



Standard Operating Guidelines

Updated 06/09/2025



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Purpose of the Standard Operating Guidelines



Introduction Letter

Dear Garrard County EMS Team,

Welcome to the Garrard County EMS Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) document. This guide serves as a vital resource for our team, outlining the principles, policies, and practices that govern our daily operations and interactions within the community. These guidelines are designed to support our mission of providing exceptional emergency medical services while ensuring safety, efficiency, and professionalism in everything we do.

The Purpose of the SOG Document:

1. **To Provide Clear Expectations**

These guidelines define the roles, responsibilities, and expectations for each team member, ensuring that everyone is equipped with the knowledge needed to carry out their duties effectively.

2. **To Ensure Consistent Operations**

By following a standardized approach, we can maintain a high level of service quality and safety across all operations. This consistency is essential to meet both our community's needs and the regulatory requirements that govern our work.

3. **To Promote Professional Growth and Safety**

The SOG outlines our commitment to training, safety, and continuous improvement. It offers direction for professional development and provides guidance on safety protocols to protect our team and the individuals we serve.

4. **To Support Teamwork and Accountability**

The guidelines encourage collaboration and teamwork by clarifying the chain of command and establishing clear procedures for communication, conflict resolution, and inter-agency relations. They also help foster accountability, ensuring that every member takes responsibility for their role in our shared mission.

Please take the time to thoroughly read this document, as it will serve as the foundation for your work at Garrard County EMS. We update these guidelines regularly to reflect changes in policies, standards, and best practices. Your awareness and adherence to these updates are crucial to our success as a team.

Thank you for your commitment to our community and to Garrard County EMS.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Sizemore

Director, Garrard County EMS

Peyton Keene

Assistant Director, Garrard County EMS



Disclaimer

The Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) for Garrard County EMS are intended to serve as a comprehensive resource for all employees, outlining essential policies, procedures, and expectations. While this document provides guidance for the various aspects of our work, it is important to note that it cannot cover every possible situation that may arise in the field.

Employees of Garrard County EMS are expected to exercise good judgment, professional discretion, and common sense when encountering scenarios not specifically addressed in these guidelines. In situations where immediate clarity is required, personnel should seek direction from their supervisor or refer to the chain of command as outlined in the organizational structure.

Please be aware that the SOG is subject to revision and updates as policies, regulations, and operational needs evolve. Employees will be notified of any changes, and it is their responsibility to review and familiarize themselves with the most current version of this document. Failure to comply with the guidelines, policies, or updates may result in corrective action, as determined by the supervisory team.

In instances where the SOG conflicts with state or federal laws, regulatory standards, or the Employee Handbook, those external regulations will take precedence. Any questions regarding the interpretation or application of these guidelines should be directed to your Captain, Assistant Director, or Director.

The goal of this SOG is to provide a framework for consistent and effective operations, but it is not a substitute for ongoing professional training, development, and the personal accountability each team member is expected to uphold in their role with Garrard County EMS.



Agency Mission

The mission of Garrard County EMS is to deliver compassionate, efficient, and high-quality emergency medical services to the citizens and visitors of Garrard County.

Our Core Objectives:

1. Provide Prompt and Effective Emergency Response

We strive to respond quickly and efficiently to all emergency situations, delivering immediate medical care and transportation when seconds count. Our goal is to be a dependable source of aid for those in need and to make a positive impact on every life we touch.

2. Prioritize Patient Safety and Well-Being

Patient care is at the heart of our mission. We aim to provide the best possible medical treatment, ensuring each patient's safety, comfort, and dignity throughout the entire process. Our team is committed to staying informed on best practices and continually improving our skills to offer exceptional care.

3. Promote Professionalism and Integrity

As representatives of Garrard County EMS, we hold ourselves to the highest standards of integrity, respect, and accountability. We foster an environment where every team member is encouraged to act with professionalism, both on and off duty, and to make decisions that reflect our shared commitment to excellence.

4. Engage with and Support Our Community

Garrard County EMS values its role within the community and actively participates in outreach, education, and public health initiatives. We believe that by building strong relationships with the people we serve, we can contribute to a safer and healthier community for all.

5. Commit to Continuous Learning and Improvement

We understand that the field of emergency medical services is constantly evolving. Our mission includes a dedication to ongoing education, training, and quality improvement, so that our team can adapt to new challenges, enhance our services, and better meet the needs of our community.

The mission of Garrard County EMS is more than a statement—it's a commitment to the people we serve and a reflection of our dedication to public safety, health, and the well-being of our community. Together, we strive to make a positive difference, one call at a time.



Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct for Garrard County EMS establishes clear expectations for ethical behavior, legal compliance, and professional integrity. It serves as the foundation for our agency's compliance program and reflects our shared commitment to providing safe, lawful, and effective emergency medical services.

Our Core Commitments:

Provide Ethical and Compassionate Patient Care

All patients will be treated with respect, dignity, and compassion, regardless of background, condition, or circumstance. Garrard County EMS personnel must deliver timely, medically appropriate care while upholding the highest ethical standards in every encounter.

Comply with All Laws and Regulations

We are committed to full compliance with all federal, state, and local laws, including those governing EMS operations, privacy (HIPAA), controlled substances, and billing practices. Employees are expected to stay informed on relevant policies and uphold all legal and regulatory requirements.

Document and Bill Accurately

Accurate and timely documentation is essential. Patient care reports must truthfully reflect the care provided, and billing must align with services rendered. Fraudulent, exaggerated, or misleading documentation or billing is strictly prohibited.

Protect Confidentiality and Privacy

All protected health information (PHI) must be handled in strict accordance with HIPAA and agency policy. Employees should only access PHI for legitimate treatment, billing, or operational purposes and must never share confidential information inappropriately.

Demonstrate Professionalism and Integrity

Employees are expected to act with integrity, accountability, and professionalism at all times, on duty and off. This includes respectful behavior toward coworkers, patients, and the public, as well as honesty in all job-related duties.



Use Agency Resources Responsibly

Vehicles, equipment, supplies, and agency technology must be used appropriately and only for authorized purposes. Controlled substances must be stored, administered, and documented according to agency protocols and DEA guidelines.

Report Concerns Without Fear of Retaliation

All employees have a duty to report suspected violations, unsafe conditions, or unethical conduct. Garrard County EMS prohibits retaliation against anyone who makes a good-faith report. Concerns may be reported confidentially through designated channels.

Commit to Ongoing Education and Compliance

All employees are required to complete annual compliance and ethics training. Supervisors are responsible for reinforcing a culture of accountability, and the agency will conduct periodic audits and reviews to ensure ongoing adherence to policy.



Agency Roles and Responsibilities

To fulfill our mission at Garrard County EMS, every team member has a specific role and set of responsibilities that contribute to the overall effectiveness, safety, and quality of our services. The following outlines the primary roles within our agency and their corresponding responsibilities.



Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)

- **Primary Responsibilities:**
 - Provide Basic Life Support (BLS) in both emergency and non-emergency situations.
 - Respond promptly to dispatch calls, ensuring safe and efficient arrival at emergency scenes.
 - Perform patient assessments and administer basic emergency treatments, such as CPR, AED, and basic airway management, following established protocols.
 - Safely transport patients to medical facilities, continuously monitoring vital signs and maintaining a high level of patient care.
 - Complete thorough and accurate documentation of all patient interactions, treatments, and transport activities.
- **Skills and Qualifications:**
 - Certified as an EMT in Kentucky, with current CPR certification.
 - Strong communication skills for effectively interacting with patients, families, and healthcare providers.
 - Ability to perform under pressure, follow protocols, and operate medical equipment safely.
- **Reporting:** EMTs report directly to the **Captain, Assistant Director, or Director** for operational and clinical guidance.



Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT)

- **Primary Responsibilities:**
 - Provide Advanced Life Support (ALS) care at the AEMT level, including IV access, medication administration, and supraglottic airway management.
 - Collaborate with EMTs and Paramedics to deliver comprehensive emergency medical care.
 - Conduct detailed patient assessments and provide emergency interventions according to AEMT protocols.
 - Ensure continuous monitoring and care during patient transport to medical facilities, documenting all advanced procedures.
 - Accurately record details of patient care, including vital signs, treatments, and any medications administered.
- **Skills and Qualifications:**
 - Certified as an AEMT in Kentucky, with current CPR certification.
 - Skilled in performing advanced interventions within the AEMT scope of practice.
 - Effective decision-making skills and the ability to work seamlessly within a team.
- **Reporting:** AEMTs report to the **Captain, Assistant Director, or Director** for clinical oversight and operational guidance.



Paramedic

- **Primary Responsibilities:**
 - Provide Advanced Life Support (ALS), including advanced airway management, cardiac monitoring, medication administration, and critical care interventions.
 - Perform thorough patient assessments, develop treatment plans, and make key clinical decisions in critical situations.
 - Serve as the lead provider on emergency calls, directing EMTs and AEMTs as necessary to ensure optimal patient care.
 - Maintain detailed and accurate records of all patient assessments, treatments, and interventions.
 - Safely transport patients to medical facilities, ensuring continuous monitoring and adapting care as needed during transport.
- **Skills and Qualifications:**
 - Certified as a Paramedic in Kentucky, with advanced skills in emergency medical procedures.
 - Strong leadership and decision-making abilities, especially in high-pressure situations.
 - Ability to communicate effectively and work as part of a cohesive EMS team.
- **Reporting:** Paramedics report to the **Captain, Assistant Director, or Director** for clinical and operational support.



Captain

- **Primary Responsibilities:**
 - Provide direct supervision and operational leadership for EMTs, AEMTs, and Paramedics during their shifts.
 - Ensure that all team members comply with agency policies, procedures, and safety protocols.
 - Coordinate with the Assistant Director and Director on operational issues, staffing needs, and emergency response planning.
 - Act as the primary point of contact for EMS personnel during shifts, addressing any immediate concerns or challenges.
- **Skills and Qualifications:**
 - Extensive experience in EMS, with a proven track record of leadership and operational management.
 - Strong problem-solving abilities and the capability to make quick decisions in emergency situations.
 - Ability to communicate effectively and maintain team morale, ensuring a high level of professionalism and teamwork.
- **Reporting:** The Captain reports to the Assistant Director and works closely with the Assistant Director and Director for overall operational management.



Training Coordinator

- **Primary Responsibilities:**
 - Oversee the training and continuing education of all EMTs, AEMTs, and Paramedics to ensure clinical competency and regulatory compliance.
 - Develop, update, and maintain progressive protocols to reflect current best practices in medicine.
 - Lead the Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement (QA/QI) process, regularly reviewing patient care reports, identifying areas for improvement, and implementing corrective action plans as needed.
 - Manage the onboarding and orientation process for all new employees, ensuring they are well-integrated into the agency and fully trained on policies, protocols, and expectations.
 - Organize and deliver in-service training sessions, maintain education records, and ensure staff are up to date on certifications and licensure.
- **Skills and Qualifications:**
 - Strong background in EMS education and field operations, with experience in training, curriculum development, or QA/QI programs.
 - In-depth understanding of EMS protocols, documentation standards, and applicable state and federal regulations.
 - Excellent written and verbal communication skills, particularly in teaching, mentoring, and policy development.
 - Detail-oriented with strong organizational and analytical skills to manage compliance and performance monitoring.
- **Reporting:** The Education Coordinator reports to the Assistant Director and collaborates with the Education Coordinator and Director to align continuing education efforts with agency goals and operational readiness.



Education Coordinator

- **Primary Responsibilities:**
 - Oversee the agency's initial education programs, including EMT and AEMT courses, ensuring compliance with KBEMS and national educational standards.
 - Develop and implement course curricula, lesson plans, and skills labs that prepare students for certification exams and real-world EMS practice.
 - Coordinate course scheduling, student enrollment, clinical and field placements, and instructor assignments.
 - Maintain accurate education records, student evaluations, and documentation required for accreditation and audit purposes.
 - Serve as the liaison between the agency and state education authorities, accreditation bodies, and partner institutions.
 - Provide mentorship, guidance, and academic support to students throughout their EMS education journey.
- **Skills and Qualifications:**
 - Extensive experience in EMS education, with a strong background in curriculum development, classroom instruction, and regulatory compliance.
 - Certified EMS educator (e.g., EMS-I, Level III instructor, or equivalent), with thorough knowledge of state and national certification requirements.
 - Excellent organizational, communication, and leadership skills to manage multiple students, instructors, and education programs.
 - Strong commitment to academic integrity, student success, and continuous improvement in EMS education delivery.
- **Reporting:** The Education Coordinator reports to the Assistant Director and collaborates with the Training Coordinator and Director to align initial education efforts with agency goals and operational readiness.



Assistant Director

- **Primary Responsibilities:**
 - Assist the Director in overseeing daily operations, ensuring that policies, procedures, and regulations are followed.
 - Supervise EMS personnel, support training and quality improvement programs, and coordinate with other emergency services as needed.
 - Manage administrative functions, including budgeting, resource allocation, and community relations.
 - Serve as a liaison between the Director, Captain, and other staff members, addressing any operational or administrative challenges.
- **Skills and Qualifications:**
 - Strong background in EMS management, with experience in supervision, budgeting, and inter-agency coordination.
 - Excellent leadership abilities, including communication, problem-solving, and decision-making skills.
 - Ability to handle both clinical and operational responsibilities effectively, ensuring that the team operates at a high level.
- **Reporting:** The Assistant Director reports directly to the **Director** and has delegated authority for both operational, clinical, and administrative tasks.



Director

- **Primary Responsibilities:**

- Provide overall leadership for Garrard County EMS, setting strategic goals and ensuring the agency's mission is fulfilled.
- Develop and enforce policies and procedures that align with regulatory requirements and best practices in EMS.
- Manage relationships with community leaders, government agencies, and the Judge Executive, representing Garrard County EMS in all professional matters.
- Oversee budget development, resource management, and long-term planning initiatives to sustain and improve EMS operations.

- **Skills and Qualifications:**

- Extensive experience in EMS leadership, with a thorough understanding of emergency medical services, regulatory standards, and community relations.
- Strong organizational and strategic planning skills, with a focus on continuous improvement.
- Exceptional communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to effectively manage a team and engage with stakeholders.

- **Reporting:** The Director reports to the **Judge Executive** and holds the highest level of responsibility for operational and administrative decisions within the agency.



Levels of Care and Medical Teams

Purpose of this Guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to define the levels of care provided by Garrard County EMS and outline the medical team configurations to ensure patients receive the appropriate level of care.

Guideline

Levels of Care Provided

Garrard County EMS is committed to delivering high-quality emergency medical care to the citizens of Garrard County and those passing through. The agency provides the following levels of care:

- **Advanced Life Support (ALS)** – Includes advanced medical interventions provided by paramedics and advanced EMTs.
- **Basic Life Support (BLS)** – Includes essential pre-hospital care provided by EMTs for lower-acuity emergencies.

Medical Team Configurations

Garrard County EMS operates with various team configurations to ensure optimal patient care:

- **Paramedic and EMT** – Provides advanced medical interventions and critical care.
- **Paramedic and Advanced EMT** – Delivers high-level care with advanced and intermediate skills.
- **Advanced EMT and EMT** – Combines intermediate and basic care skills to handle a wide range of emergencies.
- **EMT and EMT** – Offers basic life support services for non-critical patients or as a supporting team.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy ensures that Garrard County EMS deploys appropriate medical teams to meet patient care needs while maintaining operational efficiency.



Inter-Agency Relationships

Inter-agency relationships are crucial for ensuring seamless coordination during emergencies and fostering strong collaboration with neighboring services and local authorities. Garrard County EMS maintains mutual aid agreements and cooperative partnerships with other emergency service providers to enhance the safety and effectiveness of emergency response efforts.



Mutual Aid Agreements (1 of 4)

Purpose of this Guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to outline the process for requesting, providing, and managing mutual aid agreements between Garrard County EMS and neighboring EMS agencies, fire departments, and emergency responders. These agreements ensure efficient resource sharing, coordination, and improved emergency response capabilities.

Guideline

Activation of Mutual Aid

When is mutual aid activated?

Mutual aid may be activated when:

- Garrard County EMS resources are exhausted or unable to meet the demand.
- The nature of the emergency requires specialized personnel or additional equipment.
- Large-scale incidents, mass casualty events (MCI), or extended response times require additional units.

Who can request mutual aid?

- The authority to request mutual aid typically lies with the Captain, Assistant Director, or Director, depending on the situation's scale and urgency.
- If none of these individuals are available, field personnel may request mutual aid to ensure timely response.



Mutual Aid Agreements (2 of 4)

Steps to Activate Mutual Aid:

1. Establish clear communication with the mutual aid partner.
2. Provide accurate details regarding:
 - Nature of the emergency
 - Exact location
 - Resources required
 - Any hazards or operational concerns
3. Follow the protocols outlined in the mutual aid agreement to formally request assistance.

