



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES  
PO BOX 360  
TRENTON, N.J. 08625-0360

CHRIS CHRISTIE  
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO  
Lt. Governor

[www.nj.gov/health](http://www.nj.gov/health)

CATHLEEN D. BENNETT  
Commissioner

October 3, 2016

Christopher McHugh

Re: **Notice of Summary Suspension:  
Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Certification # 611141  
Investigation Control # 2016-0107V**

Dear Mr. McHugh:

The New Jersey Department of Health (the Department) is vested with the responsibility of carrying out the provisions of the Health Care Facilities Planning Act, N.J.S.A. 26:2H-1 et seq., which was enacted, in part, to ensure that all hospital and related health care services rendered in the State of New Jersey are of the highest quality. As defined at N.J.S.A. 26:2H-2(b), health care services include any pre-hospital care rendered by basic life support personnel. In addition, the Emergency Medical Services Act, N.J.S.A. 26:2K-7 et seq., authorizes the Department to certify Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs). In furtherance of the objectives set forth in the statutes, the Department has adopted regulations that govern the training, certification and professional conduct of EMTs and EMT candidates. See N.J.A.C. 8:40A, Emergency Medical Technicians: Training and Certification.

On August 24, 2016, the Department's Office of Emergency Medical Services (OEMS) received notification that you were charged with sexual assault of a minor and endangering the welfare of a minor. Consistent with regulatory authority and OEMS policy, the OEMS opened an investigation in response to this notification.

Upon opening the investigation, the OEMS investigator confirmed that you are currently certified as an EMT. In addition, the investigator obtained police reports, which provide that you were arrested on August 17, 2016 under complaint number S2016-000575 for the following:

1. Second degree sexual assault, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2C:14-2(c)(4);
2. Third degree endangering the welfare of a minor, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 2C:24-4(a)(1).

Specifically, it is alleged that you engaged in sexual intercourse with a 14-year-old child, which impaired and debauched the morals of said child.

In addition, investigators discovered that you possess two user accounts in the OEMS Certification Platform. The first account (#609129) was created on June 28, 2013 where you answered "Yes" to the question, "If you answered YES to either Legal Action question listed

above, have these matters been previously cleared by the New Jersey Office of Emergency Medical Services?" Consistent with OEMS policy, multiple letters were sent to you requesting a background check to be completed, to which no answer was received.

On October 11, 2013, you created a second account (#611141) to which you marked "No" to all of the criminal history questions. Subsequently, you were certified as an EMT on May 28, 2015. Upon further review of the two accounts, it was noticed both had the same birthday listed. And, the first account created (#609129) had a social security number of XXX-95-XXXX whereas the second account (#611141) had a social security number of XXX-96-XXXX. With the social security numbers being one digit off of each other, it appears that you altered your social security number in order to create a new account and escape the completion of a background check. Such deceptive behavior leads to the conclusion that you have criminal convictions that occurred prior to 2013 and you are attempting to conceal these convictions from OEMS.

As you are aware, EMTs work in unsupervised, two-person teams in order to respond effectively to emergencies. You should also be aware that neither member of the team works in a supervisory capacity. Rather, one team member drives the vehicle and the other is alone in the back of the ambulance providing emergency medical care to the patient. The provision of emergency care requires an EMT to have close, hands-on contact with vulnerable patients ranging from infants to senior citizens. Even more, EMTs are placed in a position of trust by the general public. They must exercise good judgment, trust each other and be trusted by the public, police officers, fire fighters, doctors and other professionals in order to be effective. In short, EMTs must be law-abiding and must be trusted to care for all patients in an appropriate, safe manner.

Based upon the foregoing, the Department has determined that your EMT certification must be **summarily suspended**. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:40A-10.2(a), "the Commissioner, or his designee, may summarily suspend a person's EMT and/or EMT-Instructor certification when, in his or her opinion, the continued certification of that person poses an immediate or serious threat to the public health, safety or welfare." The charges pending against you demonstrate poor judgment and lack trustworthiness as well as establishes that you pose a threat to vulnerable, minor patients. Furthermore, your creation of a new OEMS user account in what appears to be an attempt to evade a criminal background check shows not only that you engaged in dishonest and deceptive behavior, but also raises the question as to the nature of your criminal background that you are seeking to hide from OEMS. Because you are concealing your criminal background from OEMS and the current charges against you are serious and impede OEMS' ability to trust you with vulnerable patients, the Department finds that your continued certification as an EMT constitutes an immediate and serious threat to public health, safety, and welfare. **Therefore, your certification as an EMT is immediately suspended and shall remain suspended until such time as the Department has completed its investigation into this matter and the charges against you have been resolved. You may not, under any circumstances, act in the capacity of, or perform the duties of an EMT in New Jersey during this period of suspension.**

In accordance with N.J.A.C. 8:40A-7.1(f), certification cards are the property of the Department and shall be immediately surrendered upon demand. You are hereby directed to immediately surrender your EMT certification card(s) to the OEMS, either by sending via United States Postal Service First Class Mail, to the address on the first page of this Notice, or via physical delivery to Department of Health, OEMS, John Fitch Way, Market and Warren Streets, Trenton, NJ, 08611.

In the interim, the OEMS will continue to investigate this matter. You will be notified when the OEMS has completed its investigation, at which time you will be advised of what action(s), if any, will be taken with respect to your EMT certification.

Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 8:40A-10.3(a), you may appeal to the Commissioner of the Department Health for emergency relief to contest this summary suspension. Your request for a hearing on this matter must be submitted in writing and must be accompanied by a response to the charges contained herein. Please include the control number **2016-0105V** on your correspondence, and forward your request to:

New Jersey Department of Health  
Office of Legal & Regulatory Compliance  
P.O. Box 360, Room 805  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0360  
Attn: Ms. Tami Roach

Failure to submit a written request for emergency relief within 30 days from the date of this Notice shall be deemed an acceptance of this Department's decision to summarily suspend your EMT certification pending completion of an investigation, thereby forfeiting all rights to emergency relief. If you have any questions concerning this matter, please contact Timothy Seplaki, at (609) 633-7777.

Sincerely,

Nancy Kelly-Goodstein, M.A.S.  
Acting Director  
Emergency Medical Services

- c. Christopher R. Rinn, Assistant Commissioner  
Timothy Seplaki, OEMS  
James Sweeney, OEMS  
Tami Roach, OL&RC

SENT VIA REGULAR U.S. MAIL AND  
CERTIFIED MAIL #  
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED