



Senate Bill 67 Emergency Medical Services – Paramedics – Vaccination Administration

State of Maryland

**Maryland
Institute for
Emergency Medical
Services Systems**

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MIEMSS Position: Support

Bill Summary: SB 67 modifies existing law to permit paramedics to administer (1) vaccines included in the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention’s recommended immunization schedule or authorized for emergency use by the Food and Drug Administration; and (2) tuberculin skin testing. Vaccine administration / TB skin testing must be part of a public safety or commercial EMS service occupational health program or a population health outreach effort conducted by a county health department or Maryland hospital or health system and must be authorized by MIEMSS and under the direction of the EMS medical director. Vaccine administration is limited to those 18 years of age and older; and provisions must be in place for vaccine storage and inventory, distribution of vaccine information, documentation of patient consent and vaccine administration within ImmuNet, recognition of adverse effects, and referral and follow-up.

Rationale:

- The 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID 19) focused a bright light on the need for EMS and all health care sectors to participate in coordinated, population-based health initiatives.
- EMS personnel are uniquely positioned to act as a “force multiplier” in public health initiatives: EMS is trained to perform certain procedures, function under medical direction, provide EMS services throughout the State, and are highly regarded in the communities they serve.
- Current law – enacted in 2000 – (1) permits EMS to administer only influenza and hepatitis B immunizations and TB skin testing; (2) limits EMS administration to public safety personnel within their own jurisdiction; (3) fails to include EMS personnel who work at commercial EMS services; and (4) does not encompass EMS assisting with public health vaccine initiatives, such as with COVID-19.
- Under the Governor’s Proclamation of a State of Emergency and a catastrophic health emergency, EMS is currently permitted to administer COVID-19 vaccinations, but that expires when the State of Emergency ends. The need for COVID-19 vaccinations will continue after the conclusion of the current State of Emergency. Without SB 67, EMS cannot participate in public health efforts for COVID-19 vaccinations and for other vaccinations without a declaration of a State of Emergency.
- SB 67 enables EMS personnel to administer vaccinations as part of an EMS occupational health program and to participate in health department and hospital / health system vaccination efforts and TB skin testing within a specified framework.

MIEMSS Supports SB 67 and Requests a Favorable Report