Response to Mutual Aid Requests

How should Garrard County EMS respond to mutual aid requests?

- The Captain or on-duty leadership will evaluate Garrard County EMS's resource availability before committing to mutual aid.
- Assistance will be provided only if it does not compromise local emergency response capabilities.
- The requesting agency will receive timely updates regarding the status and availability of resources.

Priorities When Responding to Mutual Aid Requests:

1. Safety of Garrard County EMS personnel.
2. Ensuring adequate staffing and resources remain available for local emergency response.
3. Adherence to the protocols and procedures of the requesting agency for a coordinated response.



Mutual Aid Agreements (3 of 4)

Communication and Coordination

How is communication handled during mutual aid responses?

- During routine mutual aid responses, personnel will continue operating on the GCEMS EMS channel to maintain internal coordination.
- During a mass casualty incident (MCI), a separate communication channel or radio frequency will be designated for mutual aid. This ensures:
 - GCEMS EMS channel remains clear for internal communications.
 - Mutual aid agencies coordinate efficiently without overloading the primary channel.
- The Incident Command System (ICS) may be utilized in MCIs to streamline coordination across multiple agencies.

Documentation and Reporting

How should mutual aid operations be documented?

- Routine mutual aid responses require no special documentation beyond regular shift logs and patient care reports (PCRs).
- Mass casualty mutual aid responses must be thoroughly documented, including:
 - Time of request
 - Resources provided
 - Personnel deployed
 - Any challenges encountered
 - All patient care must be documented in the ePCR, but records will not be shared with mutual aid agencies.

Who is responsible for mutual aid documentation?

- The Captain or on-scene supervisor is responsible for ensuring proper documentation.
- Reports must be submitted to the Assistant Director and Director for review.



Mutual Aid Agreements (4 of 4)

Financial and Liability Considerations

What financial agreements are included in mutual aid?

- Mutual aid agreements specify financial responsibilities, including:
 - Reimbursement for equipment, personnel, and transport costs when applicable.
 - Garrard County EMS follows reimbursement procedures outlined in the agreements.
 - Any financial concerns should be directed to the Assistant Director or Director.

Who assumes liability during mutual aid operations?

- Liability is governed by the terms of the mutual aid agreement.
- Garrard County EMS personnel must follow all agency safety and operational protocols to limit liability risks.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy ensures that mutual aid agreements are executed efficiently, personnel safety is prioritized, and all documentation, financial, and liability considerations are addressed in accordance with Garrard County EMS operational standards.



Conflict Resolution

- **What steps should you take if there is a conflict during mutual aid operations?**
 - Conflicts during mutual aid operations should be reported immediately to the Captain or Assistant Director. A thorough debriefing should follow, and if necessary, the mutual aid agreement should be reviewed for clarity on roles and expectations.
 - In cases where the conflict cannot be resolved at the field level, it will be escalated to the Director, who will communicate with the leadership of the assisting agency to address the issue.



Community Engagement and Outreach

- **How does Garrard County EMS engage with the community?**
 - Garrard County EMS actively participates in public education efforts, health fairs, and emergency preparedness seminars to foster relationships with community members and improve public awareness of EMS services.
 - Garrard County EMS also works with local schools, businesses, and community organizations to provide CPR training, first-aid education, and emergency response planning.
- **How can Garrard County EMS personnel participate in community outreach?**
 - Personnel are encouraged to volunteer for community engagement events and represent Garrard County EMS at public safety initiatives.
 - Active participation in public events strengthens the relationship between the agency and the community, contributing to a positive public perception and a deeper understanding of the role of EMS.



Management and Record Keeping

Effective management and record keeping are essential for maintaining operational efficiency, compliance with regulatory standards, and ensuring accurate documentation of EMS activities. Garrard County EMS is committed to upholding high standards in how we manage records and maintain critical documentation related to operations, patient care, and agency performance.



Policy Location

- **Where can employees access agency policies and procedures?**
 - All Garrard County EMS policies and procedures, including Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs), are maintained in both physical and digital formats. The digital copies are available on the agency's internal network, while physical copies can be found in designated areas such as the shift captain's office and administrative offices.
 - **Employees are encouraged to regularly review the SOGs** to stay informed about updates or changes in agency policies.



Policy/Procedure Change Process

Purpose of this Guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to establish a standardized process for communicating, training, and implementing changes to policies and procedures at Garrard County EMS. This ensures that all staff members are informed, prepared, and compliant with updated or new guidelines.

Guideline:

Communication of Policy and Procedure Changes

- All policy and procedure changes will be communicated exclusively through email notifications.
- Policy updates are effective immediately upon being sent via email.

Training for Updated or New Policies

- When a new Standard Operating Guideline (SOG) is introduced or an existing policy is updated, staff may be required to complete a FOAMfrat training module to ensure comprehension and proper implementation.
- If a policy change significantly impacts operational procedures or patient care protocols, staff may be required to attend mandatory training sessions before full implementation.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy ensures that all employees receive timely, clear, and effective communication about policy changes and that they receive appropriate training when necessary to maintain compliance and operational efficiency.



Record Maintenance

- **How are operational and clinical records maintained at Garrard County EMS?**
 - **Operational records**, such as shift logs, vehicle checklists, incident reports, and personnel files, are maintained by the administrative staff in accordance with local, state, and federal regulations.
 - **Clinical records**, including Patient Care Reports (PCRs), are securely stored in compliance with HIPAA regulations to protect patient privacy. These records are maintained electronically and are backed up regularly to ensure data integrity.
 - Records related to mass casualty incidents and mutual aid responses, particularly in significant events, are also retained for review, debriefing, and future operational planning.
- **What are the retention periods for these records?**
 - **Patient Care Reports (PCRs)** are retained for a minimum of 7 years in compliance with state regulations and may be kept longer if necessary for legal or operational reasons.
 - **Operational logs, incident reports, and vehicle checklists** are typically maintained for 5 years, while personnel files are retained for the duration of employment and for several years following termination, as required by employment law.



Electronic Data Compliance

- **What security measures are in place to protect electronic records?**
 - Data related to patient care is encrypted and subject to regular audits to ensure compliance with HIPAA regulations and other applicable privacy laws.
- **What should you do if you suspect a data breach or loss of records?**
 - Any suspected data breaches, loss of records, or unauthorized access to sensitive information must be immediately reported to the **Assistant Director** or **Director**. The agency will follow protocols for investigating and resolving data breaches, including notifying affected parties if necessary.



Data Entry and Documentation Accuracy

- **How should documentation be handled by EMS personnel?**
 - All Garrard County EMS personnel are required to ensure that their documentation is accurate, complete, and submitted promptly following every call. This includes electronic patient care reports (ePCRs), shift logs, and any incident reports.
 - **ePCRs must be completed before leaving the station at the end of your shift.** If, for any reason, this is not possible, personnel are required to immediately contact the **Captain, Assistant Director, or Director** for further instructions.
 - Inaccurate or incomplete documentation can lead to legal issues, delayed billing, or potential harm to patients if follow-up care is needed. Therefore, it is critical that every record reflects an accurate account of the incident and care provided.



Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement (QA/QI)

- **How are records reviewed for accuracy and improvement?**
 - The **Assistant Director** and **Director** are responsible for regularly reviewing patient care reports (PCRs) and operational logs as part of the **Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement (QA/QI)** process.
 - This review identifies areas for improvement, such as documentation errors, protocol deviations, or operational inefficiencies, and allows the leadership team to provide feedback to personnel or recommend further training if needed.
 - The goal of the QA/QI process is to ensure that patient care meets the highest standards, improve operational efficiency, and maintain compliance with local, state, and federal regulations.



Financial Management

Financial management is a key component of ensuring that Garrard County EMS operates effectively within budgetary constraints while maintaining a high level of service. Proper financial oversight and responsibility are essential for managing the agency's resources, staffing, and equipment needs.



Financial Authority

- **Who has the authority to make financial decisions?**
 - Financial decisions, including purchasing, budget allocations, and resource management, are overseen by the **Director** and the **Assistant Director**. The Director has final approval for all significant financial expenditures.
 - Day-to-day purchasing for smaller operational needs may be delegated to the **Captain**, but all purchases must adhere to the approved budget and financial guidelines.



Budgeting and Monitoring

- **How is the budget developed and monitored?**
 - The annual budget is developed by the **Director** in consultation with the **Assistant Director** and other leadership members. The budgeting process involves forecasting the agency's needs, including personnel, equipment, training, and operational expenses.
 - Once approved, the budget is continuously monitored by the Director and Assistant Director to ensure that spending remains within the set limits. Any unforeseen expenses or deviations from the budget must be reviewed and approved by the Director.
 - **Quarterly financial reviews** are conducted to assess whether the agency is on track with its spending and revenue generation. Adjustments may be made to the budget if necessary.



Expense Reporting

- **How should expenses be reported?**
 - All personnel responsible for purchases or expenditures must submit **expense reports** to the administrative office. These reports should include detailed documentation, such as receipts, invoices, and purchase orders.
 - Expense reports must be reviewed and signed off by the **Assistant Director** before being submitted to the Director for final approval.
 - Any unapproved or undocumented expenses may be subject to disciplinary action, depending on the nature and severity of the violation.



Procurement and Equipment Purchases

- **What is the process for purchasing new equipment?**
 - Requests for new equipment or significant purchases must be submitted in writing to the **Assistant Director** and **Director** for review and approval. The request should include the purpose, cost estimate, and potential impact on the budget.
 - Once approved, the procurement process will be handled by the administrative office, ensuring that purchases comply with any local, state, and federal procurement regulations.



Financial Audit Procedures

- **How are finances audited?**
 - Garrard County EMS and/or Garrard County Fiscal Court conducts financial audits on an annual basis to ensure that all financial transactions are documented, compliant with regulations, and align with the approved budget.
 - The Director and Assistant Director will collaborate with external auditors, if required, to ensure transparency and accuracy in the financial reporting process.
 - Any discrepancies found during audits will be addressed immediately, and corrective actions will be implemented to prevent future occurrences.



Financial Responsibility of Personnel

- **What financial responsibilities do personnel have?**
 - All personnel are expected to act responsibly when using agency resources or making purchases on behalf of Garrard County EMS.
 - Unauthorized purchases, misuse of funds, or failure to comply with financial procedures may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
 - Personnel should report any financial concerns or suspected misuse of funds to the Assistant Director or Director immediately.



Community Outreach and Public Relations

Garrard County EMS plays an essential role in the community, not only in emergency response but also through public education, engagement, and fostering strong relationships with residents and local organizations. Effective community outreach and public relations efforts help build trust and enhance the agency's image, ensuring that the public understands the value of EMS services and knows how to access emergency care when needed.



Public Education and Outreach

- **How does Garrard County EMS engage with the community?**
 - Garrard County EMS is committed to engaging with the community through public education programs, participation in local events, and collaboration with schools, businesses, and civic organizations.
 - CPR training sessions, first-aid workshops, and emergency preparedness seminars are regularly offered to the public to improve community readiness and safety.
 - EMS personnel are encouraged to actively participate in community events, such as health fairs, school visits, and public safety demonstrations, to educate citizens about emergency services and promote public health awareness.
- **What is the role of EMS personnel in community outreach?**
 - All personnel are ambassadors of Garrard County EMS and are expected to represent the agency in a professional and positive manner during community events.
 - Personnel may be asked to assist in organizing and conducting public education programs, such as CPR or first-aid training, and to help deliver presentations on safety and emergency preparedness.
 - EMS personnel should always encourage public engagement by answering questions and providing helpful information about the services Garrard County EMS offers.



Media Relations

- **How does Garrard County EMS manage media inquiries?**
 - All media inquiries related to Garrard County EMS must be directed to the Director or Assistant Director. These leaders are responsible for providing official statements and managing interactions with news outlets. This ensures that accurate and consistent information is communicated to the public.
 - Personnel should never speak to the media on behalf of Garrard County EMS without prior approval from the Director or Assistant Director. Unauthorized communication with the media could result in misinformation, which could harm the agency's reputation and public image.
- **What are the guidelines for media and photographers?**
 - Media or photographers are not permitted to take photos inside the station without the explicit approval of the Assistant Director or Director. This ensures that patient privacy and operational security are maintained.
 - Media or photographers are strictly prohibited from entering ambulances during patient care or while on a scene. This rule is in place to protect patient confidentiality and ensure the safety and focus of EMS personnel while delivering care.
- **What should personnel do if approached by the media?**
 - If personnel are approached by the media while on duty or at the scene of an incident, they should politely direct reporters to contact the Director or Assistant Director for official information. Under no circumstances should EMS personnel provide details about patients, incidents, or operations unless expressly authorized by leadership.



Social Media Guidelines

- **What is Garrard County EMS's policy on social media use?**
 - Garrard County EMS recognizes the importance of social media in modern communication but requires all personnel to adhere to strict guidelines to protect patient confidentiality, agency reputation, and legal compliance.
 - Personnel are prohibited from posting any patient information, incident details, or internal operational discussions on personal or agency-affiliated social media accounts.
 - All official social media posts representing Garrard County EMS must be approved by the Director or Assistant Director. These posts may include public announcements, safety tips, and agency updates.
- **What are the consequences of violating social media policies?**
 - Violations of social media policies, such as sharing unauthorized information or compromising patient privacy, will result in disciplinary action, which may include suspension or termination.



Public Complaint Handling Procedures

- **How are public complaints handled?**
 - Complaints from the public regarding Garrard County EMS services should be taken seriously and addressed promptly. Complaints may be received through direct communication, phone calls, emails, or social media.
 - Personnel receiving complaints must report them immediately to the Captain, Assistant Director, or Director for further investigation.
 - Complaints will be documented and reviewed by leadership to determine if further action is needed. Feedback will be provided to the complainant, and appropriate corrective actions will be taken if necessary.
- **What is the process for resolving complaints?**
 - Once a complaint is received, the Assistant Director or Director will conduct an investigation to gather all relevant information and determine the validity of the complaint.
 - If the complaint involves a potential policy or procedural violation, the issue will be addressed with the personnel involved, and corrective actions, such as retraining or discipline, will be implemented if necessary.
 - The individual who filed the complaint will be contacted with a resolution or response once the investigation is complete.



Employee Visitations

- **When are visitors allowed at Garrard County EMS Headquarters?**
 - Visitors, such as family or friends, are allowed on the premises of Garrard County EMS between the hours of 0700 to 2200. Visits extending past 2200 are not permitted.
- **What are the rules for visitors at Garrard County EMS?**
 - **Supervision:** All visitors must be accompanied by an EMS employee at all times while on the grounds of Garrard County EMS.
 - **Leaving the facility:** If all on-duty personnel must leave the building for any reason, all visitors must also vacate the premises.
 - **Security door codes:** Door codes are confidential and must be kept secure. They are in place for the protection of EMS staff, vehicles, and facilities.
 - **Protected Health Information (PHI):** Visitors are not permitted in areas where Protected Health Information (PHI) may be visible or accessible.
 - **Sleeping quarters:** Visitors are prohibited from entering the sleeping quarters at any time.
 - **Disruptive behavior:** Any visitor who becomes abusive, disruptive, or distracting will be asked to leave by the on-duty Captain, Assistant Director or Director.
- **What is the purpose of allowing visitors?**
 - Brief visits by family and friends for legitimate reasons are encouraged to maintain personal connections for personnel. However, repetitive, lengthy, or unnecessary visits are disruptive and interfere with the normal workflow of EMS personnel. Such visits should be limited to ensure that a professional, business-like atmosphere is maintained at all times.



Human Resources

The Human Resources (HR) function at Garrard County EMS is designed to support the agency's operational goals by ensuring that all employees are properly trained, equipped, and supported throughout their careers. This section outlines expectations for job performance, uniforms, conduct, training, compensation, and disciplinary processes to maintain professionalism and high standards of service.



Job Descriptions and Expectations

- **Where can you find your job description?**
 - Job descriptions for each role, including EMTs, AEMTs, Paramedics, Lieutenants (FTO), Captains, the Assistant Director, and the Director, are provided at the time of employment and are available for review in this standard operating guidelines.
 - Each job description outlines specific duties, responsibilities, and performance expectations for your role within Garrard County EMS.
- **What are the general expectations for all Garrard County EMS personnel?**
 - All personnel are expected to provide compassionate, high-quality patient care, adhere to agency protocols, and work cooperatively with other team members and agencies.
 - You are required to maintain professional conduct both on and off duty, as you represent Garrard County EMS at all times. This includes compliance with all state and federal regulations, as well as local policies and procedures.
 - Personnel are also expected to complete all required documentation accurately and in a timely manner, as outlined in the Data Entry and Documentation Accuracy section.



