

# **STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES & WAGE/BENEFIT AGREEMENT**

**Between the  
Board of Public Works and Safety,  
of the City of New Castle, Indiana  
&  
New Castle EMS Employees**



**2013**

***This document is a copy without signatures.  
Official signed copies may be obtained for a fee by contacting  
Human Resources, (765)529-7506, ext 3112.***

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## **SECTION 1**

### **WAGE/BENEFIT AGREEMENT**

#### **1.1 AGREEMENT**

WHEREAS, New Castle Emergency Medical Service (EMS) employees desire to enter into a Wage/Benefit Agreement, hereafter referred to as "agreement", concerning salary, wages, wage related fringe benefits and enumerated working conditions; and

WHEREAS, the employees of the City of New Castle covered by the AGREEMENT are engaged in furnishing essential services affecting health, comfort, and general well-being of the Citizens of the City of New Castle; and

WHEREAS, the City's obligation and responsibility for furnishing said services to the public is a mutual responsibility for furnishing services of the City, and the employees are no more or less than employees of the taxpayers of the City of New Castle; and

WHEREAS, the responsibility for the departments operated by the City of New Castle is imposed by law, and rests with the Mayor and the Board of Public Works and Safety; and

WHEREAS, the City recognized its responsibility for services to the public and its responsibility to respect the rights of the employees; and

WHEREAS, the City and the EMS employees agree that this AGREEMENT will be the basis to resolve issues of discipline, work conditions, wages and benefits; and

WHEREAS, the City and EMS employees desire to place in writing by AGREEMENT the various steps for settlement of disputes and/or grievances with an employee or employees, thereby eliminating as nearly as possible any reason for the interruption of service to the people of this community and to enable the employees to have the privilege of bringing their grievances before the properly constituted authorities without delay.

THEREFORE, the City and EMS employees agree that the principles enumerated above can best be carried out in accordance with the wage scale set forth under the conditions of employment set forth in this AGREEMENT as hereinafter set out.

#### **1.2 Period of Agreement**

The effective date of this Agreement shall be from 12:01 a.m., January 1, 2013, and shall remain in effect until 12:00 midnight, December 31, 2013.

Economic and wage provisions of this agreement are conditioned upon the passage of corresponding salary ordinances and annual budgets by the Common Council of the City; said ordinances and budgets being passed annually effectuating the economic and wage provisions of this Agreement. Failure of the Common Council to pass the appropriate ordinances and

budgets allowing for payments pursuant to Agreement terms, during the Agreement term, releases the City from wage and economic provisions.

Wage and other economic conditions, which are provided for in this Agreement shall become effective January 1, 2013 and continue in force and effective until December 31, 2013.

Economic issues for the next agreement to be negotiated will be presented to the Human Resources Director no later than February 1<sup>st</sup>. Negotiations will begin on or before May 1<sup>st</sup> of the last year of this Agreement, so agreement can be reached between the parties prior to the budget deadline set by State law and the meeting with the Department of Local Government and Finance, July 31<sup>st</sup> annually. Management and EMS Employees may mutually agree to start negotiations at a later date than stated above.

### **1.3 Management**

Except as otherwise provided in the Agreement, the Mayor and Board of Public Works and Safety shall manage and direct, on behalf of the public, the operations and activities of the City to the full extent authorized by law. Such responsibility shall include, but not be limited to the following:

- (A) Direct its employees;
- (B) To hire, promote, transfer, assign and retain, discharge, suspend, discipline or promote for just cause, employees in positions with the Board of Public Works and Safety and;
- (C) To release employees because of lack of work or for other legitimate reasons;
- (D) To maintain the efficiency of the Governmental operation entrusted to it;
- (E) To determine the methods, means and personnel by which such operations shall be conducted;
- (F) To enact rules and regulations for the conduct of employees and safety of the work force as the Board of Public Works and Safety deems necessary.

The Board of Public Works and Safety powers granted herein shall be exercised by the authorized agents of the Board of Public Works and Safety including, but not limited to; Mayor, EMS Chief, EMS supervisory employees, Human Resource Director and the Mayor's private secretary. "Supervisor" means any individual having authority, in the interest of the employer, to hire, transfer, suspend, layoff, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline other employees, or responsibility to direct them, or to adjust their grievances, or effectively to recommend such action, if in connection with the foregoing the exercise of such authority is not of a merely routine or clerical nature, but requires the use of independent judgment.

### **1.4 EMS Employee Recognition**

The Board of Public Works and Safety agrees to recognize EMS employees as a separate unit of City employees. It is the intent of the parties that all City emergency medical officers be covered by this Agreement.

### **1.5 Management Recognition**

The EMS employees recognize the statutory procedures outlining the authority of various departments, officials, and employees of the City as well as the specific rights of the

EMS Chief, and the Board of Public Works and Safety to hire, discipline, transfer, promote, demote, suspend and discharge, as well set all matters pertaining to the rate of pay, wages, hours of employment and other conditions of employment, direct the working force of the NCEMS.

### **1.5 Wages**

It is the intent of the Board of Public Works and Safety to recognize a group of EMS employees, designated by their peers, to present requests for wage adjustments annually. The Mayor and/or his designee shall meet with these EMS employees to hear their requests and work, within budgetary constraints, to establish annual wages for EMS employees.

