



Larry Hogan, Governor
Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor
Jeannie Haddaway-Riccio, Secretary
Allan Fisher, Deputy Secretary

1-6-2022

Dear Legislators,

On behalf of Maryland's Park Rangers, I would like to help you understand our plea to be reinstated as official First Responders. Our agency underwent what is known as "The Merger" in 2005. The Department began to phase out Law Enforcement Officers (LEO Park Rangers) and hire civilian rangers (Park Service Associates). For many years, through this transition, we were still recognized by the Maryland Police and Correctional Training Commission (MPCT) and Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services System (MIEMSS) as an educational program and operational program.

Between 2015 and 2017 we lost our recognition as an operational program under MPTC as a result of Natural Resources Police moving to a shorter EMS class only intended for law enforcement officers. The Maryland Park Service could no longer use NRP to be recognized by MIEMMS and MPS choose to stick with the previous MIEMMS approved EMR program because it was a much more thorough and rigorous training. Another contributing factor at this time was enough of our LEO Park Rangers had retired or left that the park service dropped below the threshold determined by MPTC to be a law enforcement educational program. This resulted in MIEMSS rescinding our ability to train and license our EMRs.

Regardless of licensure, we maintained the same training standards and in 2020 moved to the American Red Cross's training curriculum which is an even more robust and longer training. The Red Cross program is also recognized as a MIEMSS qualifying training for EMRs. A cost saving decision made in 2005, has had the unintended ramifications of losing nearly 200 EMRs that have the training needed to be licensed EMRs working for the state of Maryland today.

Impact

- Approximately 190 currently trained American Red Cross EMRs (anticipate at least 10 more new hires in 2022 to replace vacancies)
- Seven licensed EMTs and one licensed paramedic are currently working for MPS and are not recognized by the Department of Natural Resources as such

Training

- American Red Cross Emergency Medical Responder (48 hours)
- Introduction to Search and Rescue (16 hours)
- Basic Water Rescue (6 hours)
- Hazardous Communication Training (1 hour)
- Blood Borne Pathogens (3 hours)
- FEMA IS-100 and IS-700 (4+ hours)

Respectfully,
Maria Reusing
Park Ranger Lead
Central Region Trainer
Maryland Park Service