Hiring Process Guideline

1. Application and Interview Process

- Garrard County EMS uses a behavior-based selection process to screen prospective employees. Candidates are evaluated through their application and interviews, focusing on both skills and personality traits that align with the characteristics required of an EMS worker.

2. What does the screening process assess?

- The screening process is designed to identify candidates who possess the right combination of:
 - **Problem-solving skills.**
 - **Communication abilities.**
 - **Leadership qualities.**
 - **Stress management.**
 - **Teamwork and collaborative capabilities.**
- Candidates will be asked a series of behavior-based questions during the interview, assessing how they have handled real-life situations related to these areas.

3. What is the goal of the screening process?

- The goal is to find individuals who can match Garrard County EMS's expectations as closely as possible. The selection process ensures that new hires possess the temperament, personality, and skills required to thrive in the EMS environment.



Equal Employment Opportunity and Diversity Plan Guideline

- **What is the purpose of this guideline?**
 - The purpose of this guideline is to affirm Garrard County EMS's commitment to equal employment opportunities and ensure that all qualified applicants are treated fairly and equally, without discrimination based on any protected status.

Equal Employment Guideline

1. **Equal Employment Opportunity Commitment**
 - Garrard County EMS provides equal employment opportunities to all employees and qualified applicants for employment without regard to:
 - **Race, color, religion, sex, gender identity/expression**
 - **Sexual orientation**
 - **National origin**
 - **Age**
 - **Disability**
 - **Veteran status**
 - **Marital status**
 - **Creed**
 - **National Guard or reserve unit obligations**
 - Or other statuses protected under applicable **federal, state, and local laws.**
 - This guideline applies to all terms and conditions of employment, including but not limited to:
 - Hiring and placement
 - Promotion
 - Termination and layoff
 - Recall and transfers
 - Leave of absence
 - Compensation and training
2. **Compliance with Laws**
 - Garrard County EMS complies with all **federal, state, and local laws** governing **nondiscrimination** in employment.



Annual Background Check Policy

- **Purpose**

- The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Garrard County EMS maintains the highest standards of trust, safety, and accountability by conducting annual background checks on all employees.

Policy Details

1. **Annual Background Check Requirement**

- Each employee of Garrard County EMS is required to undergo an annual background check as part of the agency's commitment to safety, integrity, and compliance with applicable standards.

2. **Cost of Background Checks**

- Garrard County EMS will cover the full cost of each employee's annual background check. There will be no cost to the employee for this required procedure.

3. **Scope of the Background Check**

- The annual background check will include, but may not be limited to:
 - Verification of criminal history and any changes since the last check.
 - Driving record review for those with roles requiring operation of EMS vehicles.
 - Any other checks deemed necessary to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal regulations, and to meet the specific standards set by Garrard County EMS.

4. **Privacy and Confidentiality**

- All information gathered through background checks will be handled with the strictest confidentiality and used only for employment purposes within Garrard County EMS. Background check results will be securely stored and accessible only to authorized personnel.

5. **Employee Acknowledgment**

- Employees are expected to cooperate fully with the background check process. Upon completion, employees may be asked to acknowledge receipt and understanding of this policy. Refusal to comply with the background check requirement may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.



Diversity Plan

- **What steps does Garrard County EMS take to promote diversity and equal employment?**
 - Garrard County EMS is committed to ensuring that employment practices do not have unintended discriminatory effects. To achieve this, the organization takes the following steps:
 - Ensure equal opportunity for all individuals in areas such as:
 - **Employee selection**
 - **Promotion**
 - **Training and development**
 - **Compensation**
 - **Termination and disciplinary action**
 - Evaluate pre-employment inquiries to prevent disproportionate screening of any group, ensuring applicants are judged solely on their ability to perform the job.
 - Promotions will be based on valid and appropriate requirements, aligning with equal employment opportunity principles.
 - No individual will be denied participation or benefits in any program or activity conducted by Garrard County EMS on the basis of protected status.
- **How does Garrard County EMS promote diversity in the workplace?**
 - Garrard County EMS is committed to ensuring racial neutrality and equal opportunity in all employment decisions. The organization recognizes the importance of removing barriers for minority groups and is dedicated to the successful implementation of this commitment at all levels of management.
- **Special functions and outreach**
 - Garrard County EMS participates in several public relations and outreach functions each year to educate potential applicants, including but not limited to:
 - Health and wellness events
 - School career days
 - Cub Scouts/Boy Scouts events
 - Gifted and talented programs
 - Paramedic student internships
 - Civic group and club events
 - Advertisements on the **EMS website**



Physical Abilities Guideline

- **What is the purpose of this guideline?**
 - The purpose of this guideline is to identify the physical abilities required to perform effectively in the EMS field and to outline the minimum requirements for initial or continued employment at Garrard County EMS.
- **What are the physical demands of working in the EMS field?**
 - All full-time and part-time field staff must understand the physical demands associated with working in an EMS environment, which include but are not limited to:
 1. **Lifting and carrying:**
 - Personnel must frequently lift and carry loads in excess of **125 pounds**. This may involve moving patients or heavy equipment in challenging conditions.
 2. **Hazardous environments:**
 - Staff may work in and around scenes involving **hazardous materials, highway traffic, fires, natural disasters**, and other emergency situations that present extreme physical demands.
 3. **Exposure to body fluids:**
 - Personnel may be exposed to **body fluids** potentially contaminated with disease, requiring the ability to wear **protective clothing** and equipment for extended periods of time.
 4. **Extreme environmental conditions:**
 - EMS staff must be prepared to work in **extreme heat or cold**, potentially for extended periods, while maintaining a high level of performance and patient care.
 5. **Confined areas:**
 - Emergency situations may require staff to operate in **confined spaces** that demand a high degree of **agility** and **mobility** to provide effective patient care.



Sick Leave

- **How is sick leave managed at Garrard County EMS?**
 - Garrard County EMS allows employees 3 unexcused absences per year. After the 3rd unexcused absence, a doctor's note will be required for any further sick leave. Employees who fail to provide a doctor's note when required will receive an occurrence. Accumulating 3 occurrences will result in termination.
- **How much sick leave can employees accrue?**
 - Full-time employees may accrue up to 360 hours of sick leave. However, unused sick leave is not paid out upon termination of employment.
- **What constitutes proper use of sick leave?**
 - Sick leave may only be used for illness or injury. Doctor's appointments may also qualify with prior approval from the Captain or the Assistant Director, or Director. Sick leave should not be used for personal reasons.
- **How is sick leave managed during extended absences?**
 - Sick leave does not accrue during extended illness, workers' compensation leave, or other absences such as a leave of absence or layoff. Pregnancy or childbirth is treated as a temporary disability and is eligible for sick leave, in compliance with the Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978.
- **Can employees donate sick leave?**
 - Employees may voluntarily donate sick leave hours to other employees by notifying the County Judge Executive or appropriate Elected Official.



Garrard County EMS Sick Leave Procedures

1. Notification of illness or injury

- If an employee is unable to attend their scheduled shift due to illness or injury, they must notify the On-Duty Captain by telephone. If the Supervisor cannot be reached, the employee must contact the Assistant Director or the Director. Notification must be made by phone call only, with no use of text messages, voicemail, email, or third-party notification.

2. Timing of notification

- Employees must notify the Supervisor a minimum of one hour prior to the start of their scheduled shift. Eight-hour prior notification is preferred if illness is known in advance. Late notification, with less than one hour of notice, may result in disciplinary action.

3. Information provided during notification

- The employee must provide the following details:
 - Date of the scheduled shift
 - Reason for absence
 - Expected return-to-work date

4. Physician or dental appointments

- Employees must schedule time off for physician or dental appointments at least three days prior and document the request on an approved form. A valid excuse from the physician or dentist must be provided.

5. Physician's excuse after three sick occurrences

- Employees are permitted three excused sick occurrences per fiscal year without requiring a physician's note. Beyond the third occurrence, a physician's excuse is required for any further sick leave, with the excuse presented to the Director of EMS before the employee's first shift back. The physician's note must document both the date of absence and the date of release to full duty.

6. Disciplinary process for unexcused absences

- Employees who exceed the maximum number of excused absences and fail to provide a physician's excuse may face disciplinary action. Two disciplinary occurrences in any fiscal year may result in termination of employment.

7. Policy changes

- This policy may be modified or amended at any time by the Director, the Garrard County Judge/Executive, or the Garrard County Fiscal Court.



Vacation Leave

- **How is vacation leave accrued at Garrard County EMS?**
 - Vacation leave is accrued based on a combination of monthly accrual and holiday hours:
 - Employees accrue 6 hours of vacation leave per month.
 - Employees receive 88 holiday hours annually.
 - For each holiday worked, employees accrue an additional 4 hours of leave.
- **What is the process for requesting vacation leave?**
 - Employees must submit a vacation leave request form to their Captain, Assistant Director, or Director for approval. Requests should be submitted well in advance to ensure that appropriate staffing levels are maintained.
- **How is vacation leave scheduled?**
 - Vacation leave will be approved based on operational needs and availability. Every effort will be made to accommodate employee preferences, but maintaining proper staffing levels will take priority.



Attendance and Reporting for Duty

Purpose of this Guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to establish clear expectations for reporting to work, managing absences, and ensuring consistent staffing for safe and effective EMS operations.

Guideline

Reporting to Work

- All Garrard County EMS personnel are expected to report on time and in uniform for their scheduled shifts.
- Shifts begin promptly at 07:00, unless otherwise scheduled (e.g., part-time or fill-in shifts).
- Part-time employees may be granted leniency with prior notice if delayed by another place of employment.

Reporting Late

- If an employee is going to be late, they must:
 1. Call the on-duty Captain at (859) 304-3001.
 2. If there is no answer, leave a voicemail.
 3. Only after both of the above, a text message may be sent with an ETA.
(*Do not text while driving.*)



Tardiness Guidelines

Excessive tardiness may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The following apply:

- **More than 3 unexcused tardies** (over 5 minutes late) within a 6-month period.
- **More than 6 total tardies** (under 5 minutes late) within a 6-month period.

Failure to Report or Notify

- Failure to report for duty without contacting the on-duty supervisor before the shift begins will be considered absent without approved leave and may result in progressive discipline, including termination.

Absence and Doctor's Note Requirement

- After three (3) total absences, the employee will be required to submit a doctor's note verifying the reason for the absence.
- The note must be submitted on the next scheduled shift the employee is assigned to work.
- Failure to submit documentation may result in disciplinary action.

Leaving Before Relief

- No employee is permitted to leave their assigned post until their relief has arrived and a proper face-to-face handoff has been completed.
- Leaving prior to relief without approval from the on-duty Captain will be considered abandonment of post and will result in disciplinary action.



Communication with Administration

- Employees experiencing ongoing personal or professional challenges affecting their ability to arrive on time or maintain attendance are encouraged to speak with GCEMS administration to discuss possible accommodations or support.



Return of Issued Equipment and Apparel

- **What must be returned upon termination of employment?**
 - All uniforms, keys, badges, two-way radios, and other issued apparel or equipment provided by Garrard County EMS must be returned at the time of employment termination. Personnel are responsible for ensuring that all issued items are returned in good condition.



Uniform Requirements

- Uniforms are mandatory and must be worn at all times while on duty to ensure a professional appearance and maintain the public's trust in the agency. The uniform includes the following:
 - **Agency-issued T-Shirt or Polo:**
 - All personnel wearing an agency-issued t-shirt or polo are required to keep their shirt tucked in under the following conditions:
 - Between the hours of 0700 and 1900, shirts must remain tucked in at all times, including while inside the station.
 - Shirts must be tucked in any time personnel are in public view. This includes all times when outside the station, interacting with the public, or representing the agency in any capacity off-base.
 - **Khaki tactical pants:** Tactical pants are required as part of the uniform to ensure durability, comfort, and functionality while performing duties.
 - **Boots:** Black tactical boots are required to ensure safety and support during emergency responses. Boots must be polished and in good condition.
 - **Agency-issued Jacket or Job shirt:** When necessary for colder weather or as required by the situation, personnel are expected to wear the agency-issued jacket or job shirt. If an employee is unable to wear an agency-issued jacket or job shirt, a solid black jacket, hoodie, or job-shirt may be worn. A yellow ANSI-compliant "High-Visible" jacket may be worn by all personnel to enhance visibility and ensure safety during cold weather.
 - **Headgear:** Personnel may wear a black ball cap, agency-issued ball cap, black toboggan, or an agency-issued toboggan for outdoor work or during inclement weather, as part of the uniform. These items must be clean, in good condition, and worn appropriately.
 - **ANSI-approved vests:** An ANSI-approved vest must be worn by all personnel whenever working on or near any roadway to ensure safety and visibility.
 - **Mock turtlenecks, plain t-shirts, or long-sleeved t-shirts** may be worn beneath the issued polo shirt for added comfort and warmth.



- **Uniform presentation:** All uniform items must be clean, in good condition, and properly fitted. Personnel are responsible for maintaining their uniforms and ensuring that any damaged or worn-out items are replaced. If any uniform item is damaged or no longer meets the standards of wear, it should be reported to the Captain or Assistant Director for replacement.
- **Additional items:** Personnel may also be required to wear badges, name tags, and other identifying markers as part of the uniform. These must be visible at all times during duty to ensure clear identification by patients, other emergency services personnel, and the public.

Uniform in Adverse Weather

- In temperatures below 32°F, personnel are permitted and encouraged to wear additional items to maintain safety and comfort during duty. These items include:
 - Thermal base layers (tops and bottoms) that are solid black or navy in color.
 - Insulated gloves designed for dexterity and warmth while not wearing exam gloves.
 - A black, navy or agency-issued insulated jacket.
 - Thick wool socks or thermal socks for additional warmth.
 - Winter hats or earmuffs in solid black, navy or agency-issued designs.



Uniform Allowance Guideline

- **What is the purpose of the uniform allowance guideline?**
 - The purpose of this guideline is to ensure a consistent and professional uniform appearance for all Garrard County EMS employees and to provide guidance on the use of the full-time employee's uniform allowance.

Guideline

- **What is the uniform allowance for Garrard County EMS employees?**
 - Garrard County EMS provides each full-time employee with a \$200.00 fiscal year uniform allowance. This allowance may be increased, decreased, or abolished at the discretion of EMS management.
- **When can uniform orders be submitted?**
 - Uniform orders can be submitted from July 1st until May 1st of each fiscal year. All orders must be submitted using approved order forms.
- **Who is the approved uniform vendor?**
 - Garrard County EMS has contracted with a single uniform vendor. No other vendors may be used for reimbursable items unless prior approval is obtained from management.
- **What can the uniform allowance be used for?**
 - The uniform allowance can be utilized for basic uniform items, including:
 - Uniform hats and toboggans
 - Jackets
 - Polos and t-shirts
 - Pants and belts
 - Socks and footwear
- **What items are not covered by the uniform allowance?**
 - The uniform allowance cannot be used for items such as:
 - Stethoscopes
 - Flashlights
 - Eyewear
- **Additional Uniform Standards**
 - For more details on uniform requirements, employees should refer to the Uniform Policy.



Meal Break Guideline

- **What is the purpose of this guideline?**
 - The purpose of this guideline is to ensure that meal breaks are taken with consideration for system status and customer needs, while also recognizing the importance of meal breaks for maintaining employee readiness and overall health.

Guideline

1. **Where can EMS personnel take meal breaks?**
 - EMS personnel are permitted to go to restaurants for meals or pick up food at establishments. Meal breaks must occur at a location within the service district of the EMS unit.
 - Units may take their meal breaks at establishments within Lancaster city limits.
2. **Meal breaks during out-of-county transports**
 - During out-of-county transports, units are not permitted to stop for a sit-down meal. The system status and call load require that units return to Garrard County before taking a meal break.
 - Exceptions include convalescent transports to physician's offices, where the patients are transferred to the physician's staff and the length of the visit makes it impractical to return to the county.
3. **Response during meals**
 - EMS personnel must be prepared to immediately leave a meal if dispatched to an emergency: a. Personnel will not wait to pay if they receive an emergency call and should make arrangements for such occurrences in advance. Employees are responsible for prepaying for their meals or returning to the establishment after the call to pay. Failure to do so will be considered a serious violation of policy, as it negatively reflects on the entire organization.
4. **Behavior during meal breaks**
 - EMS crews will not discuss details of calls in restaurants to maintain privacy and professionalism.
 - Portable radio traffic must not be audible to others in the restaurant, ensuring discretion and minimal disruption to the public.



5. Communication during meal breaks

- EMS personnel must ensure that the dispatch can reach them during their meal break to facilitate a timely response if needed.

6. Parking during meal breaks

- EMS vehicles must be parked in locations that allow for immediate emergency response without delay. Fire lanes and handicap spaces are not to be used under any circumstances.



