



# Aerie Backcountry Medicine School Policies

Volume 1 – Effective January 2020

The following policies apply to all courses and programs taught by Aerie Backcountry Medicine.

## Program Policies

We have written the following policies with the physical and emotional safety of our students, staff and the public as our first priority. Beyond this, our responsibility is to train outstanding care-providers and provide an unparalleled educational experience for students in the outdoor field. A care provider is expected to have unquestionable integrity and an ability to manage stressful and life-threatening situations. This program will provide the training and experience to prepare our students for these situations and requires complete compliance with our policies.

## **Safety**

- Aerie reserves the right to remove any student for what, at Aerie's sole discretion, is deemed unsafe behavior. Examples may include refusal to adhere to required safety precautions, participation in unplanned-unapproved activities, and a poor attitude that, in Aerie's opinion, detracts from the safety or educational experience of the other students and staff.
- No student of Aerie Backcountry Medicine shall be allowed to display violent or threatening behavior (including but not limited to, verbal threats, threatening gestures, and actual physical acts) to other students, instructors, other personnel, or guests/visitors. Any such behavior is grounds for immediate dismissal and subsequent failure of this program.
- Students exhibiting behaviors that are inconsistent with those required of an EMT will not be permitted to finish the program. Aerie does not take lightly the possibility of removing a student from class; however, we will do so whenever we feel that the student is a safety or behavioral hazard to her/ himself or others.

## **Attendance**

- You will invest a lot of time, energy and money in the program. Aerie wants you to get the most out of this program and have the best chance of passing. 100% attendance will help you achieve this goal.
  - **NO unexcused absences will be tolerated.** An Aerie instructor or the Aerie Office must be notified in advance of any absence. A student with any unexcused absence will be dismissed and subsequently failed from this program.
  - The number of hours for *excused* absences will be dependent on your course length and type and are listed below. It is crucial that the student contact the instructor(s) as early as possible regarding future absences. It is the responsibility of the absent student to arrange for make up of missed content.
    - *Note:* Not all requests for *excused* absences are granted.



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- Wilderness First Aid (WFA) students can miss 2 hours of excused absences.
  - Wilderness First Responder (WFR) students can miss 4 hours of excused absences.
  - Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) students can miss 8 hours of excused absences.
  - Wilderness EMT (WEMT) students can miss 8 hours of excused absences.
  - Semester in Wilderness Medicine (SWM) students can miss 24 hours of excused absences.
- Punctuality is required. Tardiness will count toward total absences. Tardiness is calculated in 15-minute increments. If you are tardy by 15 to 29 minutes, then it will be recorded as 15 minutes of absence; if you are tardy by 30 to 44 minutes, then it will be recorded as 30 minutes of absence, and so on. Prior notification of tardiness is required if it is to be excused.
  - EMT/WEMT/SWM: Clinical time is required. 12 hours of hospital emergency department observation and/or 12 hours of ambulance ride-along will be scheduled. All policies herein apply to these clinical settings. Name badges are the property of Aerie and must be returned upon completion of clinical time.
  - EMT/WEMT/SWM: Review sessions are optional, times and dates to be determined.

## Evaluation and Grading

- **Payment and enrollment in this program does not assure successful completion.** Students failing to keep up with required work or who consistently score poorly on exams will be removed from the program.
- Multiple-choice exams:
  - **Exams require a cumulative score of 70% or better to pass the overall program.**
  - make-up exams are allowed for exams scores of less than 70% (or missed exams due to excused absence).
    - - A score of 80% or better is required on all make-up exams
    - If the student scores less than 80% on the make-up exam, remediation, based on instructor recommendation, is required to pass.
  - All exams will be averaged for a final program percentage (based on 100% scale) and assigned a letter grade. Grading scale: *A 90-100; B 80-89; C 70-79; D 60-69; F 59 or below.*
- EMT/WEMT/SWM: Evaluation of practical skills will be based on current National Registry of EMTs and Montana Board of Medical Examiners examination checklists, which will be distributed after the program begins.



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- EMT/WEMT/SWM: Practical skills will be assessed by instructors throughout practice sessions, scenarios, and specific skill evaluations performed as a group or one on one.
- **All practical skills must be passed** prior to the end of this program for successful completion.
- EMT/WEMT/SWM: National and State practical exams are typically scheduled for the week immediately following the last day of class. Check with your instructors to confirm the dates.
- EMT/WEMT/SWM: Eligibility for testing depends on successful completion of the EMT coursework, including passing all written exams and practical skills.
- Any recording (audio, visual, or otherwise) of any lecture, scenario, debrief, or discussion is not permissible. Exceptions to this clause must be granted in writing from Aerie Management prior to the recording.

