

IDPH Prehospital Data Program

Frequently Asked Questions¹

Q: What is the IDPH Prehospital Data Program?

A: The Illinois EMS Systems Act (210 ILCS 50) and supporting administrative code (77 Ill Adm. Code 515.350 and 515.AppendixE) provide for the collection of prehospital patient care report data by licensed emergency medical services transport vehicle providers, and the subsequent submission of these data to the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH). Licensed EMS transport provider agencies must comply with 77 Ill Adm. Code 515.330(1)(6) and 515.330(1)(7) for proper oversight, monitoring of important trends, and quality assurance activities.

Illinois generally adheres to the national standard for electronic prehospital data collection. The National Emergency Medical Services Information System ([NEMSIS](#)) is the national database that is used to store EMS data from the U.S. States and Territories. NEMSIS is a universal standard for how patient care information resulting from an emergency 911 call for assistance is collected. NEMSIS is a collaborative system to improve patient care through the standardization, aggregation, and utilization of point of care EMS data at a local, state, and national level.

IDPH staff manage the prehospital data repository and provide technical assistance to EMS providers to aid in the submission and utilization of these data – forming the “Prehospital Data Program”. These data are also used by IDPH for quality assurance, planning, and regulatory matters.

Q: What records must be submitted to the IDPH State repository?

A: Please note that EMS transport providers are only required to report the type of data required under the law to IDPH. [The code section that addresses reporting](#) states that IDPH needs reports “for every inter-hospital transport and pre-hospital emergency call, regardless of the ultimate outcome or disposition of the call.” Monthly submission of all pre-hospital emergency and inter-hospital data under 77 Ill Adm. Code 515.350 and 515.AppendixE is required.

Q: What software can I use to submit ePCR to the IDPH State repository?

A: IDPH provides free access to State-run software, KeyData. KeyData software is compatible with Windows and requires hardware that can access the Internet for updates and uploads.

Alternatively, EMS transport providers can elect to use one of 11 IDPH-approved third-party software vendors, if preferred. IDPH only accepts NEMSIS V3-compliant records – NEMSIS provides a [vetted list of V3 compliant software vendors](#) on its [website](#). If you have further questions about vetting and selecting a third-party vendor, you can reach out to your EMS System Coordinator and/or IDPH Prehospital Data Program staff.

¹ Nothing contained herein is intended and should not be understood to over-rule the applicable provisions of the EMS Act or Code.

Q: Why is there a validation process and how does it work?

A: Validation is a process by which data are determined to be in the correct database format. If you are using KeyData, validation is not required because IDPH has already validated the KeyData software application. KeyData is the State-run software and therefore inherently meets all necessary specifications. With that said, be sure to consistently connect to the internet to ensure that records are transmitting to the State in a timely manner. Internet connectivity also guarantees that any updates made to the program by the State can be pushed through and updated on provider hardware as they become available.

If you are using third-party software (ESO, ImageTrend, etc.) IDPH must ensure that ePCR generated by an agency is meeting all Illinois specifications and yields high quality data. Before the State repository can begin accepting third-party software generated ePCR, the software must pass one-time validation through submitting test records to ensure adherence to the Illinois-specific requirements. After passing validation (verified with documentation letter), records can flow to IDPH in near-real time. [Here](#) is an overview of the validation process.

Please note that if you change software vendors or make a significant change to your current ePCR specifications (moving from NEMESIS V2 to V3, for example) you must complete the validation process again for the agency/agencies impacted to be able to successfully submit data to the State repository.

Q: How do I know if records are successfully transmitting to the IDPH State repository?

A: Provider agencies and their EMS System Coordinators will receive feedback emails with a summary of the records accepted and rejected from the State repository. Feedback reports go out every morning between 7:00 and 9:00 am on 24/7/365 basis, with exceptions due to maintenance.

Feedback reports have **** CONTAINS REJECTIONS **** in the subject line whenever any of the run reports covered by that feedback report have been rejected for one or more errors. Rest assured that whenever a feedback report goes out it covers everything that has been imported since the previous report. Each provider should maintain regular contact with its EMS System Coordinator to assure that data are flowing smoothly into the IDPH repository.

Attached please find the feedback for a recent submission of electronic EMS data to the state of Illinois. The file containing this data was either submitted by you or on your behalf.

If you have questions about the feedback or otherwise require assistance please contact the IDPH EMS data manager, Dan Lee, at 312.814.0056 or daniel.lee@illinois.gov. Thanks for your support of EMS data collection in Illinois.