Job Posting and Internal Advancement Guideline

- **What is the purpose of this guideline?**
 - The purpose of this guideline is to provide Garrard County EMS employees with the opportunity to express interest in open positions and advance within the organization based on their skills and experience. This process encourages internal growth and career development.

Guideline

1. Job Posting Process

- Garrard County EMS will post notices for regular, full-time job openings, although the agency reserves the right not to post a particular opening at its discretion.
- Job openings will be posted on the employee bulletin board and will typically remain open for seven days.
- Each job posting will include details such as:
 - **Posting period dates**
 - **Job title**
 - **Department**
 - **Location**
 - **Grade level**
 - **Job summary**
 - **Essential duties and responsibilities**
 - **Required skills and qualifications**

2. Eligibility to Apply

- To be eligible to apply for a posted position, employees must have performed competently in their current position for at least 180 calendar days.
- Employees who are currently under a written warning, on probation, or suspended are not eligible to apply for job postings.
- Employees can only apply for jobs for which they meet the required skills, competencies, and qualifications as outlined in the job posting.



3. How to Apply for a Job Posting

- To apply for an open position, employees must submit a job posting application to the Manager. The application should highlight:
 - Relevant job-related skills and accomplishments.
 - A description of how their current experience with Garrard County EMS, along with prior work experience and/or education, qualifies them for the position.

4. Purpose of Job Posting

- The job posting process serves to inform employees of available positions and allows the organization to identify qualified and interested applicants who may not otherwise be known to the hiring manager.
- Other recruiting sources may also be used in conjunction with the internal job posting process to fill open positions, ensuring that the best interests of the organization are met.



Random Drug Testing Guideline

Purpose of this Guideline The purpose of this guideline is to establish a fair and consistent process for conducting random drug testing at Garrard County EMS. This policy is designed to ensure a safe and drug-free workplace, uphold the integrity of emergency medical services, and promote the health and safety of employees, patients, and the community.

Guideline

Random Drug Testing Process

- Garrard County EMS will conduct random drug testing for employees in safety-sensitive positions, including all field and administrative personnel.
- The selection of employees for drug testing will be conducted through a neutral, computer-generated randomization process.
- Employees selected for random drug testing will be notified discreetly and required to report to the designated testing facility within the specified timeframe.
- Testing will be conducted in compliance with all applicable state and federal regulations.

Substances Tested

- The drug testing panel will include, but is not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, opiates, amphetamines, and phencyclidine (PCP).
- Additional substances may be tested based on regulatory requirements or reasonable suspicion.

Employee Compliance

- Employees must comply with all random drug testing procedures as a condition of employment.
- Failure to report for testing, refusal to submit to testing, or tampering with test results will be treated as a violation of this guideline and may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.



Confidentiality

- All drug testing results will be handled with strict confidentiality.
- Results will be disclosed only to authorized personnel and in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Positive Test Results

- Employees who test positive for a prohibited substance will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include suspension, mandatory substance abuse counseling, or termination of employment.
- Employees may have the opportunity to dispute or request a re-test of their sample within the allowable timeframe, as per the testing facility's policies.

Purpose of Random Drug Testing Random drug testing helps to maintain a safe and reliable workforce, deter substance abuse, and reinforce Garrard County EMS's commitment to public and workplace safety. This guideline ensures that all employees are treated fairly and that the organization remains compliant with industry best practices and regulatory standards.



On-Call Personnel

- **What are the uniform guidelines for on-call personnel?**
 - Personnel who respond to base or a call when not scheduled for work are not subject to the normal uniform and dress procedures. However, Garrard County EMS recommends that staff store uniform apparel at the base for use in these situations. When this is not possible, the following guidelines apply:
 - Garrard County EMS t-shirt, polo, job-shirt, or jacket must be worn
 - No skirts or dresses are permitted.
 - Shorts must be no shorter than 3 inches above the knee.
 - No apparel that advertises drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or includes sexual innuendos is allowed.
 - No flip-flops, sandals, or bare feet are permitted. Appropriate footwear, such as closed-toe shoes or boots, must be worn.
 - These guidelines ensure that on-call personnel maintain a professional appearance while responding to calls, even when not in full uniform.



Prohibited Use of Tobacco Products

- **No smoking, smokeless tobacco, or vaping** is permitted while in a Garrard County EMS uniform when visible to the public at any time. This policy helps maintain a professional image and ensures compliance with health and safety standards.



Fit and Procurement

- **What happens if an employee's uniform no longer fits properly?**
 - If an employee's weight fluctuates, causing their uniform to no longer fit properly and appear unprofessional, it is the employee's responsibility to procure an additional uniform at their own expense.
- **What is the policy for pregnancy-related uniform changes?**
 - In cases of pregnancy, it is the staff member's responsibility to contact the Captain or Director of EMS to arrange for the procurement of a more appropriately sized uniform.
- **Can EMS administration request a new uniform?**
 - Yes, the EMS Administration reserves the right to request that the employee procure a new uniform due to poor fit in any other circumstances that may affect the employee's professional appearance.



Professional Conduct in Uniform

Personnel at Garrard County EMS are expected to uphold the highest standards of professionalism while in uniform. The way personnel present themselves directly reflects on the agency's reputation and influences the trust and confidence that patients, other first responders, and the public have in Garrard County EMS. Therefore, personnel must adhere to the following guidelines:

- **Approachable and Professional Demeanor:**
 - Personnel must present themselves in a friendly, calm, and professional manner at all times while on duty. This includes being polite, attentive, and respectful when interacting with patients, co-workers, and the public. A positive attitude, clear communication, and a willingness to help are essential components of a professional appearance.
- **Uniform Presentation:**
 - **Cleanliness and condition of uniform:** Uniforms must be clean, free of stains, tears, and wrinkles, and appropriately fitted. Personnel are responsible for ensuring that their uniforms are well-maintained and replaced if damaged. A neat and professional appearance reflects both personal pride and the high standards of Garrard County EMS.
 - **Proper display of identification:** Name badges, agency patches, and other required identifiers must be worn visibly on the uniform at all times. This ensures that personnel can be easily identified by patients, other emergency responders, and the public.
 - **Headgear:** If personnel choose to wear a **black ball cap, agency-issued ball cap, black toboggan, or agency-issued toboggan**, it must be clean, in good condition, and worn in accordance with uniform standards.
- **Body Language and Behavior:**
 - Body language speaks volumes in a professional setting. Personnel must carry themselves with confidence, poise, and composure in stressful or routine situations. Slouching, hands in pockets, or appearing disengaged from duties can convey a lack of professionalism. Personnel are expected to remain attentive and ready to act while on duty.
- **Communication:**
 - Clear, respectful, and professional communication is required in all interactions, whether with patients, co-workers, or the public. Personnel should use appropriate language, avoid slang or jargon when speaking to patients, and listen actively to those they are assisting. In stressful



situations, it is crucial to maintain a calm and controlled tone of voice to reassure patients and guide co-workers.

- **Handling Difficult Situations:**

- Personnel may encounter stressful or challenging situations, such as dealing with uncooperative patients, emotional family members, or chaotic emergency scenes. In these cases, it is essential to maintain professionalism, patience, and empathy. Personnel must refrain from engaging in arguments, displaying frustration, or using inappropriate language.

- **Use of Personal Devices:**

- Personnel are permitted to use personal devices, such as cell phones, smartwatches, and other electronic devices, while on duty, but should do so appropriately and with discretion. The use of personal devices should not interfere with patient care, agency responsibilities, or professional duties.
- **Appropriate use in public:** When in public or on the job, personal device usage should be limited to breaks or moments when it does not detract from the professional image of Garrard County EMS. Excessive or inappropriate use of personal devices in front of the public can appear unprofessional and should be avoided.
- **During patient care:** Personal devices should not be used during patient care unless it is for an official EMS purpose or if approved by a supervisor. Using personal devices in the presence of patients during care may cause distractions and reduce focus on the critical tasks at hand.

- **Respect for Equipment and Vehicles:**

- Garrard County EMS equipment and vehicles are essential tools for providing high-quality care. Personnel must treat all agency property with respect and care, ensuring that equipment is used properly, maintained, and stored appropriately after each use. Any damage or malfunctions should be reported immediately to a Captain.

- **Conflict Resolution:**

- If conflicts arise with patients, co-workers, or other emergency service providers, personnel must handle the situation with professionalism and tact. Disputes should be resolved through calm discussion or escalated to a Captain or Assistant Director if necessary. Under no circumstances should personnel engage in verbal or physical altercations while on duty.



- **Adherence to Policies and Protocols:**

Personnel are expected to follow all agency protocols, procedures, and guidelines while on duty. This includes adhering to safety protocols, patient care guidelines, and operational procedures. Failure to follow established procedures can compromise safety and damage the agency's reputation.

Personal Grooming and Hygiene

- **What are the personal grooming and hygiene standards for Garrard County EMS personnel?**
 - All personnel are required to maintain a high standard of personal hygiene to ensure professionalism, safety, and comfort for both patients and co-workers. This includes:
 - **Showering and cleanliness:** Personnel should report to work clean and showered. Maintaining proper hygiene is essential for creating a comfortable and professional work environment, especially when providing close-contact care to patients or working alongside other staff members for extended periods.
 - **Hair:** Hair must be neat, clean, and well-groomed. Long hair should be tied back to avoid interference during patient care or operational duties.
 - **Facial hair:** Facial hair is permitted, but it must be neatly trimmed and well-maintained. Beards, mustaches, and sideburns should be kept at a length that allows proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE), such as masks or respirators, which may require a secure fit to ensure safety during patient care.
 - **Cologne and perfume:** While personal grooming products such as deodorants are expected, cologne and perfume should be used in moderation. Strong scents may cause discomfort for patients, especially those with allergies or respiratory conditions. Fragrances should not be overpowering, ensuring a neutral environment for all.
 - **Deodorant:** All personnel are required to use deodorant to maintain a fresh and professional appearance during long and physically demanding shifts.
 - Adherence to high personal grooming standards is not only a reflection of professionalism but also essential for the well-being of patients and colleagues. Personal grooming habits contribute significantly to maintaining the high standards of Garrard County EMS.



Orientation Process Policy

- **What is the purpose of this policy?**
 - The purpose of this policy is to outline the orientation process for all new employees, ensuring they are welcomed, informed, and successfully integrated into Garrard County EMS.
- 1. **New Employee Orientation Program**
 - On or before their first day of employment, new employees will participate in an orientation session conducted by the Assistant Director. The session will cover:
 - Completion of necessary employment documents.
 - A review of key company policies and compensation terms.
 - An explanation of benefit and reward systems.
 - Other relevant human resource information to assist with the employee's integration into Garrard County EMS.
 - The topics covered in the orientation will be documented and placed in the employee's personnel file.
- 2. **Orientation Topics**
 - During the orientation period, the training officer will review:
 - Company history and organizational structure.
 - Job content, performance standards, and safety protocols.
 - Working conditions, promotional opportunities, and other operational matters.
 - These topics will be documented on a form and added to the employee's training file.
- 3. **Ongoing Feedback and Support**
 - During the introductory period, the training officer will meet with the employee's Field Training Officer (FTO) at least once per week to respond to questions and provide constructive feedback on performance.



Minimum Orientation Requirements

- The orientation process covers many areas of operation but must include, at a minimum:
 - **Validation of Certification or License**
 - Validation of certification or licensure with KBEMS.
 - **NIMS ICS Validation**
 - Validation of NIMS ICS 100, 200, 700, and 800 within 7 days of employment for any employee staffing a licensed vehicle.
 - **PAHT, HIV/AIDS, and Sexual Assault Training Validation**
 - Validation of PAHT, HIV/AIDS, and Sexual Assault Training within 7 days of employment for any employee staffing a licensed vehicle.
 - **Driver's License Validation**
 - Validation of a driver's license, if applicable.
 - **Agency Policies and Protocols**
 - Review of agency policies, procedures, and protocols.
 - **Communication Equipment**
 - Review of the communication equipment at the base station and on each vehicle.
 - **Operational Aspects**
 - Review of the agency fleet, facilities, and equipment.
 - **Maintenance Procedures**
 - Inspection and routine maintenance procedures for the fleet, facilities, and equipment.
 - **Disinfection Protocols**
 - Procedures for the disinfection of the agency fleet, facilities, and equipment.
 - **Geographic Orientation**
 - Local navigation and geographic orientation to familiarize the employee with the service area.
 - **Documentation Requirements**
 - Completion of PCRs and other documentation established by the agency.



Continuing Education Requirements Guideline

- **What is the purpose of this guideline?**
 - The purpose of this guideline is to address the need for continuing education required for state and national licensure for EMTs and Paramedics at Garrard County EMS. Continuing education ensures that personnel remain up-to-date with best practices in providing pre-hospital care.
- 1. **Commitment to Ongoing Education**
 - Garrard County EMS is committed to providing the best possible pre-hospital care by offering continuing education courses throughout the year. These courses meet or exceed the state and national curriculum requirements, ensuring that all EMTs and Paramedics stay current with their certifications and skills.

Continuing Education Requirements for EMTs

- **How do EMTs meet continuing education requirements?**
 - EMTs must maintain current registration with the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) or complete the "EMT Basic Minimum Continuing Education Requirement," which includes 24 structured contact hours in the following subjects:
 - 1 hour in Disaster Management or Mass Casualty Incidents.
 - 2 hours in Airway Management.
 - 3 hours in Patient Assessment.
 - 4 hours in Medical or Behavioral Emergencies.
 - 4 hours in Trauma.
 - 2 hours in Obstetrics, Gynecology, or Infants and Children.
 - 8 elective hours in relevant subjects.
 - This education must be validated by one of the following:
 - The instructor, medical director, or Training Officer/Education Coordinator.
 - The course coordinator or provider of the continuing education offering.
 - The service director or Training Officer/Education Coordinator of the EMT's ambulance service, first response agency, fire department, or rescue squad.



Continuing Education Requirements for Paramedics

- **How do Paramedics meet continuing education requirements?**
 - Paramedics must maintain one of the following:
 - Current registration with the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) as a Paramedic.
 - Successful completion of the University of Maryland Baltimore Campus Critical Care Emergency Medical Transport Program.
 - Successful completion of 60 hours of continuing education, with no more than 16 hours per course in certifications such as:
 - Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS).
 - Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS).
 - Basic Trauma Life Support (BTLS).
 - Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS).
 - Pediatric Education for Prehospital Providers (PEPP).

Specific Paramedic Continuing Education Requirements (30 of the 60 hours)

- The 60-hour continuing education requirement for Paramedics includes a minimum of:
 - 2 hours in Preparatory.
 - 4 hours in Airway Management.
 - 5 hours in Cardiac Management.
 - 4 hours in Medical or Behavioral Emergencies.
 - 5 hours in Trauma.
 - 2 hours in Obstetrics and Gynecology.
 - 5 hours in Pediatrics.
 - 3 hours in Operations.
 - At least 1 hour in Disaster Management or Mass Casualty Incidents (MCI).
 - This continuing education must be validated by one of the following:
 - The instructor, medical director, or Training Officer/Education Coordinator.
 - The course coordinator or provider of the continuing education offering.



- The service director or Training Officer/Education Coordinator of the Paramedic's ambulance service, first response agency, fire department, or rescue squad.
- **How is ongoing training handled?**
 - Garrard County EMS maintains a robust ongoing training program, which includes:
 - **Quarterly training sessions** assigned through FOAMfrat or conducted in-person. These trainings cover essential medical protocols, equipment usage, and emergency response updates.
 - **Monthly Quality Assurance (QA) meetings** to review patient care reports, discuss improvements, and ensure adherence to agency standards. Attendance is required, as these meetings contribute to overall operational excellence.
 - **Biweekly protocol assignments** through FOAMfrat, designed to ensure that all personnel are up-to-date on the latest medical and operational protocols.
 - **For Captains**, there are additional biweekly Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) assignments through FOAMfrat. These assignments reinforce leadership knowledge of agency policies and improve decision-making in the field.
- **What resources are available for continuing education?**
 - FOAMfrat is the primary online education platform used by Garrard County EMS, offering modules that cover a wide range of EMS-related topics. In-person training sessions may also be scheduled for more hands-on skills practice or specialized topics.
 - Captains and other personnel are encouraged to take advantage of continuing education opportunities, additional certifications, and leadership development programs that enhance skills and benefit the agency.



Part-Time Personnel Guideline

- **What is the purpose of this guideline?**
 - The purpose of this guideline is to clarify the policies related to part-time staff at Garrard County EMS, ensuring that their roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.

