
Wisconsin Legislative Council

ACT MEMO



Prepared by: Amber Otis, Senior Staff Attorney

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2023 Wisconsin Act 218
[2023 Senate Bill 829]

**Carrying of Firearms by Tactical
Emergency Services
Professionals**

BACKGROUND

State law allows certain licensed emergency medical services (EMS) professionals to obtain a “tactical emergency medical services” (TEMS) endorsement from the Department of Health Services (DHS). An EMS professional with a TEMS endorsement is generally affiliated with a DHS-recognized tactical team, defined as a paramilitary special operations tactical unit typically found in law enforcement or the military that responds to threats to public safety.

2023 WISCONSIN ACT 218

2023 Wisconsin Act 218 creates exemptions from certain restrictions on the possession of a firearm in various places for TEMS professionals who have been certified by the Law Enforcement Standards Board (LESB). Specifically, if the act’s conditions are met, an LESB-certified TEMS professional may, while acting in the line of duty, lawfully carry a firearm in certain otherwise-prohibited locations, such as school zones, public buildings, certain wildlife refuges, and places where a posted sign provides notice not to enter or remain on the premises.

The act defines a TEMS professional as a licensed EMS professional who has been endorsed by DHS as a person who provides medical services when operating as part of a law enforcement tactical team and operating with the prior written approval of the sheriff or chief of police for the jurisdiction in which the licensed EMS professional is authorized to carry out his or her duties.

The act authorizes the LESB to regulate the certification, decertification, and training of TEMS professionals, similar to the state law authority granted to the LESB to regulate law enforcement professionals. The act grants rulemaking authority to the LESB and directs the LESB to establish minimum training standards for TEMS professionals based on recommendations by the curriculum advisory committee that exists under state law.

To become certified by the LESB, a TEMS professional must satisfactorily complete the minimum training standards established by the LESB, be certified by LESB as being qualified to be a TEMS professional, and obtain prior written approval of the sheriff or chief of police who has authority and responsibility over the team on which he or she is approving the TEMS professional to go armed with a firearm.

Additionally, for a TEMS professional to continue to be certified, he or she must maintain employment as a TEMS professional, maintain the approval of the sheriff or chief of police, and meet the LESB’s annual recertification training standards, including completing a handgun qualification course from curricula based on model standards established by LESB under prior law, maintained by the act.

The act also expands the definition of “law enforcement officer” to include an LESB-certified TEMS professional for purposes of certain use-of-force statutory standards and related duties to report and intervene in certain circumstances.

Effective date: March 28, 2024

For a full history of the bill, visit the Legislature’s [bill history page](#).

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