

Virtual Inspection Process Overview

(10/20/2020)

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), EMS & Trauma Systems has implemented Virtual Inspections to continue the validation of compliance pursuant to Texas Health and Safety Code [Chapter 773](#), including Section 773.0611, and the licensing rules under Texas Administrative Code [Chapter 157](#), including Section [157.11](#)(r), activities which include, but are not limited to, EMS Vehicle Inspections and EMS Provider Compliance Surveys.

The inspection process will continue to follow the same standard format and will utilize standard documents and forms to validate compliance as previous in-person inspections.

❖ **What to expect prior to the Virtual Inspection**

The EMS Specialist conducting the Virtual Inspection will contact you prior to the visit to determine which virtual meeting platform works best based on your equipment and available internet connection. Once this has been determined, a trial meeting should be conducted to ensure there is a successful connection to both audio and visual components.

❖ **What to expect during the Virtual Inspection**

Provider Compliance Surveys and Vehicle Inspections will be completed by using a camera connected to a mobile device, such as a smartphone, tablet, or portable computer, to validate that all documents, policies, protocols, and procedures are present, and that equipment and supplies are present and in working order. The EMS Specialist will ask you to physically show them the specific item using the camera on your device.

❖ **What to expect at the conclusion of the Virtual Inspection**

At the end of the Virtual Inspection, the EMS Specialist will review the results of the inspection with you. The EMS Specialist conducting the inspection will email you a copy of the inspection documents for you to print, sign, and then return electronically.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**Q. Our technology resources are limited, and we prefer an in-person inspection. Do we have to conduct the inspection virtually?**

A. The Virtual Inspection process is currently being implemented to complete and conduct inspections while maintaining social distancing requirements and to mitigate any potential health safety issues. DSHS asks that all providers work with the EMS Specialist conducting the inspection to identify and resolve any barriers or issues that would prevent you from completing a virtual inspection.

Q. Do I have to use a specific web meeting or web hosting platform?

A. DSHS has not mandated the use of a specific web meeting or web hosting platform for virtual inspections. There are several options that can be used to include Microsoft Teams, Skype, Google Duo, and Facetime. Talk with your EMS Specialist about which option works best for you.

Q. We have access to the Zoom meetings platform, can we use this instead?

A. Due to serious and unresolved issues concerning security, privacy and data use, DSHS staff are prohibited from hosting Zoom meetings. Please discuss alternative options with your EMS Specialist.

Q. Are we required to purchase the software and equipment needed to participate in the Virtual Inspection?

A. DSHS is not requiring you to purchase or upgrade equipment, software, or technology to conduct a virtual inspection. Your EMS Specialist will work with you based on your existing equipment and resources.

The mission of DSHS is to improve the health, safety, and well-being of Texans through good stewardship of public resources, and a focus on core public health functions, which includes compliance activities. By working together and utilizing this innovative process we can ensure that the quality of emergency care provided to the residents of Texas meets expectations. For additional questions or concerns, please contact your local regional office.