Guideline

- 1. Part-Time Personnel's Role**
 - Part-time personnel play a crucial role in the department and are highly valued. They are held to the same standards as full-time employees, with no distinction made between part-time and full-time status unless specifically noted in these Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs).
- 2. Performance Expectations**
 - Part-time staff members are expected to perform at the same level as full-time staff, meeting all requirements related to certification, continuing education, and operational performance.
- 3. Consideration for Full-Time Employment**
 - Part-time employees are considered "inside employees" and will receive initial consideration for full-time openings when they arise. However, this guideline does not imply that part-time employees are guaranteed full-time positions. The advantages of hiring from within are recognized, but the decision will be based on the agency's needs and the qualifications of each candidate.
- 4. Certification and Education Standards**
 - Part-time employees are expected to maintain the same certification and continuing education standards as full-time employees to ensure they are fully qualified to perform their duties.
- 5. Roster Management and Availability**
 - The EMS Assistant Director/Director has the authority to modify the roster of part-time staff as necessary to meet the agency's operational mission. Part-time employees who are consistently unavailable to cover shift openings may be terminated from employment.



Scheduling Requirements Guideline

- **What is the purpose of this guideline?**
 - The purpose of this guideline is to establish scheduling requirements for EMTs and Paramedics at Garrard County EMS, ensuring that all shifts are covered and that employees understand their scheduling responsibilities.

Guideline

1. **Full-Time Scheduling**
 - Full-time EMTs and Paramedics typically work a set 24/48 shift rotation. This provides a regular schedule for full-time staff, allowing for consistent shift coverage.
2. **Part-Time Scheduling and On-Call Status**
 - Part-time employees are primarily on-call and do not have a set schedule. They are responsible for providing coverage for open slots, vacation, sick time, and other staffing needs.
 - Part-time employees are required to sign up for a minimum of 24 hours of coverage by the 15th of the preceding month. This ensures that part-time staff contribute to covering shifts on a consistent basis.
3. **Master Schedule and Sign-Ups**
 - The master schedule is posted on Aladtec on the 1st of each month for the following month's schedule. The deadline for part-time employees to sign up for open shifts is 1600 hours on the 15th of the preceding month.
4. **Minimum Commitment for Part-Time Employees**
 - Part-time employees must sign up for at least **24 hours** each month. In addition to signing up for shifts, part-time staff are expected to help cover immediate openings such as sick leave.
 - Failure to meet the required 24 hours of sign-up or patterns of being unable or unwilling to cover shifts may result in removal from employment.



Shift Trade Procedures Guideline

- **What is the purpose of this guideline?**
 - The purpose of this guideline is to establish clear procedures for shift trades between employees at Garrard County EMS, ensuring that trades do not negatively impact operations or staffing.

Guideline

1. Conditions for Shift Trades

- Shift trades are permissible as long as the following conditions are met:
 - The trade occurs within the fourteen-day pay period.
 - The trade does not result in additional overtime.
 - The trade does not jeopardize paramedic or supervisor coverage or cause undue hardship on other scheduled employees.
 - All shift trades are performed hour for hour.
 - The trade is approved by the Assistant Director or Director.
 - The trade does not result in an employee exceeding the permissible number of consecutive hours worked.

Procedure

1. Submitting Shift Trades

- Shift trades must be submitted through the Aladtec Schedule system.
- All shift trades must be submitted for approval prior to the swap occurring. Once a shift trade request shows as "accepted," it will be evaluated by an EMS Supervisor.

2. Approval Process

- Once the shift trade is posted, it is considered final.
- Shift trades must be in the "accepted status" a minimum of 72 hours in advance. Trades with less than 72 hours' notice should be rare and emergent, requiring the employee to notify the Assistant Director or Director.

3. Trades Between Part-Time Employees

- Shift trades between part-time employees should be rare and emergent. These trades can only be approved by the Assistant Director or Director.



Shift Transition and Assignment Guideline

- **What is the purpose of this guideline?**
 - The purpose of this guideline is to ensure that all employees experience an efficient transition of shifts, maintaining the operational readiness of Garrard County EMS and ensuring continuous emergency response coverage.

Guideline

1. Shift Transition Process

- EMS personnel are expected to be present, in uniform, and prepared to receive a report from off-going personnel promptly at shift change.
- Employees are required to remain at GCEMS base until they are properly relieved or dismissed by the on-duty Captain.
- The primary mission of Garrard County EMS is to ensure an immediate response to calls for emergency assistance. Therefore, timely and effective shift transitions are critical to achieving this mission.

2. Shift Assignments

- Employees do not have preference in shift assignments and cannot alter their assigned shifts without the express permission of the EMS Director.
- Employees may request changes to their shift assignments, but such requests must be submitted in writing and are subject to the discretion of the EMS Director.

3. Disaster Response and Extra Shifts

- During disaster situations, employees may be required to work additional shifts as needed to accomplish the mission of Garrard County EMS. While this standard is rarely utilized, employees are expected to report for duty when ordered in response to disaster situations.



Pay, Benefits, and Schedule Requirements

- **How is compensation structured at Garrard County EMS?**
 - Compensation for each role is determined based on experience, certification levels, and responsibilities. Salary or hourly wages will be discussed during the hiring process and outlined in your employment contract.
 - Employees are eligible for pay increases based on performance evaluations and years of service. Overtime may be available depending on the staffing needs of the agency.
- **What benefits are available to employees?**
 - Garrard County EMS offers a comprehensive benefits package that may include health insurance, paid time off, retirement savings plans, and other perks as outlined in the employee handbook.

Discipline and Corrective Action

- **What happens if a policy or procedure is violated?**
 - Garrard County EMS takes violations of agency policies or procedures seriously and enforces corrective actions or disciplinary measures based on the severity of the infraction.
 - **Progressive Discipline Process:** The agency employs a progressive discipline process, where the corrective action depends on the nature and frequency of the violation. This process includes:
 - **Verbal warnings:** For minor infractions, such as tardiness or failure to follow minor procedural guidelines, the supervisor may issue a verbal warning. This serves as a reminder to correct the behavior before it escalates.
 - **Written warnings:** If the issue persists or if the violation is more significant, a formal written warning may be issued. This warning will detail the violation, the expected corrective actions, and a timeline for improvement.
 - **Coaching and retraining:** In some cases, personnel may be provided additional coaching, retraining, or mentorship to address gaps in knowledge or performance. This is aimed at improving skills and ensuring that the employee understands the agency's expectations.
 - **Suspension:** For more serious violations, such as unprofessional behavior, repeated failure to follow procedures, or endangering patients or co-workers, the employee may be placed on **suspension**. This may be a temporary suspension pending investigation or a disciplinary action to address serious concerns. This may be paid or unpaid and is at the discretion of the Judge Executive, Director and/or Assistant Director.
 - **Termination:** Employment with the agency is at-will, meaning either party may terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or prior notice. In cases of severe misconduct—such as patient endangerment, gross negligence, theft, or violence—immediate termination may be warranted. The agency reserves the right to terminate employment if the violation is deemed egregious or if corrective measures have failed to resolve the issue.

- **Examples of policy violations that may lead to disciplinary action:**
 - **Minor violations:** Tardiness, improper uniform presentation, failure to complete documentation on time, or minor safety infractions.
 - **Major violations:** Patient endangerment, breaches of patient confidentiality, unprofessional behavior (e.g., inappropriate language, harassment), failure to follow medical protocols, or unauthorized use of agency property.
 - **Severe violations:** Fraud, theft, violence, drug or alcohol use while on duty, and gross misconduct, which can lead to immediate dismissal.
- **How are performance issues addressed?**
 - **Performance evaluations:** Performance issues are generally addressed during performance evaluations, which are conducted by the Captain, Assistant Director, or Director. These evaluations assess an employee's job performance, adherence to protocols, professionalism, and overall contribution to the team.
 - If performance deficiencies are noted, the supervisor will clearly outline the areas that require improvement. Based on the evaluation, corrective actions may include coaching, retraining, or more formal disciplinary measures.
- **Performance Improvement Plan (PIP):**
 - If an employee's performance consistently fails to meet the agency's standards, a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) may be implemented. The PIP will:
 - Clearly identify the areas of deficiency and set measurable goals for improvement.
 - Outline a specific timeframe within which the employee is expected to demonstrate progress.
 - Provide resources such as training or mentorship to support the employee in meeting these goals.
 - Failure to meet the expectations outlined in the PIP could result in further disciplinary action, which may include suspension or termination if the employee is unable to improve their performance to an acceptable level.

Investigation of Violations

- **What happens when a serious policy violation is reported?**
 - When a serious policy violation occurs, an internal investigation may be initiated by the Captain, Assistant Director, or Director. The investigation process typically involves the following steps:
 - **Interviews with witnesses:** Anyone involved in or who witnessed the incident may be interviewed to gather a full understanding of the situation.
 - **Review of documentation:** Relevant documentation, including incident reports, patient care reports (if applicable), and any other records related to the violation, will be reviewed as part of the investigation.
 - **Incident report:** The employee involved, as well as any witnesses, are required to complete an incident report that provides a detailed account of what happened. This report is a critical part of the investigation and helps ensure all relevant details are documented.
- **Administrative Leave:**

During the investigation, the employee may be placed on administrative leave, with or without pay, depending on the nature of the violation and the circumstances. This leave allows the investigation to proceed without further incidents and ensures the integrity of the process.
- **Conclusion and Actions:**
 - Once the investigation is complete and all evidence has been reviewed, appropriate disciplinary actions will be taken. This may range from coaching or retraining to more serious measures such as suspension or termination, depending on the findings.
- **Employee Rights:**
 - Employees have the right to understand the reason for any disciplinary action and may request a meeting with their Captain, the Assistant Director, or the Director to discuss the issue. If they believe the discipline is unfair or based on incorrect information, they may also follow the agency's grievance procedure to address their concerns.
- **Documentation of Disciplinary Actions:**
 - All disciplinary actions, including verbal warnings, written warnings, suspensions, and PIPs, are documented and placed in the employee's



personnel file. This documentation ensures that there is a clear record of the action taken and the reason behind it.

- Documentation also provides transparency and ensures that disciplinary actions are applied fairly and consistently across the agency.



Grievance Policy

At Garrard County EMS, we are committed to creating a positive and supportive work environment where all employees feel respected and valued. The Grievance Policy provides a structured process for employees to raise concerns or complaints related to workplace issues, violations of policy, or disputes. This policy ensures that grievances are addressed fairly, promptly, and in accordance with agency guidelines.

Purpose of the Grievance Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that employees have a clear and transparent process to raise grievances.
- Address grievances in a timely and consistent manner.
- Provide a mechanism for resolving workplace conflicts and ensuring compliance with agency policies and procedures.
- Foster an environment of open communication where employees feel comfortable voicing concerns.

What is a Grievance?

A grievance is a formal complaint raised by an employee concerning:

- Violation of agency policies or procedures.
- Unfair treatment, including issues related to discipline, promotions, pay, scheduling, or working conditions.
- Harassment, discrimination, or bullying in the workplace.
- Conflicts with supervisors or co-workers.
- Safety concerns or violations of health and safety regulations.
- Any other matters that negatively affect the employee's ability to perform their job or feel safe and respected at work.



Grievance Procedure

Step 1: Informal Resolution

- **What should an employee do before filing a formal grievance?**
 - Before filing a formal grievance, employees are encouraged to attempt to resolve the issue informally by discussing it with the person(s) involved. In many cases, open communication can resolve misunderstandings or conflicts.
 - If the grievance involves a supervisor or management, the employee may seek guidance from a trusted colleague or another supervisor to help facilitate the discussion.
 - If the issue is resolved informally, no further action is required.

Step 2: Filing a Formal Grievance

- **When should an employee file a formal grievance?**
 - If an issue cannot be resolved informally, or if the matter is too serious to be addressed through informal means, the employee may file a formal grievance. This formal process ensures that the issue is documented and properly addressed by agency leadership.
 - Formal grievances must be submitted in writing using the agency's Incident Report, which can be submitted via Aladtec under the form's tab.
- **What should be included in a grievance?**
 - The written grievance should include:
 - A clear and detailed description of the issue or complaint.
 - The date(s) and time(s) when the incident(s) occurred.
 - The names of any individuals involved in the grievance.
 - Any witnesses to the incident(s), if applicable.
 - Supporting documentation or evidence, such as emails, reports, or notes.
 - The specific resolution the employee is seeking.
- **Who should the grievance be submitted to?**
 - Grievances should be submitted to the Assistant Director or the Director of Garrard County EMS via Aladtec's Incident Reports. If the grievance involves the Assistant Director or Director, the grievance should be submitted to the Judge Executive, if applicable.

Step 3: Grievance Review and Investigation

- **How will the grievance be reviewed?**
 - Upon receiving the formal grievance, the Assistant Director or Director will acknowledge receipt of the complaint and begin the review process.
 - A Grievance Review Committee may be formed, consisting of senior management or neutral parties, to investigate the grievance in an impartial manner. The committee will gather all relevant information, interview witnesses, and review any supporting documentation.
- **What happens during the investigation?**
 - The investigation may involve:
 - Interviews with the employee filing the grievance, the person(s) named in the grievance, and any witnesses.
 - Review of documentation, such as emails, reports, or policies that are relevant to the issue.
 - The committee will ensure that the investigation is conducted confidentially and that the employee's concerns are taken seriously.
- **How long will the investigation take?**
 - The investigation will be conducted as quickly as possible, typically within 14 to 30 days, depending on the complexity of the issue. The employee will be kept informed of the progress and any potential delays.

Step 4: Resolution and Response

- **How is the grievance resolved?**
 - After the investigation is complete, the Grievance Review Committee or supervisory authority will issue a decision. The resolution may involve:
 - Mediation or negotiation between the parties to reach a mutual agreement.
 - Corrective actions or disciplinary measures if a violation of policy is found.
 - Changes to policies, procedures, or workplace conditions if the grievance relates to systemic issues.
 - Dismissal of the grievance if it is determined that the complaint is unfounded or lacks sufficient evidence.
- **What is the final outcome?**
 - The employee who filed the grievance will receive a written response detailing the outcome of the investigation and any actions that will be



taken. If the employee is satisfied with the resolution, the matter will be considered closed.

Step 5: Appeal Process

- **What if the employee is not satisfied with the outcome?**
 - If the employee is not satisfied with the outcome of the grievance, they have the right to **appeal** the decision. The appeal must be submitted in writing within **10 days** of receiving the written response.
 - The appeal should outline the reasons why the employee disagrees with the decision and any additional evidence or arguments that were not considered during the initial investigation.
- **Who reviews the appeal?**
 - The appeal will be reviewed by the **Director** (if not involved in the initial decision) or another senior authority, such as the **Assistant Director**. The reviewer will reassess the grievance and the previous investigation, and a final decision will be issued.

Confidentiality and Non-Retaliation

- **How is confidentiality maintained?**
 - All grievances will be handled with the utmost **confidentiality**. Only those directly involved in the investigation or resolution of the grievance will have access to the information. This protects the privacy of both the employee filing the grievance and any individuals involved.
- **What protections are in place against retaliation?**
 - Garrard County EMS strictly prohibits any form of **retaliation** against an employee for filing a grievance or participating in an investigation. Retaliatory actions, such as harassment, demotion, or termination, are grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination.
 - Employees are encouraged to report any concerns about retaliation immediately to the Assistant Director, Director, or other appropriate authority.

Conclusion of Grievance

The grievance process at Garrard County EMS is designed to ensure that all employee concerns are handled fairly and professionally. Open communication is encouraged at all levels, and the agency is committed to resolving issues in a manner that fosters a



respectful, productive, and harmonious work environment. By following the steps outlined in this policy, employees can trust that their grievances will be addressed promptly and equitably.



Sexual Harassment Policy

Garrard County EMS is committed to providing a work environment that is free from sexual harassment. This policy establishes guidelines for preventing, reporting, and addressing incidents of sexual harassment to ensure a safe and professional workplace for all employees, volunteers, and affiliated personnel.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and any individuals affiliated with Garrard County EMS while on duty, during work-related activities, or while representing the organization.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

- Unwelcome sexual advances or requests for sexual favors.
- Verbal comments of a sexual nature, including jokes, slurs, or innuendos.
- Non-verbal actions such as inappropriate gestures, leering, or displaying sexually explicit materials.
- Physical contact that is unwelcome, including touching, hugging, or any other inappropriate bodily contact.
- Retaliation against an individual for reporting harassment or participating in an investigation.

Prohibited Conduct

Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited in all workspaces, vehicles, stations, and work-related settings such as training sessions, conferences, and social events associated with Garrard County EMS. All employees must adhere to professional conduct and treat coworkers with dignity and respect.



