



## Transport of Biomedical Material Training

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The U.S. Army Public Health Command (USAPHC) offers and presents certification training relating to all aspects of preparing and shipping medical samples and specimens. The course is called the Transport of Biomedical Material (TBM) and it is conducted at various locations within CONUS and OCONUS several times a year.

1. **WHY THIS COURSE?** United States government and International regulations specify requirements for the safe transportation of hazardous materials (Hazmat) in commerce by motor vehicle, aircraft, vessel, and rail car. These comprehensive regulations govern transportation-related activities by persons and organizations that offer the hazardous materials for transport and the regulations govern actions by carriers. These are enforceable regulations and penalties for violations can be substantial. In addition, the Defense Transportation Regulation requires that “persons who certify Hazmat on shipping papers by any mode of transportation, military or commercial must successfully complete a certification course from one of the DOD schools” listed in that regulation, DoD 4500.9-R. The 40-hour TBM course taught by USAPHC is one of the schools/courses listed.

2. **WHAT IS TAUGHT?** The TBM course provides detailed instruction pertaining to transporting infectious substances, diagnostic specimens biological products, regulated medical waste, and limited quantity shipments of Class 3 flammable liquids. Detailed course topics include: training requirements, classification and identification of Hazmat, the kinds of packagings that must be used, hazard communication, preparation of shipping papers, markings and labels, emergency response actions, and incident notification requirements.

3. **REFERENCES USED.** Discussion focuses on requirements published in the Department of Transportation Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 49, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention CFR Title 42 [Select Agent], Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service 9 CFR and 7 CFR, Food and Drug Administration 21 CFR, the International Air Transport Association Dangerous Goods Regulations, Air Force Interservice Manual (AFMAN 24-204), the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code, United States Postal Service Domestic and International Mail Manuals, the Emergency Response Guide, and more. These regulations are provided to the students, some in their entirety and others in the form of pertinent extracts.

4. **WHO NEEDS THIS TRAINING?** This training is required for anyone who certifies (i.e., signs) shipping papers for the transport of any medical specimens that are defined in the hazardous materials regulations as being regulated in transportation. Anyone who performs any of the following pre-transportation functions must be trained:

- Determining the hazard class of a hazardous material.
- Selecting the proper packaging for hazardous materials.
- Filling a hazardous materials packaging.
- Securing or closing (sealing) a filled or partially filled hazardous materials package.
- Marking a package to indicate that it contains a hazardous material.
- Labeling a package to indicate that it contains a hazardous material.
- Preparing and/or signing shipping papers.
- Providing and maintaining emergency response information.
- Reviewing a shipping paper to verify compliance with the domestic or international regulations.
- Obtaining or filling out import/export documentation.
- Certifying that a hazardous material is in proper condition for transportation in conformance with the appropriate regulations.

**5. LEARNING ACTIVITIES.** The course is taught using lecture, detailed reading of the regulations, completing written Practical Exercises, evaluating packages during “hands-on” practical exercises, participating in oral discussions, and preparing for a comprehensive written (open book) examination. A student needs to achieve a score of 75% on the final exam to pass the course.

**6. COURSE DESIGN.** The instruction follows the style of the other DOD 80-hour certification courses. The TBM differs from the 80-hour DOD certification course by being shorter (40 hours) and by providing certification training that is limited to shipments of biomedical material, with or without Dry Ice, and limited quantity shipments of Class 3 flammable liquids (e.g., ThinPrep samples). Any personnel who need certification training for all hazard classes (such as persons who sign Hazardous Waste manifests), must successfully pass the 80-hour course Transportation of Hazardous Materials course from one of the other DOD schools.

**7. AFTER-THE-COURSE REQUIREMENTS.** After passing the TBM course and before signing shipping papers, one **must** obtain a Letter of Designation (e.g., Appointment Orders) that authorizes the person to sign on behalf of the command. An example of a Letter of Designation is provided in the course material. In addition, refresher training **must** be completed every 2 years in order to continue having the authority to certify shipping papers. Refresher training may be completed either by an on-line course provided by USACHPPM, or by attending the full TBM initial training course. The on-line refresher training is not authorized as a substitute for the in-person initial training.

**8. HOW TO APPLY FOR THE TBM COURSE.** Go to the CHPPM website <http://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/envirohealth/hmw/Documents/Transport%20of%20Biomedical%20Materials.pdf> and click on Training/Conferences (left side of the home page). Then click on Scheduled Training and Conferences. Scroll down the alphabetical listing of courses until you find the Transport of Biomedical Material course. There you can read the course description and you can *apply to attend* from a form available by clicking on the course title. Submit that online application form by clicking on the

"Submit" button at the bottom of the form. It should take less than 10 minutes to fill out and submit the form.

At the same website, one can find and apply for a Medical Waste Transport (MWT) course; this 20-hour course is tailored to those personnel who manage, handle, and prepare only regulated medical waste for transport. The MWT course is not sufficient for laboratory personnel; it is tailored to the certification needs of housekeeping personnel and Logistics personnel involved with regulated medical waste.

Note: The military medical treatment facilities (MTFs) are subject to scrutiny from transportation enforcement officials. MTFs have been inspected by these enforcement officials and there have been a few instances of Notices of Violation for noncompliance with the transportation regulations. Every MTF needs to have appropriately trained personnel.

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