Requests for a change in EMS wages should be delivered to the Human Resource Director no later than February 1<sup>st</sup> annually to give management ample time to consider prior to budgets being set.

### **1.6 Benefits**

It is the intent of the Board of Public Works and Safety to recognize a group of EMS employees, designated by their peers, to present requests for benefit adjustments annually. The Mayor and/or his designee shall meet with these EMS employees to hear their requests and work, within budgetary constraints, to establish annual benefits for EMS employees.

Requests for a change in EMS benefits should be delivered to the Human Resource Director no later than February 1<sup>st</sup> annually to give management ample time to consider prior to budgets being set.

#### **A. Vacations**

The City of New Castle provides employees with paid vacation time as allowed by local ordinance.

1. Vacation days are days earned off by seniority and as follows:

<u>Years of Service</u>	<u>Accrual Rate</u>
6 Months	2 vacation days per year
1 year - 2 years	4 vacation days per year
2 years - 5 years	7 vacation days per year
5 years - 10 years	11 vacation days per year
Over 10 years	14.5 vacation days per year

2. Vacation days need to be scheduled at least 10 days prior to the date requested.
3. Vacation time will be taken no more than 6 shifts consecutive at one time. This includes the use of personal days. \*Certain exceptions may be granted by EMS Chief, if possible.
4. Vacation days will not be accumulated from year to year.
5. No vacation time will be scheduled following the first Monday in December.

6. No vacation time will be allowed on the following holidays: New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day.
7. Vacation days unused will be paid to the officers during the month of December at a straight time rate.
8. At no time will vacation be granted if daily unit operations are at risk for disruption.
9. The EMS Chief will grant or deny all vacation requests.

**B. Personal and Perfect Attendance Days**

1. One (1) personal day will be earned based on the accumulation of twenty-four (24) in-service hours during the year. This can be accumulated by audit and reviews and other education hours not being compensated by other means.
2. Each employee who works from January 1<sup>st</sup> until April 30<sup>th</sup> without using any sick time will be awarded twelve (12) hours off with pay. Each employee who works from May 1<sup>st</sup> until August 31<sup>st</sup> without using any sick time will be awarded twelve (12) hours off with pay. Each employee who works from September 1<sup>st</sup> until December 31<sup>st</sup> without using any sick time will be awarded twelve (12) hours off with pay. This time off must be scheduled with management's approval and will not be counted toward any payment of overtime.
3. Use of the personal day or perfect attendance day must be scheduled at least 24 hours prior to the date requested.
4. Unused personal and attendance days will be paid to officers during the month of December at a straight time rate.
5. The EMS Chief will grant or deny the request.

**C. Sick Leave**

1. Sick leave is accumulated monthly by the hour.
2. Officers will gain 10 hours per month sick time as long as zero sick time is used that month. During the months of June and December 15 hours will be earned if no time is used. A total of 130 hours a year will be gained. A total of 650 hours can be accumulated.
3. Once 650 hours is accumulated officers will be paid for hours earned monthly at a straight hourly rate.
4. Officers may use no more than 48 hours sick time consecutively without needing a doctor's explanation. At the EMS Chief's discretion an officer may need a physician's re-evaluation every two days (48 sick hours) off.
5. While on extended sick time, officers will not gain sick hours or vacation time.
6. Once an officer's accrued benefits are exhausted, salary continuation will cease. For the next twenty-six (26) week period following, officers may continue the benefit package on a cost sharing basis.

7. There is no light duty or administrative leave at the New Castle Emergency Unit, due to the nature of the duties performed.

**D. Uniform Allowance**

Uniforms will be furnished to a new hire at the time he/she is hired. One year probationary period will be served with no clothing allotment consideration. Clothing allotment will be budgeted at \$600.00 per employee, payable as follows:

\$300.00 Payable on or Before June 28<sup>th</sup> each year.

\$300.00 Payable on or Before December 28<sup>th</sup> each year.

Upon retirement or termination of employment, Uniforms become the property of the department, all partial payments will be figured on \$1.64 per day pro-rata to the effective date of termination. Badges are city property and are to be returned to the department.

**E. Insurance**

1. Medical Insurance shall be provided with the city paying 95% and the employee 5% or the policy premium. Coverage includes employee, spouse, and dependent children during continuous employment.
2. Life Insurance in the amount of \$20,000.00 will be provided by the City.
3. All Full time employees will be covered by:
  - a. Workers' Compensation
  - b. Unemployment
  - c. Pension Plan for retirement – PERF
4. Ambulance Malpractice Professional Liability Insurance for Medical Professions.

All city employees upon termination of their employment, for any reason except retirement, (Pursuant to Indiana Code) shall be entitled to only those health care benefits provided for by the Federal Cobra Option, available through the city's insurance carrier, provided further that said employee pays the full cost of such health care benefits after termination.

**F. Holiday Pay**

All full time employees shall be paid two (2) 24-hour shifts for holiday pay annually to be paid the last pay period in December of each year. This will be paid at the straight hourly rate.

**G. Christmas Bonus**

All employees will be paid a \$100.00 Christmas bonus

**H. Longevity Pay**

On the first of the month after the date of employment each EMS employee at the shall receive \$23.50 per bi-weekly pay for each 3 years of continuous employment.