Reporting Procedures

1. **Immediate Reporting:** Any employee who experiences or witnesses sexual harassment should report the incident as soon as possible to a supervisor, the Human Resources department, or a designated compliance officer.
2. **Confidentiality:** All reports will be handled with discretion, and confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible while ensuring a thorough investigation.
3. **No Retaliation:** Garrard County EMS strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone who reports sexual harassment or participates in an investigation. Any act of retaliation should be reported immediately and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Investigation and Resolution

- Upon receipt of a report, an impartial investigation will be conducted promptly.
- Investigators will collect statements, review evidence, and interview relevant parties.
- If an incident of sexual harassment is substantiated, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, up to and including termination of employment.
- If the investigation finds that the complaint was made maliciously or in bad faith, disciplinary action may be taken against the complainant.



Equipment Training and Testing Guideline

Purpose of this Guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to ensure transparency, accountability, and safety when training with or testing Garrard County EMS equipment. This policy establishes the requirement that all training and equipment testing be conducted in a controlled setting to maintain professionalism and prevent misunderstandings.

Guideline

Training and Testing Requirements

- Equipment training or testing must be conducted in a non-private setting.
- Training or testing sessions must be conducted by either:
 - A single employee performing individual training or equipment testing.
 - A minimum of three (3) employees when more than one person is present.
- Training sessions should be scheduled in a designated training area or an appropriate public workspace within Garrard County EMS facilities.

Prohibited Practices

- Two employees should not train or test equipment alone together—if more than one person is present, a third employee must also be included.
- No training or testing of equipment should take place in a private or isolated setting.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy ensures that training and equipment testing are conducted in a professional, transparent, and safe manner while fostering teamwork and proper oversight.



At-Will Employment and Staffing Decisions Guideline

Purpose of this Guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to clarify Garrard County EMS's employment policies regarding hiring, promotion, and termination. This policy reinforces that employment with Garrard County EMS is at-will, meaning employment decisions can be made at any time based on the needs of the agency.

At-Will Employment Policy

- Employment at Garrard County EMS is at-will, meaning employees may be hired, promoted, reassigned, or terminated at any time, with or without cause or notice, in accordance with applicable laws.
- No policy, procedure, or statement in this document creates a contractual obligation or guarantees continued employment.

Hiring and Promotion

- Garrard County EMS reserves the right to hire or promote employees without posting the position to all staff.
- Decisions regarding promotions and hiring are based on operational needs, leadership discretion, and organizational priorities.
- Internal and external candidates may be considered at management's discretion.

Termination and Reassignment

- As an at-will employer, Garrard County EMS may terminate or reassign employees at any time for reasons including, but not limited to, performance, operational requirements, or administrative discretion.
- Employees are expected to adhere to Garrard County EMS policies, procedures, and standards of conduct, but employment may be ended at any time regardless of cause.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy ensures that Garrard County EMS retains full flexibility in employment decisions to best serve the agency's operational needs while reinforcing the at-will nature of employment.



Clinical Standards

Providing high-quality patient care is the core mission of Garrard County EMS. All personnel are expected to adhere strictly to established clinical protocols and deliver patient care that meets the highest standards of the profession. These protocols ensure that every patient receives timely, effective, and compassionate care, regardless of the situation.

Adherence to Clinical Protocols

- **What are clinical protocols, and why are they important?**
 - Clinical protocols are the standardized guidelines that Garrard County EMS personnel must follow when assessing and treating patients. These protocols are based on best practices and state or national standards for emergency medical services, ensuring that patients receive consistent and appropriate care across a wide range of medical emergencies.
 - Adhering to these protocols ensures that every decision made during patient care is evidence-based and aligned with the most current medical knowledge, reducing errors and improving patient outcomes.
- **How should personnel follow protocols?**
 - Personnel must always follow established protocols during patient assessments, treatments, and transport. Clinical protocols cover all aspects of patient care, including trauma, medical emergencies, cardiac events, respiratory issues, and other critical situations.
 - Personnel are required to stay up to date with protocol revisions and updates provided training sessions.
- **Deviations from Protocol:**
 - While protocols are designed to guide care, there may be rare instances when a deviation is necessary due to the unique nature of a patient's condition. If such a deviation is required, it must be justified with an order from medical direction and clearly documented in the patient care report (PCR) including the name of the physician who provided the order. Deviations may be discussed during Quality Assurance (QA) meetings to ensure they are appropriate and to identify any potential training needs.
- **Corrective Actions for Non-Adherence**
 - Failure to adhere to clinical protocols without proper justification or medical direction may result in corrective actions. These may include retraining, written warnings, suspension, or other disciplinary measures. Repeated or egregious deviations from protocols, especially those that compromise patient safety or violate medical standards, may result in termination of employment. Adherence to clinical protocols is essential to maintaining the high standard of care that Garrard County EMS is committed to providing.

Patient Assessment and Care Delivery

- **What is the process for patient assessment?**
 - Patient care begins with a comprehensive **assessment**, which includes evaluating the patient's airway, breathing, circulation (ABCs), mental status, and vital signs. This initial assessment should be conducted promptly upon arrival at the scene to determine the severity of the patient's condition.
 - Based on the findings, personnel should follow the appropriate clinical protocol to provide initial care, stabilize the patient, and determine the best course of action for transport.
- **How should patient care be delivered?**
 - Patient care should be provided with compassion, professionalism, and attention to detail. This includes communicating with the patient and their family (if applicable) to explain treatments, ensuring that the patient feels comfortable and informed throughout the process.
 - Personnel should deliver care in a timely manner, prioritizing life-threatening conditions and using critical thinking skills to adapt to dynamic situations. Ensuring that the patient's safety and comfort are maintained at all times is essential.



Medication Administration (1 of 2)

Purpose of this Guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to ensure that all medication administrations are performed safely, accurately, and in accordance with Garrard County EMS protocols. This policy establishes the standard for medication administration, the reporting process for errors, and consequences for non-compliance.

Guideline

Medication Administration Standards

All EMS personnel authorized to administer medications must follow the Five Rights of Medication Administration:

1. **Right Patient** – Verify the patient's identity before administering any medication.
2. **Right Medication** – Confirm the correct medication name, concentration, and expiration date.
3. **Right Dose** – Ensure the proper dose is being administered according to protocol or medical direction.
4. **Right Route** – Confirm that the medication is administered via the correct route (e.g., IV, IM, IO, SQ, PO, IN).
5. **Right Time** – Ensure that the medication is administered at the correct time and at the appropriate intervals.

Authorization for Medication Administration

- Medications must be administered only under approved offline protocols or direct online medical direction when required.
- If online medical direction is obtained, the ordering physician's name must be documented in the patient care report (PCR).



Medication Administration (2 of 2)

Medication Administration Errors

If a medication administration error occurs, the following steps must be taken:

1. **Immediate Patient Safety Actions** – Take appropriate corrective measures to ensure patient safety.
2. **Notify Medical Control** – Report the error immediately if it impacts patient care.
3. **Report to Captain** – The error must be reported to the on-duty Captain on the date of occurrence.
4. **Documentation** – The error must be documented in the ePCR, including what occurred, corrective actions taken, and any physician instructions.

Accountability and Consequences

- Honest reporting of medication errors is critical to patient safety and quality improvement.
- Failure to report a medication error or dishonesty regarding the event may result in corrective action up to termination of employment.
- Errors will be reviewed to determine whether additional training, protocol updates, or corrective actions are needed.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy ensures that all medications are administered safely and effectively, that errors are properly reported and addressed, and that accountability is maintained to protect patient care standards.



Patient Safety and Comfort

- **How is patient safety ensured during care?**
 - Patient safety is a top priority. All personnel must take steps to minimize risks, such as maintaining an aseptic environment during invasive procedures, ensuring proper lifting techniques during patient transport, and regularly checking equipment to confirm that it is in good working order.
 - The use of personal protective equipment (PPE), including gloves, masks, gowns and eye protection, is required when necessary to protect both the patient and the EMS provider from contamination or injury.
- **How should personnel manage patient comfort?**
 - In addition to providing medical care, personnel are responsible for ensuring that the patient's comfort is maintained during the transport. This includes controlling pain when possible, keeping the patient warm, and explaining procedures to reduce anxiety.
 - Reassurance and communication are key components of care. Patients should be informed of their condition, treatments being performed, and what to expect during transport. This not only helps alleviate fear but also fosters trust between the patient and EMS personnel.



Online Medical Direction

- **What is the purpose of online medical direction?**
 - Garrard County EMS is committed to providing the highest quality of emergency care to the citizens and visitors of Garrard County. In certain emergencies, online medical direction may be required to aid in patient care. This procedure ensures that personnel can access 24-hour medical direction for patients when necessary.
- **How should personnel utilize online medical direction?**
 - When encountering a patient in need of emergency care, personnel must determine the appropriate medical facility to which the patient will be transported.
 - If the provider on scene decides that medical direction is needed, they must contact the emergency department physician on duty using radio, landline, or cell phone.
- **What are the steps for consulting with medical direction?**
 - Contact the emergency department via the appropriate communication method.
 - Consult with the on-duty emergency department physician to determine the best course of action for the patient.
- **What if medical direction cannot be reached?**
 - In the event that medical direction cannot be reached due to location issues, lack of a landline, or equipment failure, the following procedures must be followed:
 1. Follow Garrard County EMS protocols approved by the agency's Medical Director and KBEMS.
 2. Move the patient to the ambulance and begin transport to the appropriate facility.
 3. Once in an area where communication can be re-established, attempt to contact medical direction again.
 4. In the case of equipment failure, continue to follow protocol to ensure the best care for the patient.



Student Interventions

Policy Statement: To ensure the highest standard of care and to minimize the risk of sentinel events, Garrard County EMS requires that all student interventions, whether occurring during an EMS call, a walk-up to the station, or while assisting an employee, be directly supervised by a designated preceptor. This policy is intended to reinforce our commitment to patient safety, clinical education, and professional development.

Scope: This policy applies to all EMS personnel and students participating in any intervention during a patient care scenario under Garrard County EMS.

Policy Guidelines:

1. Supervision Requirement:

Any intervention performed by a student must be supervised by an assigned preceptor throughout the entire process. This includes direct observation, guidance, and critique of the student's performance to ensure adherence to clinical protocols and to minimize the possibility of a sentinel event.

2. Preceptor Responsibilities:

The preceptor is wholly responsible for:

- Supervising the student's interventions.
- Providing real-time feedback and instruction as necessary.
- Ensuring that all interventions align with current medical guidelines and protocols.
- Documenting any observations relevant to the student's performance and patient care.

3. Documentation and Reporting:

For each intervention involving a student:

- A run number must be obtained.
- An Electronic Patient Care Report (EPCR) must be completed to accurately document the intervention details, patient response, and any significant findings.
- The student must be listed as a **non-crew member** on the ESO platform. In the narrative section, it should clearly state that all skills performed by the student were conducted under the direct supervision of a preceptor.



4. **Compliance and Accountability:**

Preceptors are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy. Failure to adhere to these supervision and documentation requirements may result in disciplinary action in accordance with Garrard County EMS policies.

5. **Policy Review:**

This policy is subject to regular review to ensure it continues to reflect best practices in clinical education and patient safety. Any amendments will be communicated promptly to all Garrard County EMS personnel.



Documentation Requirements

- **How are patient charts managed for prompt billing?**
 - Garrard County EMS personnel must ensure that all patient care charts are completed and delivered promptly to facilitate the billing process. Completed charts must be entered into the **ESO software** by the end of the shift.

Procedure

1. Chart Entry and Submission

- All patient care charts must be completed and entered into the ESO software by the end of the shift. If an employee cannot complete the chart by the end of the shift, they must notify the On-Duty Captain for further instructions.

2. Late Charts

- **Daily Monitoring:** The Director or Assistant Director will run a daily query to check for incomplete or non-submitted charts in the ESO system.
- **Follow-up:** The Director or Assistant Director will contact personnel to inquire about the status of any delayed charts.
- **Disciplinary Action:** If a chart remains incomplete after 24 hours without prior authorization from the Director, the disciplinary process will be initiated.

3. Chart Addendum

- If a need for an addendum is identified (e.g., missing information, incomplete diagnosis), the Director or Assistant Director will:
 1. Contact the employee by email, text, or phone and notify the billing office.
 2. The employee will have **48 hours** to complete the addendum.
 3. Failure to complete the addendum within **48 hours** of notification may result in disciplinary action.

4. Lost Chart

- If a chart is lost, the employee must generate a replacement chart with the help of the Captain, Assistant Director or Director. The replacement will include the Prehospital Information Form, response log, and any other supporting documentation.
- The employee has 24 hours from receiving the necessary documentation to generate and submit the replacement chart.



5. Failure to Complete a Chart

- Failure to complete a chart on time or notify the Director of a delayed chart may lead to disciplinary action, including suspension or termination.



EPCR Report Review

- Patient Care Reports (PCRs) are reviewed continuously by the Assistant Director and Director to ensure that all billing, documentation, and clinical guidelines are being met. This comprehensive review process ensures that:
 - Billing is accurate and compliant with applicable regulations.
 - Documentation is complete, detailed, and submitted according to the agency's policies.
 - Clinical protocols are being followed correctly, with any deviations properly justified.
- The QA process also provides personnel with constructive feedback and helps refine protocols or identify areas where additional training may be needed to improve patient care and operational efficiency.



Competency Standards

- **What are competency standards for Garrard County EMS personnel?**
 - Garrard County EMS personnel are required to maintain current certifications and demonstrate proficiency in a wide range of clinical, operational, and interpersonal skills. Competency standards ensure that personnel are equipped to handle medical emergencies, provide compassionate patient care, and operate safely in high-pressure environments.
 - Competency assessments include but are not limited to:
 - **Medical knowledge:** Proficiency in medical protocols, procedures, and treatments outlined by the agency's clinical guidelines.
 - **Skills proficiency:** Ability to perform key skills such as airway management, medication administration, IV insertion, and trauma care.
 - **Equipment operation:** Familiarity with agency equipment, including stretchers, cardiac monitors, and airway devices.
 - **Communication and teamwork:** Effective communication with patients, families, co-workers, and other emergency services personnel.
 - **Documentation:** Ability to accurately and promptly complete patient care reports (PCRs) and other required documentation.



Performance Evaluations

- **How are personnel evaluated on their performance?**
 - Performance evaluations are conducted regularly to assess each employee's competencies, adherence to agency protocols, and overall job performance. Evaluations may be carried out by the Captain, Assistant Director, or Director, depending on the scope of the review.
 - **Key areas assessed during performance evaluations** include:
 - **Clinical skills:** Competence in providing patient care according to agency protocols and best practices.
 - **Professionalism:** Conduct, appearance, and interaction with patients, co-workers, and the public.
 - **Adherence to protocols:** Compliance with agency policies, clinical protocols, and documentation requirements.
 - **Teamwork:** Ability to collaborate effectively with other EMS personnel and external agencies in the field.
 - **Problem-solving:** Critical thinking and decision-making during emergency situations.
- **Frequency of evaluations:**
 - Formal evaluations are typically conducted annually, but additional reviews may occur after a training period, performance issue, or promotion. Feedback from Quality Assurance (QA) reviews may also be incorporated into performance evaluations.

Performance Improvement Plans (PIP)

- **What is a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)?**
 - A **Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)** is a structured plan designed to assist employees in improving areas where their performance is below expectations. The PIP outlines specific goals and objectives, timelines for improvement, and the resources available to help the employee succeed.
 - A PIP may be implemented when:
 - Performance consistently falls below acceptable standards.
 - A specific issue or skill gap is identified during an evaluation or QA review.
 - The employee requires additional support or training to meet the required competency level.
- **What does a PIP include?**
 - **Clear objectives:** Specific areas where improvement is needed are outlined with measurable goals.
 - **Timeframe:** A set period is defined for the employee to show measurable improvement.
 - **Support resources:** Additional training, mentoring, or educational resources are provided to assist the employee.
 - **Follow-up evaluation:** Regular follow-ups are scheduled to track progress and provide feedback.
- **What happens if performance does not improve?**
 - If the employee fails to meet the expectations outlined in the PIP, further disciplinary action may be taken, which could include **additional training, suspension, or termination.**



Ongoing Training and Professional Development

- **What opportunities are available for continuing education?**
 - Garrard County EMS is committed to the ongoing professional development of its personnel. Training is regularly provided through quarterly FOAMfrat modules, in-person workshops, and biweekly protocol and SOG assignments. These opportunities ensure that personnel stay up-to-date on medical advancements and continue to refine their skills.
 - In addition to mandatory training, employees are encouraged to pursue specialty certifications, attend conferences, and engage in advanced clinical training to enhance their skills and contribute to their career growth.
- **How does the agency support skills development?**
 - Garrard County EMS provides access to simulation-based training, ride-alongs with senior personnel, and peer mentoring programs to help employees improve their competencies in real-world scenarios. The agency fosters a culture of continuous learning, with feedback and coaching offered regularly.