## Facilities

- Depending on the type of length of your class type/program, we may be guests of multiple facilities throughout the program and will follow their policies and guidelines at all times. Some of these facilities include, but are not limited to, Rancho Mastatal, the Hanifl Centre, Jack Creek Preserve Foundation, the Whitewater Rescue Institute, and Swan Valley Connections.
- Respect the flora and fauna living at each facility
- Be courteous to employees of our facilities
- No alcohol or illegal drug use permitted during any part of program hours and at the discretion of the instructors or facility hosts
  - If an instructor believes that a student's off-time alcohol use is interfering with that student's program performance in any way and/or is a safety threat, the student will be removed from the program.

## Attitude

Almost nothing is less tangible and yet more important than student attitude. Attitudes are infectious, affecting the morale and well being of fellow students and staff alike. Aerie reserves the right to remove a student from the class for what it deems to be a pervasive and persistent negative attitude and/or an attitude that distracts other students and/or Aerie staff from successful completion of the program.

## Harassment

Aerie Backcountry Medicine is committed to creating and maintaining a learning environment in which all students, instructors, other personnel, and guests/visitors can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of all forms of harassment (including



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sexual harassment), exploitation, or intimidation. All allegations or threats will be taken seriously and are grounds for immediate dismissal and subsequent failure of this program

Aerie Backcountry Medicine does not tolerate any action or statement that discriminates against another because of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, creed, marital or veteran status, age, or the presence of a physical, mental or sensory disability and that such behavior is also prohibited by local, state, and federal laws. Any form of discrimination is grounds for immediate dismissal and subsequent failure of this program.

## Physical Demands

This program is physically demanding, as is the job of care providers and EMTs on the street or in the backcountry. Aptitudes required for this program include good physical stamina, endurance, and body condition that would not be adversely affected by the following National Registry requirements:

- walking 2-5 miles on uneven terrain while carrying 35 pounds of weight,
- standing for 2-12 hours,
- sitting for 2-4 hours,
- lifting 100 pounds of weight,
- crawling, crouching, kneeling, bending, balancing, reaching above shoulder height and to the floor.

## Physical Modesty

Some degree of contact is helpful during the program in order to practice and improve assessment techniques, especially during practice scenarios. However, rude or illicit behavior will not be tolerated, even if it is in a joking manner. Please approach an Aerie instructor if you are not comfortable with the level of physical contact during the program.

## Personal Beliefs

Aerie Backcountry Medicine students, employees, facility hosts and your future patients will come from diverse political, religious, and economic backgrounds. We require our students to respect this diversity by not making comments that offend or threaten individuals for their beliefs.

## Attire

- Please refer to the gear list you will receive in the student handbook for a complete checklist of clothing you will need for the program.
- Casual attire that is both comfortable and functional is adequate for all classroom sessions.



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- We will hold class outside in any weather, so please review and follow the gear lists. In addition, please wear or bring an extra set of clothing that can get dirty or even stained during scenarios. Please ask an Aerie instructor if you need any extra clothing or have questions regarding appropriate cold weather layering.

## Enrollment Policy

Students are eligible to enroll in course and programs with Aerie Backcountry Medicine up to one calendar day before the beginning of the desired course or program. Restrictions apply to course or program where the student maximum has been reached. In such cases, students may be placed on a waitlist for enrollment in future courses or program at their request.

EMT/WEMT/SWM: Students must be 18 years of age. In addition, to test for and receive National Registry EMT (NREMT) certification, students must have a high school diploma/ GED and have no current felony convictions. Otherwise, we expect students to arrive with a solid work ethic, physically capable of completing the program's activities, an open mind and a positive attitude.

## General

- Keep an open mind and be prepared to be critiqued
- Keep up on the reading
- Be flexible with the schedule – it will change

## Leaves of Absences for VA-funded students

VA will not pay benefits to veteran or eligible person(s) during a leave of absence.

## Program Completion for VA-funded students

Your VA educational benefits expire on the earliest of either the date you reach the total hours approved for your program, or on the date you complete or terminate your enrollment in the program. Upon your successful program completion, Aerie Backcountry Medicine's VA Certifying Official will inform the VA within 30 days.



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## VA Student Prorated Refund Policy

Aerie Backcountry Medicine agrees that if a veteran student fails to enter the course, withdraws, or is discontinued at any time prior to completion of the course, the unused portion of paid tuition, fees, and other charges will be refunded or the debt for such tuition, fees, and other charges will be canceled on a prorated basis as provided in VA Regulations 38CFR21-4255, as follows:

### Tuition and Other Charges

Aerie may charge a sum, which does not vary more than 10 percent from the exact pro rata, portion of such tuition, fees, and other charges that the length of the completed portion of the course bears to its total length. The exact proration will be determined on the ratio of the number of days of instruction completed by the student to the total number of instructional days in the course. For example:

**REFUND TABLE FOR VETERAN/ELIGIBLE STUDENTS**

STUDENT ENTITLED UPON WITHDRAWAL/TERMINATION	REFUND
10% of program completed	90% Refunded
20% of program completed	80% Refunded
30% of program completed	70% Refunded
40% of program completed	60% Refunded
50% of program completed	50% Refunded
60% of program completed	40% Refunded
70% of program completed	30% Refunded
80% of program completed	20% Refunded
90% of program completed	10% Refunded

### Prompt Refund

In the event that the veteran, spouse, surviving spouse, or child fails to enter the course, or withdraws, or is discontinued there from at any time prior to completion of the course, the unused portion of the tuition, fees, and other charges paid by the individual shall be refunded promptly, within 40 days, by Aerie Backcountry Medicine.

