10, 2021 in Bismarck.
- Mental Health Awareness, EMS Safety, Management Essentials, and online EMR courses will be evaluated separately and decisions made on each course in the coming weeks.



My certification and/or licensure expires in 2020 and I needed hours from the April conference, now what?

- If you are an EMT, the National Registry of EMT's extended the March 31, 2020 re-certification date to June 30, 2020. The NREMT also lifted the Distributive Education (DE) online restriction for the 2020 certification period. Continuing education credits from the October 2-4, 2020 conference will count for those expiring in March of 2021 and 2022.
- If you are a North Dakota licensed EMR with an expiration of June 30, 2020 we are currently working with the ND Division of EMS to determine if they will grant an extension.
- If you have an Instructor/Coordinator license that expires on June 30, 2020 the I/C refresher class scheduled for June 5, 2020 in Jamestown is still being held as scheduled. NDEMSEA will be working with the ND Division of EMS on an extension for those unable to relicense by June 30, 2020.

I paid for the April conference, can I get a refund or apply a credit toward a future event?

- One and two year NDEMSEA membership dues are non-refundable (as noted on the registration form).
- NDEMSEA can transfer your paid registration to the October 2-4, 2020 conference. NDEMSEA staff will work with you individually if you require significant changes to your registration (i.e. pre-conference classes selected, one day versus two days, etc.) once the October schedule is released early this summer.
- If you are simply unable to transfer your registration to the October conference we will work with you (or your EMS agency) on issuing a refund.

I am an exhibitor and currently registered for the April conference, can I get a refund or apply my registration to a future conference?

As with participant registrations the NDEMSEA staff will work with you to transfer your exhibitor registration to either the October 2-4, 2020 conference or the April 8-10, 2021 conference. NDEMSEA will work with each exhibitor on their selected booth space. Currently, we do not anticipate any significant changes to the exhibit map as we will remain in Hall B at the Bismarck Event Center.

If you are unable to transfer your registration, the NDEMSEA Director of Administration will work with you individually on refund options. Any refunds issued will be processed in two to four weeks.

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I have hotel reservations for April, can I just transfer my hotel reservation to October?

NDEMSEA does not manage hotel accommodations. Please work with the hotel directly on cancellations, refunds, or October conference bookings. If you booked a non-refundable or discounted rate with a travel vendor you may be eligible for refunds due to the state and national emergency declarations.

The decision to postpone the conference to October 2-4, 2020 was just made on Friday, March 13th. NDEMSEA staff is currently working with the five area hotels near the Bismarck Event Center so please allow them time to block hotel rooms for the EMS Conference with the October dates. While we don't see any major events for the first weekend in October we suggest booking your hotel accommodations well in advance.

I have additional questions and concerns

Please call our office at 701-221-0567 or email at ndemsa.office@ndemsa.org.

Online updates will be posted at www.ndemsa.org and our Facebook page.

Because we are still securing additional details in regards to the location, schedule, and classes we ask that if you do not have an urgent matter that needs immediate assistance to please wait until further details are released.

We thank you for your patience, and your everyday dedication to the citizens of North Dakota. While our nation and world is facing this pandemic, EMS providers, nurses, firefighters, law enforcement, and other emergency workers continue to put themselves at risk to serve their communities.

We appreciate you, please stay healthy and safe.

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