**I. Court Pay**

Court time shall be paid in accordance with the policy of the New Castle Police Department.

**J. Disability Plan**

A disability plan will be provided for employees, in the amount of \$100.00 a week, consisting of a 26 week benefit period, effective on the 31<sup>st</sup> day of absence. This plan is to be conditioned on a policy as established by the Board of Public Works and Safety pertaining to Guidelines of Eligibility.

## **SECTION 2: STANDARD OPERATING AGREEMENT**

**2.1 New Castle / Henry County EMS - Mission Statement**

It is our mission to provide compassionate, quality care to the citizens of New Castle – Henry County. We will be known for professionalism and excellence in emergency care. We will serve our fellow citizens with integrity and virtuous character. We will maintain a positive, safe work environment where our brotherhood/sisterhood will all share fair and equal treatment regardless of race, ethnicity and gender without prejudice.

**2.2 Disclaimer**

This policy manual is not a contract. Flexibility is important in the area of Emergency Medical Services as well as personnel policies to allow for growth and change. For this reason, the policies and benefits described in this manual may be discontinued or revised at any given time in light of experience of changing conditions.

**2.3 Purpose and Objectives**

It is the purpose and objective of these, rules, regulations, guidelines and policy statements to regulate the conduct of officers of the New Castle Emergency Unit and the operation of the department. The need for such a guide is not unique to this department but rather is an essential component of all large emergency organizations to assure their proper functioning.

Guidelines are intended to be general in nature and are not designed or intended to limit any officer in the exercise of his/her judgment or initiative in taking reasonable action in an extraordinary emergency situation.

Because guidelines are general in nature, it may be necessary for the EMS Chief to supplement them by establishing more detailed instructions governing particular operating procedures or manners of conduct as the need arises. Much must be left to skill, loyalty, integrity, and discretion of officers. To the degree we demonstrate these qualities in the discharge of our duties; we will measure up to the high standards rightly expected of the emergency medical services.



Nothing in these policies, procedures or guidelines shall be construed to limit the power and authority granted to the EMS Chief, Advisory Board, State Law, or other legislative action for the protection of life.

## **2.4 Employment**

The EMS Department's official employment application process conforms with applicable laws and regulations including, without limitation, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

All Applications must comply with the following procedures:

- 1) Applicants must: fill out application in its entirety, minimum of 21 years of age, provide a copy of Paramedic or EMT license provided by the State of Indiana and be in good standing, provide a copy of ACLS certification, provide copy of valid non-restricted Indiana driver's license, provide a copy of all related certifications, be able to communicate fluently in English as well as read, write and understand the English language.
- 2) Applicants must: complete physical exam free of medical complications, pass written and practical exam, pass skill test, conduct oral interview before interview board appointed by the EMS Chief.
- 3) Once applicants complete each portion of step two, they will be advised to continue to the next portion of step two or stop.
- 4) New hires will be considered probationary officers for one year. During the probationary year, officers will be subject to dismissal without hearing or the right to appeal. All officers, beginning their date of hire will follow the rules and regulations of the New Castle Emergency Unit and the Policies set forth by the City.
- 5) Once the probationary year has been completed, officers will be reviewed by the shift Lieutenant and the EMS Chief. This review will determine if the probationary officer will be cleared from probationary status.

## **2.5 Overtime Guidelines**

The EMS Department complies with the Fair Labor Standards Act. At no time shall any of these guidelines limit or prohibit the daily operations of the unit and its ability to cover overtime shifts.

- A. The EMS Chief or shift command will determine placement of officers working overtime.
- B. Lieutenants' positions will be filled the same as shift officer slots.
  1. If another lieutenant does not cover the lieutenant position, the senior shift officer will assume shift command.
- C. As overtime arises the positions will be filled in list order.
  1. The overtime list will be created by the EMS Chief and updated by the Chief / or designated officer.
  2. The list will be updated on an as needed basis as overtime is filled moving officers to the bottom of the list.
  3. Officer's list positions will not change if worked overtime is 12 hours or less.
  4. If officer refuses overtime the list position will not change.
  5. Officers forced to work overtime will not be moved on the list.

- D. Triple shifts will be avoided if at all possible. To avoid this, officers not causing triples will be offered those shifts first.
- E. All attempts will be made to not force officers to work triples.
- F. Officers will not be forced to work two consecutive overtime shifts back to back.
- G. At no time will two probationary employees or PRN employees work together on the same truck during the same shift.
- H. PRN employees will be offered overtime as the EMS Chief deems necessary.
- I. While on suspension or sick leave, officers are not eligible to work overtime.
- J. Attempts to contact officers for shift coverage will be made as time permits, if contact is not made the officer will be skipped and his/her list position will not be changed.
- K. Overtime pay will be paid at a predetermined rate. Overtime pay for extra shifts worked (overtime) will be paid at a rate of \$20.60 per hour or 1.5 times the regular rate of pay, whichever is greater.

## **2.6 Scheduled Trades**

The EMS Department allows employees to have some flexibility with work schedules.

- A. Duty time may be traded if approved by the EMS Chief and does not cause daily operations disruption.
- B. Proper forms will be filled out and signed by both officers.
- C. Trading time must be within the same pay cycle.
- D. Ultimate responsibility for traded shift then falls on the officer who accepted responsibility.
- E. Failure to comply with the above may result in disciplinary action.