## VA Student Delayed Payment Processing

Aerie Backcountry Medicine will not impose any penalty, including the assessment of late fees, the denial of access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities, or the requirement that a covered individual borrow additional funds, on any covered individual because of the individual’s inability to meet his or her financial obligations to Aerie due to the delayed disbursement funding from VA under chapter 31 or 33.



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## School Calendar

Aerie Backcountry Medicine office staff will observe the following federal holidays: New Year's Day, Birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr., Washington's Birthday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day

The Aerie Backcountry Medicine office will be closed on the above listed holidays.

## Progress Record Maintenance

Aerie Backcountry Medicine will maintain progress records that clearly illustrate students' progress towards the completion of their program. These records include, but are limited to, attendance verification, test results, quizzes, practical examination skill sheets, interpersonal evaluation instruments, incident reports, remedial training sheets, and coursework remediation/student contracts.

These records will be maintained for a period not to exceed seven years and will be organized by individual course. Records will include the final letter grade assigned to each student originally enrolled in the course or program.

Each student will receive a course completion certificate upon the successful completion. Duplicate copies of the course completion certificate are available upon request.

## Readmission Policy

Students who have been dismissed or terminated from an Aerie Backcountry Medicine course or program for reasons of unsatisfactory attendance or unsatisfactory conduct may be readmitted, upon written appeal to the school's director. Student must be able to clearly articulate how they intend to prevent future unsatisfactory attendance records.

Students who have been dismissed or terminated from an Aerie Backcountry Medicine course or program for reasons of insufficient grades or unsatisfactory program progress may be readmitted, upon written appeal to the school's director and demonstration of a mastery of knowledge, skills, and abilities in the previously failed grading rubric categories. Student must be able to clearly demonstrate, both written and psychomotor mastery of topics.

## Credit for Previous Training Policy

Aerie Backcountry Medicine will evaluate all prior credit and grant credit, where appropriate, thus reducing a student's program cost and length. Students must submit appropriate proof of training with submission of application.



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## Dismissal

This program operates within, and abides by, specific guidelines established by, among others:

- Aerie Backcountry Medicine
- National Registry of EMTs (please review the NREMT [Eligibility, Disciplinary and Appeal Process](#))
- State of Montana Board of Medical Examiners
- University of Montana (please review the University of [Montana Student Conduct Code](#))

Failure to abide by the Aerie’s course policies and the policies of our cooperating sponsors/ hosts will result in dismissal from the program. Other than dismissal resulting from concerns for immediate threat to safety due behavior, where law enforcement will be involved, the student will be presented with a minimum of three warnings of possible dismissal and given the opportunity to modify their behavior and/ or performance. In the event that the student is taking the Aerie program for credit through the University of Montana, the student also has the right appeal Aerie’s decision in compliance with the University of Montana’s Code of Student Conduct. See “Readmission Policy” for details about regulations regarding readmission after dismissal.





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**Failure to abide by the above program policies will result in immediate dismissal from this program and subsequent failure without refund (except VA funded students).**

**In the event of dismissal or, a student will be responsible for his own food, lodging and travel from that point forward. Aerie is not responsible for providing transportation back to trailheads, airports or town. Aerie will not reimburse a student for expenses incurred after their expulsion.**

**In the event that a student decides to drop from their course/program, all expenses are similarly the student's responsibility.**

**In the event that a student is injured, ill, or otherwise requires evacuation or medical care during the program, the student is responsible for all expenses associated with this event. This will include transportation to and from trailheads/ remote villages, any food/ lodging expenses incurred during recuperation, and any other expense associated with the student outside of the program's planned schedule.**

**For all of the above reasons, Aerie strongly recommends that students have comprehensive medical and trip insurance and that they review these policies with their insurer before beginning the program. Aerie recommends [Global Rescue](#) for these services.**

### **Students with Disabilities**

Every effort will be made by Aerie Backcountry Medicine and its instructors to reasonably accommodate students with special needs while balancing the needs of the entire class and the required curriculum. ***It is the student's individual responsibility to notify the instructors of any disability or special need.***



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I have read and understood this document and accept all the terms of Aerie Backcountry Medicine’s School Policies outlined above on this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

Participant Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Witness to Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_