Quality Assurance and Feedback

- **How does the QA process support performance improvement?**
 - The Quality Assurance (QA) process plays a key role in evaluating employee performance. During QA meetings, Patient Care Reports (PCRs) and clinical documentation are reviewed to ensure that employees are following proper protocols and delivering high-quality care.
 - Feedback from QA reviews is used to identify areas for improvement, both for individual employees and across the agency. Personnel may receive targeted training or coaching based on the results of QA reviews, ensuring continuous improvement in patient care delivery.
- **What role does feedback play in performance improvement?**
 - Constructive feedback is an essential component of the performance improvement process. Personnel are encouraged to view feedback as an opportunity for growth, and supervisors provide feedback regularly—whether through formal evaluations, QA meetings, or real-time coaching.
 - Employees may also request feedback from their supervisors or peers to gain additional insights into their performance and identify areas where they can further develop their skills.

Transfer Operations

- **Purpose**
 - The purpose of this guideline is to outline the procedures and limitations for conducting patient transfers, ensuring that Garrard County EMS continues to meet community needs without overburdening staff or compromising emergency response readiness.
-

Guideline

1. **Daily Transfer Goals**
 - Garrard County EMS aims to perform 1 transfer per ambulance per day, with the ability to take additional transfers if available and operational needs allow.
 - The on-duty Captain, Assistant Director, or Director will manage transfer assignments to maintain appropriate staffing and response readiness.
2. **Transfer Timeframes**
 - Transfers will generally be accepted between 0700 and 2200 hours.
 - After 2200 hours, only the following types of transfers will be considered:
 - Emergency transfers that are life-threatening or critical in nature.
 - Transfers for citizens of the community, such as returning a resident to Landmark of Lancaster or similar local facilities.
3. **Approval Process**
 - All transfers must be approved by the Officer in Charge (OIC), Assistant Director, or Director.
 - Long-distance transfers (**greater than 200 miles round-trip**) require prior approval from the Assistant Director or Director to ensure adequate staffing and operational readiness.
 - If a long-distance transfer creates a staffing gap, an additional ambulance may be staffed to maintain service coverage.
4. **Cancellation Process**
 - Employees are to notify the Assistant Director or Director prior to cancelling a transfer.
5. **Staffing Considerations**



- Garrard County EMS is committed to avoiding overburdening its staff while taking transfers. Operational decisions will prioritize maintaining appropriate coverage for emergencies and supporting staff well-being.

Procedure

1. Request Evaluation

- When a transfer request is received, the OIC, Assistant Director, or Director will evaluate the following:
 - Current system status and ambulance availability.
 - The urgency and necessity of the transfer.
 - Whether the transfer falls within the timeframe guidelines (**0700-2200 hours**).
 - Staffing and operational capacity to handle the request.

2. Long-Distance Transfers

- For transfers outside the immediate service area:
 - Approval from the Assistant Director or Director is required.
 - If needed, an additional ambulance may be temporarily staffed to ensure coverage and handle the transfer without compromising local response capacity.

3. Documentation

- All transfer requests and approvals will be documented, including the reasoning for accepting or declining a transfer outside the normal guidelines.

4. Emergency and Community Transfers (After 2200 Hours)

- Transfers accepted after 2200 hours must meet the following criteria:
 - Life-threatening emergency requiring immediate transport.
 - Community-specific transfers (e.g., local residents returning to facilities such as Landmark of Lancaster).
- Non-emergency, non-local transfers after 2200 hours will not be accepted unless exceptional circumstances are approved by the Assistant Director or Director.



Highest Level of Care in Patient Compartment Guideline (1 of 2)

Purpose of this Guideline The purpose of this guideline is to ensure that patients receive the highest level of care available during transport. This policy establishes a standard for determining which provider assumes primary patient care responsibility during emergency transports.

Guideline

Primary Patient Care Responsibility

- The appropriate level of certified provider assigned to the ambulance must be in the patient compartment and assume responsibility for patient care during transport. If the crew consists of two EMTs, they may manage lights and sirens transports. However, **if a higher level of care is present** on the unit during a lights and sirens transport, the provider with the highest level of care must assume patient care in the patient compartment.
- If a paramedic is part of the ambulance crew, they must be in the patient compartment and assume patient care responsibilities on all **lights and sirens transports**.

Chase Paramedic Procedures

- When a chase paramedic (a paramedic responding separately from the transporting unit) arrives on scene, they must assess the patient and determine the appropriate level of care.
- The chase paramedic has the discretion to downgrade the patient to an Advanced EMT or EMT if they determine that paramedic-level intervention is not required.
- Once a downgrade is made, the transporting crew will proceed with patient care at the designated level of service.



Highest Level of Care in Patient Compartment Guideline (2 of 2)

Exceptions & Special Circumstances

- In cases where a paramedic is part of the transporting crew but is unable to assume care due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., injury, critical equipment operation), the decision should be documented and reported to a captain.
- If a patient condition changes during transport requiring a higher level of care, the highest certified provider in the ambulance must assume care immediately.

Purpose of this Policy This policy ensures that every patient receives the most appropriate level of medical care based on provider capabilities while maintaining operational efficiency. The intent is to optimize patient outcomes and resource utilization in the field.



Paramedic Response Guideline

Purpose of this Guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to establish clear expectations regarding when a paramedic must respond to an emergency call. This ensures that critical patients receive the appropriate level of care while maintaining efficient use of EMS resources.

Guideline

Paramedic Response Criteria

- If a paramedic is assigned to an ambulance, they must take the call and provide patient care rather than responding as a second unit.
- The following types of calls **must** be responded to by a paramedic:
 - Unresponsive patients
 - Chest pain
 - Seizures
 - Cardiac arrest

Downgrading of Care

- After assessing the patient, the paramedic may downgrade the call to a lower-level provider (Advanced EMT or EMT) if the patient's condition does not require paramedic-level intervention.
- This does **not** permit calling for a second unit to assume care if the paramedic is already assigned to an ambulance rather than operating as a chase unit.

Operational Considerations

- If a paramedic is already on a transporting unit, they should remain in that role and manage patient care accordingly.
- Paramedics assigned to chase units will assess the patient and determine the appropriate level of care, making downgrading decisions as necessary.

Purpose of this Policy This policy ensures that paramedic resources are utilized efficiently, guaranteeing that patients in critical condition receive the highest level of care while preventing unnecessary duplication of response efforts.



12-Lead ECG Acquisition, Interpretation, and Documentation Guideline (1 of 2)

Purpose of this Guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to ensure that patients meeting specific criteria receive a 12-lead ECG for early identification of cardiac-related conditions. This policy establishes when a 12-lead ECG should be performed, how it should be interpreted, and the required documentation procedures.

Guideline

Patients Requiring a 12-Lead ECG

A 12-lead ECG must be performed on patients presenting with any of the following conditions:

- **Shortness of breath**
- **Chest pain**
- **Fall for an unknown reason**
- **Syncope or near-syncope**
- **Unresponsive patients**
- **Cardiac arrest**
- **Respiratory arrest**
- **New Onset-Altered mental status**
- **Any situation where the provider determines a 12-lead ECG is necessary**

12-Lead ECG Interpretation and Downgrade Procedures

- **EMTs and AEMTs:**
 - Must obtain and transmit the 12-lead ECG to the closest appropriate facility for physician interpretation.
- **Paramedics:**
 - Are responsible for interpreting the 12-lead ECG in the field.
 - If a paramedic determines that paramedic-level care is not required based on ECG findings, they may downgrade the patient to a lower level of care (AEMT or EMT) if clinically appropriate.
 - If there is any uncertainty in interpretation, the ECG should be transmitted to a physician for review.



12-Lead ECG Acquisition, Interpretation, and Documentation Guideline (2 of 2)

Documentation Requirements

- All 12-lead ECGs must be documented in the electronic patient care report (ePCR), including:
 - The reason for obtaining the ECG
 - The interpretation of the ECG
 - Whether the patient was downgraded based on ECG findings
 - Who interpreted the ECG (either the paramedic or physician)
 - The name of the provider (paramedic or physician) who interpreted the ECG

Purpose of this Policy

This policy ensures that 12-lead ECGs are obtained when clinically necessary, appropriately interpreted, and properly documented to enhance patient care and continuity of treatment.



Patient Refusal Guideline (1 of 2)

Purpose of this Guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to ensure that all patient refusals of care and/or transport are handled with appropriate medical assessment, thorough documentation, and patient-centered education. This policy outlines the expectations for vital signs, patient encouragement, and documentation when a refusal occurs.

Guideline

Vital Signs Requirement for Refusals

- A minimum of two complete sets of vital signs must be obtained on all patients who refuse care or transport.
- Vital signs should include blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate, oxygen saturation, and level of consciousness.
- If a patient explicitly refuses vital signs, the refusal must be clearly documented in both the narrative and the refusal form, including the patient's stated reason.

Patient Encouragement and Education

- EMS providers must encourage every patient to be evaluated at a hospital, regardless of the severity or perceived urgency of the complaint.
- Patients should be informed of the risks of non-transport, including the potential for worsening or hidden medical conditions up to death.
- This conversation should be documented thoroughly, including what was recommended by EMS and the patient's rationale for refusing.



Patient Refusal Guideline (2 of 2)

Special Considerations

- Minors (under 18) and patients who lack decision-making capacity may not legally refuse care.
- If there is any doubt about the patient's capacity, EMS should involve law enforcement or contact medical control.
- Providers must use discretion and ensure legal compliance in cases involving impaired, confused, or mentally altered patients.

Documentation Requirements

All patient refusals must be fully documented in the electronic patient care report (ePCR), including:

- At least two sets of vital signs, or documentation of refusal to allow vitals.
- A clear and detailed narrative explaining the patient's condition, recommendations made by EMS, and the patient's decision.
- Completion of the Refusal of Care form with the patient's signature.
 - If the patient refuses to sign, this must be noted and a witness signature should be obtained.
- The name and certification level of the EMS provider completing the documentation.
- Any contact with medical control, law enforcement, or legal guardian, if applicable.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy ensures that refusals are managed with appropriate clinical judgment, patient education, and legal documentation. It protects both the patient and the provider by demonstrating due diligence, informed consent, and quality care delivery.



Safety and Risk Management

Safety and risk management are critical components of the operational success at Garrard County EMS. The agency is committed to minimizing risks to personnel, patients, and the public through the implementation of strict safety protocols and driving standards. Adherence to these guidelines ensures that every team member performs their duties in a manner that promotes safety, reduces liability, and protects the health and well-being of everyone involved.



Vehicle Operation and Driving Standards

Off Duty Response

- **What should off-duty personnel do when responding to an emergency?**
 - If Garrard County EMS personnel need to respond to an emergency while off duty, they must notify Bluegrass 911 by providing their radio number. This confirms that they are now on duty and covered by Workers' Compensation and liability policies of Garrard County EMS.
 - Personnel can also notify Bluegrass 911 upon arrival at the base when responding to a call in the ambulance.
- **Can off-duty personnel take equipment from the base?**
 - Off-duty personnel are not permitted to remove any medical equipment from the base. Only the equipment stored in designated agency vehicles may be used during the response.
- **What vehicle can off-duty personnel use when responding?**
 - If no other on-duty personnel are available, off-duty personnel may utilize the chase vehicle and its equipment until additional help arrives.
 - **Ambulance Staffing:** An ambulance must not leave the base with only one person. A full crew is required for all patient transports.
- **Are controlled substances allowed to be taken from the ambulance?**
 - Controlled substances must remain secured on the ambulance at all times. Off-duty personnel may not take controlled substances from the vehicle unless responding in the ambulance with the proper crew.
- **What should off-duty personnel do if they encounter an emergency while off duty?**
 - If off-duty personnel come upon an emergency, they should provide care to the best of their ability, consistent with their certification level. Personnel should contact Bluegrass 911 to report the emergency and request the necessary agencies to respond.
- **Are off-duty personnel allowed to use lights and sirens?**
 - Off-duty personnel responding in the chase vehicle or personal vehicle may use red and white lights and sirens as permitted by KRS 189.920. All use of emergency lights and sirens must comply with state and local laws to ensure a safe response.



Safe Driving Practices

What are the expectations for vehicle operation at Garrard County EMS?

All personnel who operate Garrard County EMS vehicles must follow strict driving standards designed to ensure safety and protect agency property. Safe driving is a priority at all times, whether responding to an emergency or transporting patients emergently or non-emergently.

Additionally, the mode of transportation (emergent/nonemergent) should always be based on patient assessment to determine acuity, with decisions guided by the provider's clinical judgment.

Personnel are expected to:

- **Drive defensively:** Be aware of other drivers, anticipate hazards, and always follow traffic laws unless superseded by emergency response protocols.
- **Obey speed limits:** While driving an emergency vehicle may sometimes require exceeding the posted speed limit, personnel must always balance urgency with safety. At no time should excessive speed endanger the patient, crew, or public.
- **Use of emergency lights and sirens:** Emergency lights and sirens should only be used when responding to an emergency call or transporting an emergent patient, in accordance with state and local laws. In non-emergency situations, lights and sirens should not be used to avoid creating confusion or unnecessary risk to other drivers.
- **Maintain a safe following distance:** Always keep a safe distance from the vehicle in front to allow for sudden stops or changes in traffic conditions.



Emergency Response Driving

- **What are the guidelines for driving during emergency responses?**
 - During emergency responses, personnel must adhere to the following safety protocols:
 - **Activate emergency lights and sirens:** When responding to an emergency, both lights and sirens must be activated in compliance with state regulations. This signals to other drivers that they must yield the right of way.
 - **Proceed with caution at intersections:** Even with lights and sirens, drivers must approach intersections cautiously, especially when going through red lights or stop signs. The driver must ensure that the intersection is clear before proceeding.
 - **Avoid aggressive driving:** While quick responses are essential, aggressive driving, such as weaving through traffic or abrupt lane changes, should be avoided. The priority is to arrive at the scene safely.
 - **Monitor weather conditions:** In inclement weather, such as rain, snow, or fog, personnel must adjust driving speed and behavior to account for reduced visibility and slippery roads.



Non-Emergency Driving

- **How should vehicles be operated during non-emergency situations?**
 - When driving in non-emergency situations (e.g., transporting a patient to a medical facility under routine conditions), personnel must:
 - **Follow all traffic laws:** Lights and sirens should not be used during routine transport. Drivers must obey all posted speed limits, traffic signals, and road signs.
 - **Ensure patient comfort:** Smooth driving, including gradual acceleration and braking, is essential to avoid causing discomfort or exacerbating the patient's condition.
 - **Conduct vehicle inspections:** Drivers are responsible for ensuring that the vehicle is in safe operating condition before and after each transport. Any mechanical issues must be reported immediately.



Vehicle Accident Review Board

- **What is the purpose of the Vehicle Accident Review Board?**
 - The Garrard County EMS Vehicle Accident Review Board was established to ensure a systematic review of every accident involving a motorized vehicle owned or operated by Garrard County EMS. The board's responsibilities include:
 - Recommending corrective actions to prevent future vehicle accidents.
 - Recommending disciplinary action to the EMS Director when appropriate.

Board Membership

- **Who are the members of the Vehicle Accident Review Board?**
 - The board consists of the following members:
 - The EMS Director, who will act as the chair.
 - The Assistant Director
 - The Captain from the shift during which the incident occurred.
- **What happens if a board member is involved in the accident?**
 - If any board member is involved in the accident, they will be replaced for that specific review by another employee at the discretion of the EMS Director.

Procedure

- **How are vehicle accidents reviewed?**
 - Every vehicle accident shall be reviewed following the board's established guidelines. A reportable occurrence form detailing the background of the accident, the board's findings, and recommended actions will be submitted to the EMS Director for further analysis and review.
 - A copy of the report will be provided to each employee involved in the accident, and the report will be placed in the employee's permanent personnel file.
 - Disciplinary actions will be administered according to the department's rules, regulations, and procedures.



Guidelines for Accident Classification

- **How are accidents categorized?**
 1. All accidents will be classified into one of three categories:
 2. **Category One: Non-Preventable**
 - The accident was unavoidable, and no action could have prevented it. In these cases, a report is filed, and no disciplinary action is taken.
 3. **Category Two: Driver Partially at Fault**
 - The driver is deemed partially at fault, and the accident could have been prevented. **Disciplinary action** may be recommended to the EMS Director based on the circumstances.
 4. **Category Three: Driver Totally at Fault**
 - The driver is judged to be fully at fault. Disciplinary action will be proportional to the severity of the accident and may range from a **written reprimand** to **termination**, depending on the specifics of the case.