## **2.7 Absence from Duty**

The EMS Department allows employees to have some flexibility with work schedules.

- A. Any intent to be absent from work will need to be reported to the EMS Chief as soon as possible to receive approval and to get appropriate coverage.
- B. No call / no show for work is considered AWAL (absent without approved leave) and is grounds for disciplinary action.

## **2.8 Disciplinary Actions**

There are written procedures for discipline of employees prescribed by the EMS Department as well as City-wide policy. Guidelines are available in the City's Personnel Policy Handbook.

- A. While on or off duty officers are responsible to act in a reasonable manner, projecting a positive image of the department.
- B. Substandard performance will be dealt with as a training issue, disciplinary issue, or combination as determined by the EMS Chief and Medical Director.

## **2.9 Uniform and Appearance Guidelines**

There are written procedures regarding uniforms and personal appearance as prescribed by the EMS Department and City-wide policy.

- A. Officers will receive regulation uniforms at the time of appointment.
- B. Uniforms shall be maintained and replaced as needed by officers or at the discretion of the EMS Chief.
- C. Uniforms will not be worn that are patched, frayed, faded, or showing signs of wear.
- D. Uniforms must comply with the specifications set forth by the EMS Department.
- E. Uniforms will not be worn while off duty, on suspension, or on leave of absence.
- F. When unit employment is over, initial unit issued uniforms will be returned.
- G. Turnout gear must be worn as practical (10-50's, 10-70's, etc. and anywhere else OIC deems appropriate.
- H. Uniform appearance is as follows:
  - 1. Class "B" work uniform:
    - a. White uniform style polo shirt, with unit logo embroidered on front left chest, name on right chest, back decal, American flag on right shoulder, NCEMS on left shoulder.
    - b. Navy blue T-shirt with appropriate decals on front and back
    - c. Polo shirt may be substituted with sweatshirt
    - d. Navy EMS pants or dress pants
    - e. Black uniform belt
    - f. Black EMS boots or shoes
    - g. Black or blue socks if visible while sitting
    - h. Approved hats may be worn
    - i. *\* Navy T-shirt may be worn without polo shirt after 1900 hours, if approved by OIC.*
  - 2. Class "A" uniform
    - a. Solid navy blue T-shirt
    - b. White shirt with contrasting front pocket flaps and shoulder straps
    - c. NCEMS patch on left shoulder, one inch from shoulder seam
    - d. IN State EMT-P patch right shoulder one inch down from shoulder seam
    - e. American flag centered above the right breast pocket one-half inch above the pocket flap
    - f. Collar insignia will be brass EMS
    - g. Buttons will be brass EMS
    - h. Brass name badge will be worn on left breast pocket flap and will be centered above button and below seam
    - i. Pants, belt and boots will be the same as class "B" uniform
    - j. Paramedic school pin may be worn on right chest pocket flap centered above button and below seam and may be off set with ACLS and PALS pins
    - k. Serving since pin may hang from name badge and will notate time serving with the NCEMS
    - l. Unit badge will be worn above left pocket flap in its designated area
    - m. Brass pins, buttons and badges will be silver for paramedic officers and gold for EMS Chief and Lieutenants.

- n. \*Navy T-shirts may be worn without polo shirt after 1900 hours, if approved by the Chief.
- I. Class "A" uniform will be worn to all extra-curricular activities unless otherwise directed by the EMS Chief.
- J. Class "B" uniforms will be worn while on duty.
- K. Gym trunks and T-shirts will be appropriate sleepwear
  - 1. Gym trunks (with screen print) & T-shirt are accepted for workouts.
- L. Personal appearance will be as follows:
  - 1. Hair will be neatly trimmed, clean and at no time hang over the collar.
  - 2. Sideburns will be neatly trimmed and will not extend below the lowest portion of the ear.
  - 3. Facial hair will be neat and groomed regularly. No facial hair will hang over the upper lip.
  - 4. No beards.
  - 5. No visible necklaces.
  - 6. Cologne and perfumes may be worn but are not to be offensive.
- M. The uniform policies and appearance guidelines may be altered if uniforms are damaged while on duty but must be approved by shift command.

## **2.10 High Visibility Safety Apparel**

All on duty officers involved with any type of MVC or obstructed roadway that requires work within the right-of-way or close proximity of the right-of-way of any city streets, county roads, or state and federal highways shall wear high visibility safety apparel, or any other time deemed appropriate by the OIC, to decrease the likelihood of officer injuries or fatality while working.

- A. All officers will be issued a high visibility parka or safety vest that meets or exceeds ANSI 207 requirements for safety apparel, as required by the Federal Highway Administration mandate 23 CFR Part 634.
- B. It will be the individual officer's responsibility to maintain the apparel; including cleanliness and repair, and to replace as needed with the officers clothing allowance.
- C. High visibility parka or safety vest will be worn over any approved uniform or other issued safety apparel while working in the right-of-way of any street, road or highway.

## **2.11 General Regulations**

- A. Work shifts consist of 24 consecutive hours on duty. Shifts will begin at 0700 hours one morning and end at 0700 hours the following morning, or until relieved by another unit officer or directed by shift command (Work 24 hours off 72 hours).
- B. Two (2) trucks will be staffed daily with both trucks stationed at the Unit Building. Each truck will consist of 1 Paramedic & 1 EMT. Trucks will rotate calls, the shift LT's truck will take the first call of each day and then rotate calls thereafter.
- C. While in uniform, officers will refrain from political involvement except to cast his/her vote.
- D. Officers will notify the EMS Chief of any address or phone number change promptly.
- E. Officers will respond to all emergencies to which they are dispatched.

- F. All officers will be knowledgeable of the medical protocols and of the SOP. Officers will be responsible for reading and knowing all changes to the above mentioned protocols and SOP.
- G. If a difference of opinion arises between officers, shift command will make the decision until further review of the problem is concluded and the EMS Chief makes a final decision.
- H. All officers are required to follow the laws of the State of Indiana and the County of Henry. Driving to and from scenes will be done in a safe manner. \*Driving non-signal 10 from the scene is at the officers discretion.
- I. At no time will officers receive bribes or gratuity for services performed while on duty.
- J. The attaching of any device or instrument, either electronic or mechanical, to any department property except with permissions of the EMS Chief is prohibited.
- K. Officers will make truthful and accurate records and reports and will not make false or misleading statements on any department documents.
- L. When dispatched to a call of serious nature, while in route to the scene: attempt to contact the hospital in order to allow the hospital to prepare.
- M. Officers will maintain the building on a daily basis by cleaning and keeping beds in a neat fashion.
- N. The shift coming on will wash and clean the truck that was used the previous day, thereby allowing everyone to start their shift with a clean truck.
- O. Visitors will be permitted between 0800 hours and 2100 hours. Visitors will be courteous and will not loiter about the premises. Under no circumstances will visitors remain on the premises if officers leave.
- P. When called to a scene where a crime has possibly been committed, officers will wait on the proper authorities and will make all attempts to preserve the scene. This in no way will hinder or restrict the officers from performing their duties as EMS professionals.
- Q. Court appearance pay will be paid in accordance with the current policy used by the New Castle Police Department.
- R. All officers shall submit a list of prescription drugs they are required to take to the EMS Chief.
- S. Each officer will be entitled to one shift off with pay due to the death of a member of the officer's immediate family. Such days will not be cumulative. Immediate family members include: spouse, children, mother, father, sister, brother, stepchildren, parent-in-law, brother/sister-in-law, son/daughter-in-law, stepparent, grandparent, grandchildren, grandparent-in-law.
- T. Officers will be required to attend at least 10 monthly staff meetings / audit and reviews per year unless on vacation or other absence approved by the EMS Chief.
- U. In-service will be provided for unit officers to conform to levels of care requirements and regulations set forth by the State of Indiana. Individuals will be responsible for maintaining their own in-service ledgers. If classes are not available for officers locally, arrangements will be made as needed and as the EMS Chief deems necessary.
- V. The EMS Chief and Medical Director will work together to maintain appropriate protocols and procedures for patient care. These protocols and procedures shall be changed and updated as needed. These changes will be provided to officers in written

form and it is each officer's responsibility to read and understand each change. These changes will also be discussed monthly to notify officers of the updates and changes.

- W. It is the policy of NCEMS to transport all patients for which they are dispatched to HCMH.
- X. Transfers by the NCEMS from the HCMH to other hospitals on the ER doctor's request can be performed. All other attempts must be made for private services to do the transfer first. Only Advance Life Support transfers will be made. No Basic Life Support transfers will be taken. No transfers will be taken if fewer than three (3) ambulances are in service. If a second transfer need arises while the first transfer is gone, the second transfer request will need to wait until the first is complete. Ultimate decision on every transfer will need to rest on the EMS Chief or the shift command officer.
- Y. Soft restraints can be used on patients needing to be restrained. Law enforcement officers may use handcuffs on unruly patients only if needed to protect EMS personnel.
- Z. Patient confidentiality must be maintained at all times. All inquiries about patient information will be directed to the EMS Chief / Privacy Officer.
- AA. All officers will be subject to alcohol and/or drug testing. This will be in accordance with the City of New Castle's Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy. Officers want to report another city employee in reference to the drug and alcohol policy will need to contact the City's Human Resource Director and the EMS Chief. Officers while on duty or in uniform will not enter any premises where alcohol is consumed unless performing his/her duty.
- BB. No officer will report to duty under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- CC. No officer, while on duty or in uniform, will consume alcohol or narcotic drugs.
- DD. No officer shall consume alcohol or narcotic drugs fourteen (14) hours prior to reporting for duty.
- EE. Any problems or differences officers may have with employees for other agencies will be brought to the attention of the EMS Chief in writing. At no time will a confrontation take place in front of by-standers or patients. If immediate attention is needed shift command will be called.
- FF. Persons requesting to ride must follow these guidelines:
  - a. Must be approved by the EMS Chief and Shift Command
  - b. Must be 18 years of age or older
  - c. Must sign a "Rider Release Form"
  - d. Must wear a white shirt, navy blue pants, black shoes, black socks, and jewelry as permitted for officers. Officers on duty are responsible for appearance and conduct of riders.
- GG. When an officer's absence from work is due solely to disability resulting from sickness, disease, or injury and due proof of the disability is given to the EMS Chief, he/she shall return to work provided a medical examination is passed and the officer presents proof he/she has the ability to perform all duties. The EMS Chief shall have the right to order an officer to an independent physician to resolve conflicting medical findings. Cost for the independent physician will be covered by the city. The findings of the independent physician will be binding. If the officer fails to submit to the independent physician

exam or fails to submit the findings, disciplinary action and immediate discharge will result.

- HH. Officers unavoidably late must contact shift command on duty and advise the circumstances and the approximate arrival time. Habitual tardiness will result in disciplinary action.

## **2.12 Universal Precautions**

Compliance with this policy is mandatory, as it is designed to protect the health of you, your family, your co-workers, and the patient.

- A. Exam gloves must be worn when examining a patient, when handling blood / bodily fluids or when the possibility of contact exists.
- B. Gloves must be changed between patients.
- C. If gloves are visibly soiled or torn, they must be changed.
- D. Soiled gloves MUST NOT BE worn in the front cab of the ambulance.
- E. Eye protection and masks must be worn when there is a risk that blood or bodily fluids could be splattered or aerosolized.
- F. Gloves, goggles and masks will be provided by NCEMS.

## **2.13 Standards of Behavior**

### **A. ATTITUDE**

We are committed to providing the best pre-hospital care possible for our patients. This commitment must be reflected in our behaviors because:

- The patient has a need, we have a job to do;
- The patient has sensibilities, we must be considerate;
- The patient has an urgency, we must be quick;
- The patient is unique, we must be flexible;
- The patient has high expectations, we must excel;
- The patient has influence; we have the hope of more patients;
- Because of the patient, WE EXIST!

Action points:

- We are not doing a favor by serving them, they are doing us a favor by giving us the opportunity to do so.
- Department and co-worker issues should NEVER be discussed in front of the public.
- Protect PATIENT PRIVACY and use discretion discussing any patient issues.
- Rudeness is NEVER acceptable in any situation.

***"I treat the other man like a gentleman not because he is, but because I am"***  
**- Benjamin Franklin**

### **B. APPEARANCE**

Our appearance represents the entire NC-HC EMS organization. Therefore, our grooming and dress will reflect our respect for our customer, community and each

after. While on duty at NC-HC EMS or at a community function, our manner and expression will convey our concern for and willingness to serve our community. All staff members need to take pride in their personal appearance, our facility appearance and our equipment appearance in order to show our community the respect we feel for NC-HC EMS.

i. Personal Appearance

- Our dress always will be professional and neat
- Department specific Dress Code policies will be followed
- Greet patients with a smile, pleasant tone and good eye contact

ii. Facility Appearance

- When we come across litter, we will make sure it is disposed of in a proper manner.
- When we spot spills, we will see to it that they are cleaned up to ensure patient and co-worker safety.
- NC-HC EMS is a smoke-free facility. It is our responsibility to inform visitors of our policy in a friendly, non-confrontational manner.
- Maintain an uncluttered and litter-free workplace.
- Equipment will be returned to its proper place.
- Keep all trucks and the Unit Building neat and clean. If items are recognized as needing repair, please contact the Shift Lieutenant or EMS Chief.

C. COMPUTER & E-MAIL ETIQUETTE

The use of the computer and e-mail is recommended for most situations that require information sharing or communication amongst EMS staff. In situations where the main objective is problem solving, face to face communication may be the best method of interaction. To assist in those situations where e-mail will be the mode for information sharing or communication amongst staff, consider these steps:

- Be professional and careful of what you say about others. E-mail is easily forwarded.
- If you are not typing your entire message in UPPER CASE letters, please do not use UPPER CASE to prove your point. This may be considered shouting and offend the reader. Read your message before sending it, ensuring that you are communicating what you intended.
- Be careful when using sarcasm and humor, it may be viewed as inappropriate. Without face to face communications your joke may be interpreted differently than you intended.
- The computer & e-mail should never create either the appearance of or the reality of inappropriate use (i.e. chain letters, or inappropriate web sights), or



the interference with work productivity. Its main purpose is for completing those tasks associated with the successful completion of one's job duties.

**D. COMMITMENT TO CO-WORKERS**

As NC-HC EMS staff members, we are linked to one another by a common purpose: serving our patients and our community. Our co-workers therefore, are our teammates. They deserve our cooperation and respect. Without everyone's contributions, none of us could perform our jobs. Just as we rely on our fellow staff members, they rely upon us. Each of us has an obligation to our co-workers.

**WHO ARE OUR CO-WORKERS?** All NC-HC EMS staff, all HCMH ER staff, all members of other agencies that we may work with

- Rudeness is NEVER appropriate. We must at all times treat one another with courtesy and respect. No staff member is exempt.
- Treat every co-worker as a professional. Recognize that we each have an area of expertise.
- Show consideration. Be sensitive to a fellow staff member's inconvenience. Consider another's priorities in addition to your own. This includes care of your work area and keeping scheduled commitments.
- Be tolerant of fellow staff members. Recognize conflicts may exist among co-workers, but professional courtesy is expected. Set aside differences when working together. Realize that we all have shortcomings and diverse personalities and that it takes many different people to complete your team.
- Be supportive of fellow staff members. Offer help when possible. Cooperation is expected in the workplace.
- Be loyal to your co-workers and the NC-HC EMS organization. Do not unnecessarily undermine other people's work. Be discreet about what you say.
- Do not defame co-workers character.
- Welcome new staff members. Be supportive by offering to help and by setting an example of the cooperation expected in the workplace. Support and listen to new ideas, recognizing their fear and uncertainty in the new work environment.
- Be honest during all interactions with co-workers.
- Respect our co-workers' privacy by eliminating gossip.
- Do not chastise or embarrass fellow staff members in the presence of others.
- Address problems by going to the appropriate supervisor. Remember that non-supervisory staff members may not have the authority to make procedural changes.

***"People working together – building, linking, sharing, lifting, pulling, supporting, helping, encouraging – can accomplish anything. - Anonymous***

E. SAFETY

Safety is the responsibility of all NC-HC EMS staff members. We must think safe, be safe, and stay safe. This is a fundamental part of our job performance. Accidents are a result of actions and attitudes that YOU can help eliminate. It is up to each of us to do our part in keeping NC-HC EMS safe for all.

i. Maintain a Safe Environment

- Report accidents promptly and completely.
- If you see a safety hazard, correct if possible. If not possible, report to your supervisors or EMS Chief.
- Do not take unnecessary chances. If you need help – get help. If you see someone that needs help – offer help.
- Practice safety at all times as a courtesy to your co-workers, your patients, yourself and others.
- Protect your back when lifting, pushing, pulling, or carrying. Use proper body mechanics. Get help when necessary.
- Be aware of potential chemical hazards; it is your right to know. Know where the Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) information is located in your area.
- Respect all machinery/equipment. Be sure to report in a timely manner if a piece of equipment needs repair by notifying your supervisor.
- Use protective clothing and equipment when needed.

F. SENSE OF OWNERSHIP

Every NC-HC EMS staff member must feel a sense of ownership toward his or her job, taking pride in what we do, feeling responsible for the outcome of our effort, and recognizing our work as a reflection of ourselves. Take pride in this organization as if you owned it.

- Be sure you know and understand the responsibilities of your job. Take charge of these responsibilities.
- Adhere to organizational and departmental policies.
- Keep your work area and surrounding environment clean and safe.
- Strive to do the job right the first time. Focus on patient and community needs.
- Look beyond your assigned tasks. Your responsibility does not end where your co-workers' responsibilities begin. In most situations, responsibilities merge and blend. When it is appropriate for you to perform a service, do so.
- Don't say, "It's not my job." If you are unable to meet a request, be responsible for finding someone who can.
- Perform your work in a timely manner.
- Pay attention to details.
- Complete tasks. If interrupted, return to the job as soon as possible. If you are unable to finish a task, find someone who can.

- Conduct yourself as a professional.
- Live the values of this organization.
- BE BETTER THAN THE BEST!

***“The desire to go beyond what is asked or expected is a gift that rare individuals give their colleagues and their organizations. All things can be taught but extra effort comes not from a book, but from the heart.***  
***-- Anonymous***

***Professionalism: The conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person.***  
***-- Merriam / Webster On-line Dictionary***

## **2.14 Emergency Vehicle Response**

### **A. PURPOSE and PROCEDURES**

Responding to an emergency call places a great deal of responsibility on the drivers of our emergency vehicles. Not only must the emergency vehicle drivers provide prompt conveyance of the apparatus, equipment and emergency personnel to those in need, but as importantly, must accomplish this task in the safest and most prudent manner possible. Emergency vehicle drivers have in their care, custody and control most of the major assets possessed by this organization (the vehicle, portable equipment, personnel). Emergency vehicle drivers also have a higher standard of care to provide to the general motoring public and must make every attempt possible to provide due regard for the safety of others. Drivers must constantly monitor and reduce the amount of risk and exposure to potential losses during each and every response. Safe arrival at an emergency scene shall be and must always remain the first priority of all emergency vehicle drivers. In order to accomplish this enormous task, all emergency drivers shall become familiar with and constantly abide by the following policies and procedures:

#### **1. Circle of Safety**

Prior to entering the cab and starting the vehicle, the driver will make a “circle of safety” check around the vehicle to see that all equipment is secured, that all compartment doors are securely closed, and any physical obstructions moved out of the way. During the circle of safety, the emergency vehicle driver shall encircle the vehicles and visually inspect all 4 sides and the top of the vehicle before entering the cab. The driver should also verify the right side and rear clearance with the person riding in the officer position. This shall be conducted prior to moving the vehicle regardless of whether or not the vehicle is about to leave on an emergency or non-emergency.

#### **2. Warning devices and true emergencies**

When responding to a true emergency<sup>1</sup>, all audible and visual warning devices will be operated at all times regardless of time of day and/or traffic conditions. All emergency vehicle drivers must understand that warning devices are not always effective in making other vehicle operators aware of your presence. Warning devices only request the right-of-way, they do not insure the right-of-way.

3. Vehicle control and right-of-way

All drivers shall attempt to maintain control of the vehicle that they are operating in such a manner as to provide the maximum level of safety for both their passengers and the general public. Emergency vehicle drivers should be aware that the civilian vehicle operators may not react in the manner in which is expected or felt to be appropriate. An attempt should be made to have options available when passing or overtaking vehicles. If another vehicle operator fails to yield the right of way to an emergency vehicle, the emergency vehicle driver cannot force the right of way, nor can you assume the right of way, therefore you do not have the right of way until the other vehicle yields to you.

4. Response speeds

When responding to a true emergency only, drivers shall operate the vehicle they are driving at as close to the **posted speed limit** as possible, but not to exceed ten (10) miles per hour over the posted speed limit, **conditions permitting**. Examples of conditions requiring slower response speeds include but are not limited to:

- Slippery road conditions
- Inclement weather
- Poor visibility
- Heavy or congested traffic conditions
- Sharp curves

5. Intersection practices

Extreme care should be taken when approaching any intersection as intersections are the locations responsible for a large percentage of major accidents involving emergency vehicles. Drivers are required to practice the organizations intersection operating guidelines during all emergency responses.

**Uncontrolled Intersections**

Emergency vehicle drivers should do the following at any intersection that does not offer a control device (stop sign, yield or traffic signal) in the direction of travel of the emergency vehicle or where a traffic control signal is green upon the approach of the emergency vehicle:

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<sup>1</sup> The definition of a true emergency is a situation in which there is a high probability of death or serious injury to an individual or significant property loss, and actions by an emergency vehicle driver may reduce the seriousness of the situation.

- Scan the intersection for possible hazards (right turns on red, pedestrians, vehicles traveling fast, etc.). Observe traffic in all 4 directions (left, right, front, rear),
- Slow down if any potential hazards are detected and cover the brake pedal with the driver's foot,
- Change the siren cadence not less than 200' from intersection,
- Avoid using the opposing lane of traffic if at all possible.

Emergency vehicle drivers should always be prepared to stop. If another vehicle operator fails to yield the right of way to an emergency vehicle, the emergency vehicle driver cannot force the right of way, nor can you assume the right of way, therefore you do not have the right of way until the other vehicle yields to you.

#### Controlled Intersections

Any intersection controlled by a stop sign, yield sign, yellow traffic light or a red traffic light requires a complete stop by the emergency vehicle driver. In addition to bringing the vehicle to a complete stop, these additional steps must be followed:

- Do not rely on warning devices to clear traffic,
- Scan the intersection for possible hazards (right turns on red, pedestrians, vehicles traveling fast, etc.) as well as driver options,
- Begin to slow down well before reaching the intersection and cover the brake pedal with the driver's foot, continue to scan in 4 directions (left, right, front and back),
- Change the siren cadence not less than 200' from the intersection,
- Scan the intersection for possible passing options (pass on right, left, wait, etc.) avoid using the opposing lane of traffic if at all possible,
- Come to a **complete stop**,
- Establish eye contact with other vehicle drivers; have partner communicate all is clear; reconfirm all other vehicles are stopped,
- Proceed one lane of traffic at a time, treating each lane of traffic as a separate intersection.

#### Railroad Intersections

At any time an emergency vehicle driver approaches an unguarded rail crossing he/she shall bring the apparatus or vehicle to a complete stop before entering the grade crossing. In addition, the emergency vehicle shall perform the following prior to proceeding:

- Turn off all sirens and air horns
- Operate the motor at idle speed
- Turn off any other sound producing equipment or accessories
- Open the windows and listen for a train horn.

6. Non-emergency response

When responding to a call in a non-emergency response mode or normal flow of traffic (non-signal 10) the vehicle will be operated without any audible or visual warning devices and in compliance with all state motor vehicle laws that apply to civilian traffic. At no time should an emergency vehicle be operated during response with only visual warning devices.

7. Ordinary travel procedures

All drivers shall obey all traffic and traffic control device laws when driving an EMS department vehicle under ordinary travel conditions. Any driver observed breaking any traffic law or driving any vehicle in an aggressive manner will be subject to disciplinary action including suspension of driving privileges.

8. Backing

The department recognizes that backing emergency vehicles is made hazardous by the fact that the driver cannot see much of where he/she intends to go. The department recommends that whenever possible drivers should avoid backing as the safest way to back up a vehicle is not to back up at all. When it is necessary to back up any departmental vehicle all drivers shall follow on of these two measures:

- The departments first choice of backing procedures is that before any vehicle is put into reverse and backed that a spotter be put in place near the rear of the vehicle (Driver's side rear, having eye contact with the driver, through the driver's side mirror and also able to see the complete rear of the vehicle before the driver begins to back the vehicle). The spotter should be safely positioned so that the emergency vehicle driver can see them at all times. If at any time the emergency vehicle driver loses sight of the spotter, he/she shall stop immediately until the spotter is visible again.
- If conditions exist that make use of spotters impossible, all drivers, before attempting to back up any EMS department vehicle, will make a circle of safety to see that no person or persons are directly behind the vehicle or in its intended path of travel; all equipment is secured and that all compartment doors are securely closed; any physical obstructions are moved out of the way. The emergency vehicle driver should also note all potential obstructions in the intended path of travel.



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### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have received a copy of the 2013 Standard Operating Procedures & Wage/Benefit Agreement between the Board of Public Works and Safety and the New Castle/Henry County EMS Employees. I have also been trained in SOP procedures and understand items and instructions contained in this document. I also understand the importance of safe operation of these organization vehicles, and will abide by all of the tactical and administrative operating guidelines contained in this document.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