Examples of Disciplinary Actions

- **How are disciplinary actions determined?**
 - For **first offenses** with damage under **\$1,000.00** and no injuries, a **written reprimand** may be sufficient.
 - An **indefinite suspension** may be recommended in cases involving:
 - Multiple offenses in the previous 24 months.
 - Damage exceeding **\$5,000.00**.
 - Bodily injury or death.
 - The driver being **intoxicated** or otherwise **impaired** at the time of the accident.

Backing Guideline

- **What are the general rules for backing a vehicle?**
 - Backing an ambulance should be avoided whenever possible. When backing is necessary, the following procedures must be followed:
 - Do not back the unit if it can be avoided.
 - Never be in a hurry while backing—move the vehicle slowly and cautiously.
 - Survey the area and ensure you are aware of your surroundings. Do not back if unsure of the area.
 - Always use a spotter, if available, to guide the backing maneuver.
 - Verbal communication with the spotter should be established whenever possible.
- **What should you do if no spotter is available?**
 - Reconsider backing up. If it is not absolutely necessary, avoid backing the vehicle.
 - Make a reasonable attempt to find someone who can act as a spotter.
 - If no spotter can be obtained, the driver must survey the backing area, checking for any obstacles or hazards, including overhead clearance.
- **What if there are two personnel but one is required to be with a patient?**
 - If a spotter is not available because one crew member must stay with a patient, the driver may proceed with backing only if all the above procedures are followed.

Driver Responsibilities

- **What are the driver's responsibilities when backing?**
 - Stop the vehicle completely before beginning any backing maneuver.
 - Ensure that the spotter is in place eight to ten feet from the left rear of the unit.
 - The driver must be able to see the spotter in the left rear-view mirror. If the spotter is not visible, do not proceed with backing.
 - Lower the window to hear verbal communication from the spotter.
 - Establish eye contact with the spotter through the left rear-view mirror at all times.
 - Agree on hand signals with the spotter before proceeding.
 - Back up only when signaled by the spotter to do so.
 - Ensure that the sides, front, and mirrors clear any obstacles while backing.

Spotter Responsibilities

- **What are the spotter's responsibilities?**
 - The spotter must exit the unit and survey the side and rear areas for obstacles that could damage the vehicle.
 - Position yourself eight to ten feet to the left rear of the unit.
 - Ensure that the driver can see you in the left rear-view mirror.
 - Agree on hand signals with the driver before allowing any backing to begin.
 - Maintain eye contact with the driver at all times through the left rear-view mirror and direct the driver using the agreed-upon hand signals.

Ambulance Backing Accidents

- **What happens if an accident occurs while backing?**
 - A spotter is required when backing the ambulance, with the only exception being when there is a patient on board.
 - Backing accidents that occur without the use of a spotter will result in a 24-hour suspension without pay for both the driver and attendant.
 - Further issues or repeated offenses will follow the progressive discipline policy.



Vehicle Maintenance and Inspections

- **What are the vehicle maintenance and inspection requirements?**
 - All Garrard County EMS vehicles must undergo regular maintenance and inspections to ensure they are in safe operating condition. Drivers are responsible for completing a daily vehicle inspection at the start of their shift, which includes:
 - Checking fluid levels (e.g., oil, coolant).
 - Inspecting tires for proper inflation and wear.
 - Ensuring that lights, sirens, and communications equipment are functioning correctly.
 - Verifying that all medical equipment and supplies are stocked and ready for use.
 - Any issues or deficiencies found during the inspection must be reported to the Captain or Assistant Director or Director immediately, and the vehicle should not be driven if it is unsafe.



Accident Reporting and Investigation

- **What should be done in the event of a vehicle accident?**
 - If a Garrard County EMS vehicle is involved in an accident, the following steps must be taken:
 - **Ensure safety:** Immediately assess the scene for any injuries and ensure the safety of the crew, patient, and other involved parties. Provide first aid if necessary.
 - **Notify dispatch:** Contact dispatch and the Captain to report the accident and request additional resources if needed. Ensure that law enforcement is contacted to file an official accident report.
 - **Do not move the vehicle:** Unless it is unsafe to do so, the vehicle should remain in place until law enforcement arrives to document the scene.
 - **Complete an accident report:** The driver must complete an official **accident report** as soon as possible, documenting the details of the accident, including road conditions, actions taken, and any contributing factors. This report will be reviewed as part of the investigation.
 - **Submit to an investigation:** The **Assistant Director** and **Director** will conduct an internal investigation to determine the cause of the accident and identify any corrective actions or further training that may be necessary.



Driver Training and Certification

- **What are the driver training requirements?**
 - Personnel must complete a driver training program before operating any Garrard County EMS vehicles. This program covers defensive driving techniques, emergency response driving, and proper vehicle handling under different conditions.
 - Drivers must also maintain a valid driver's license and any necessary state certifications. Re-certification and skills assessments will be required every two years to ensure that personnel continue to meet driving standards.



Seatbelt Use

- **What are the seatbelt requirements for Garrard County EMS personnel?**
 - **Seatbelt use is mandatory** for all Garrard County EMS personnel while operating or riding in any agency vehicle, regardless of the type of response (emergency or non-emergency). This applies to both the front and rear seats, including during patient transport.
 - **Patient safety:** Patients transported in the ambulance must be securely fastened using the appropriate restraints on the stretcher. Family members or other passengers, if present, must also wear seat belts when riding in the ambulance.
 - **Exceptions:** The only exception to seatbelt use may occur during patient care in the back of the ambulance when personnel are providing direct medical interventions that require mobility. Even in these cases, personnel should use available safety restraints when possible to minimize the risk of injury in the event of sudden stops or accidents.



Safe Driving Practices

- **How does Garrard County EMS promote safe driving?**
 - **Defensive driving:** All EMS personnel are expected to drive defensively, always anticipating potential hazards and practicing vigilance. Defensive driving includes:
 - Keeping a safe following distance to allow for sudden stops.
 - Being aware of other drivers, pedestrians, and environmental conditions that may present risks.
 - **Obeying traffic laws:** Even in emergency situations, personnel must exercise caution and ensure they are following applicable traffic laws. While emergency vehicles may exceed speed limits or pass through red lights under certain circumstances, these actions must always be executed with extreme caution to ensure safety.
 - **Maintaining speed control:** Speed must be controlled appropriately to prevent accidents or injury. In emergency response situations, personnel must balance the need for urgency with the safety of patients, crew, and the public. **Excessive speed** or reckless driving will not be tolerated.
 - **Cautious use of lights and sirens:** Emergency lights and sirens should only be used when necessary, and drivers must ensure they have **cleared intersections** before proceeding, even if other vehicles are yielding the right of way.
 - **Weather conditions:** Personnel must adjust driving speed and techniques based on weather and road conditions. Rain, snow, fog, and ice require slower speeds and increased caution to maintain control of the vehicle.



Driver Responsibility

- **What are the responsibilities of EMS drivers?**
 - Drivers are responsible for ensuring the **safety of all occupants** in the vehicle, including patients, personnel, and any passengers. This includes checking that seat belts are used by all individuals and that equipment is properly secured before the vehicle is in motion.
 - **Safe operation of the vehicle:** Drivers must be familiar with the operation of the vehicle, including the use of lights, sirens, and communications systems. They should avoid distractions, such as using personal devices, that could impair their ability to drive safely.



Accountability for Safe Driving

- **How are safe driving practices enforced?**
 - Failure to adhere to safe driving practices or mandatory seatbelt use may result in disciplinary action, including retraining, suspension, or termination. All incidents related to vehicle safety will be reviewed during Quality Assurance (QA) meetings, and personnel will receive feedback or corrective measures if needed.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- **What is the role of PPE in injury prevention?**
 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is essential for reducing exposure to hazardous substances, infectious diseases, and potential injuries during patient care and emergency operations. All personnel must wear the appropriate PPE for the situation, which may include:
 - **Gloves:** Required for all patient contact to prevent contamination and the spread of infectious agents.
 - **Eye protection:** Worn in situations where there is a risk of exposure to blood or bodily fluids.
 - **Masks and respirators:** Used when airborne pathogens are suspected, or as part of respiratory protection protocols.
 - **Gowns and other protective clothing:** Used when there is a risk of exposure to hazardous materials or when dealing with patients in highly contagious conditions.
 - PPE must be worn **properly** and maintained in good condition. Damaged or worn PPE should be replaced immediately.

Lifting and Moving Patients

- **How can injuries be prevented when lifting and moving patients?**
 - Proper body mechanics are crucial to preventing back, shoulder, and other musculoskeletal injuries. Personnel are required to:
 - Use appropriate lifting techniques, including bending at the knees and keeping the back straight.
 - Work in teams when lifting heavy patients or equipment to distribute the weight and reduce the strain on any one individual.
 - Use available equipment such as stretchers, stair chairs, and mechanical lifts to assist with patient movement, reducing the need for manual lifting.
 - Communicate clearly with the patient and other team members to ensure everyone is prepared before a lift or move is attempted.

Scene Safety and Situational Awareness

- **How is scene safety managed?**
 - Upon arriving at an emergency scene, personnel must assess the environment for potential hazards before engaging in patient care. Scene safety includes:
 - Evaluating the environment for hazards such as traffic, unstable structures, fires, hazardous materials, or violent individuals.
 - Ensuring that law enforcement or other emergency services have secured the scene if necessary, especially in situations involving violence or danger.
 - Maintaining situational awareness at all times, ensuring that personnel are aware of potential changes in the environment that could increase risks, such as worsening weather conditions or unstable debris.
- **How should personnel handle potentially hazardous scenes?**
 - If a scene is deemed too dangerous for immediate entry, personnel should wait for the appropriate backup resources (e.g., fire department, law enforcement) to secure the area. Personnel should never compromise their own safety to access a patient.
 - **Hazardous materials:** In situations involving chemical spills or other hazardous substances, personnel must wear the necessary protective gear and follow established hazardous materials protocols.



Infection Control and Hygiene

- **How does Garrard County EMS ensure infection control?**
 - Infection control is critical for protecting both patients and EMS personnel from the spread of infectious diseases. Personnel are required to:
 - Follow hand hygiene protocols, including washing hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand sanitizer before and after patient contact.
 - Properly dispose of contaminated materials such as gloves, masks, and any other single-use PPE in designated biohazard containers.
 - Decontaminate equipment, stretchers, and the ambulance after every patient transport to prevent the spread of infectious agents.
 - Adhere to exposure protocols if personnel are exposed to potentially infectious substances, including immediate reporting to a supervisor and seeking medical evaluation.



Vehicle and Equipment Safety

- **What are the protocols for maintaining vehicle and equipment safety?**
 - Regular vehicle inspections and equipment checks are required to ensure that all Garrard County EMS vehicles and medical devices are in safe working order. This includes:
 - **Pre-shift inspections:** Drivers must check vehicles for mechanical issues, and all medical equipment should be inspected to ensure it is functioning correctly and stocked with the necessary supplies.
 - **Securing equipment:** During patient transport, all medical equipment and supplies must be securely fastened to prevent injury to the crew or patient in the event of sudden stops or accidents.
 - **Reporting and addressing defects:** Any faulty equipment or vehicle malfunctions must be reported immediately to the Captain or Assistant Director. The vehicle or equipment should be taken out of service if it poses a risk until repairs can be made.



Workplace Violence Prevention

- **How does Garrard County EMS prevent workplace violence?**
 - Personnel may encounter volatile or hostile situations during the course of their duties. To reduce the risk of workplace violence, Garrard County EMS implements the following safety protocols:
 - **Law enforcement support:** In situations where violence is a potential threat, law enforcement should be called to secure the scene before EMS personnel enter.
 - **Emergency communication:** Personnel should use radios or other communication devices to alert dispatch or other responding agencies if they feel unsafe or require assistance at a scene.



Incident Reporting and Injury Documentation

- **What should personnel do in the event of an injury?**
 - Any injuries sustained by personnel while on duty must be reported immediately to the Captain, Assistant Director, or Director. This includes injuries that occur during patient care, vehicle operations, or any other work-related tasks.
 - An incident report must be completed, detailing the nature of the injury, how it occurred, and any contributing factors. The incident will be reviewed by leadership to identify areas for improvement and prevent future injuries.
 - **Post-incident evaluation:** Personnel may be required to undergo a medical evaluation to ensure that the injury is properly treated, and follow-up care is provided if necessary.



Regular Safety Training

- **How does Garrard County EMS promote ongoing safety awareness?**
 - Safety training is an integral part of Garrard County EMS's risk management strategy. Personnel must complete regular safety training modules, which may include topics such as:
 - Injury prevention techniques, including lifting and moving patients.
 - PPE use and infection control practices.
 - Scene safety and situational awareness.
 - Quarterly in-person or FOAMfrat training sessions provide additional reinforcement of safety protocols, ensuring that personnel remain updated on the latest safety practices.



On-Duty Injury/Illness

- **What should employees do if they experience an injury or illness while on duty?**
 - Employees who incur a work-related injury or exposure during their duties must immediately report the incident to the on-duty Captain and seek appropriate medical assistance if necessary. Employees should prioritize their safety, following the same medical protocols they use for others. Even if no outside medical care is sought, the incident must be documented as per agency policy.

Procedure

- 1. Immediate Reporting and Care**
 - Employees must immediately report any work-related injury or exposure to the on-duty supervisor. If medical assistance is required, the employee should seek care promptly.
- 2. Incident Documentation**
 - Employees must complete an incident report detailing the following:
 - **Time of occurrence**
 - **Equipment** in use at the time
 - **Activity** the employee was engaged in
 - **How the injury or exposure occurred**
 - **Names of witnesses**
 - Any employee witnesses to the incident must also complete an incident report.
- 3. Medical Treatment and Documentation**
 - If the employee seeks outside medical treatment, they must obtain a Blue Grass Health Network / Kentucky Association of Counties card from the on-duty captain. This card should be presented to the care provider to help avoid the employee receiving a bill for treatment.
- 4. Filing the First Report of Injury**
 - The Director will complete and officially file the IA-1 First Report of Injury or Illness Form at the earliest convenience. A copy will be provided to the employee, and a copy will be kept on file for official records.





Equipment and Facility Maintenance

Maintaining the equipment and facilities at Garrard County EMS is crucial for ensuring operational efficiency, safety, and readiness. Proper upkeep of vehicles, medical devices, and station facilities guarantees that personnel can provide high-quality patient care and respond effectively to emergencies. This section outlines the standards for maintaining equipment and the facilities in which personnel work and operate.



Station Chores and Vehicle Detailing Guideline

Purpose of this Guideline

The purpose of this guideline is to establish a clear, consistent schedule for daily and deep cleaning tasks within the station, as well as routine vehicle detailing responsibilities. This ensures a clean, professional, and operationally ready environment for all Garrard County EMS personnel.

Guideline

Daily Cleaning Responsibilities (Performed Daily by On-Duty Crew):

- The floors must be swept and mopped.
- The kitchen must be cleaned (dishes washed, counters wiped, stove and microwave wiped).
- The trash must be taken out from all common areas.
- All trucks must be cleaned (interior surfaces wiped down, trash removed, restocked as needed).

Deep Cleaning Schedule

| Day | Deep Cleaning Focus | Description |
|-----------|-------------------------|--|
| Monday | Bay Day | Pull all trucks from bay. Spray and clean floors. Clean bay door windows. Wipe down bay table. Return all equipment/items to proper places. |
| Tuesday | Bathrooms | 2 crew members per staff bathroom, 1 per public bathroom. Clean toilets, sinks, and showers. Sweep and mop floors. Clean mirrors. Restock supplies. Take out trash. |
| Wednesday | Bunk Rooms & OIC Office | Dust all surfaces. Sweep floors. Spray Lysol on bedding. Clean inside windows. |
| Thursday | Living Room | Vacuum, including under furniture. Dust all surfaces. Clean the inside of the windows. |
| Friday | Bathrooms (Repeat) | Repeat Tuesday's cleaning assignments. |
| Saturday | Classroom | Sweep and mop floors. Clean counters and tables. Wipe down chairs. Clean and organize the storage closet. |
| Sunday | Kitchen Deep Clean | Clean out all refrigerators. Discard expired food and leftovers. Wipe inside and outside of refrigerators, microwave, and stove. Clean cabinet doors. (<i>Note: Routine daily kitchen cleaning still applies.</i>) |



Truck Detailing Schedule

Each ambulance is to be fully detailed monthly based on the unit and day of the month.

| Unit | Assigned Date |
|--------------|----------------------|
| EC 1 | 1st of the month |
| EC 2 | 2nd |
| EC 3 | 3rd |
| EC 4 | 4th |
| EC 5 | 5th |
| Med 1 | 6th |

Truck Detailing Includes:

- Remove and inspect all cabinets and bins.
- Check expiration dates on all supplies.
- Wipe down every surface in the patient compartment.
- Fully clean and detail the front cab, including dashboard, console, and windows.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy promotes operational readiness and professional standards through consistent cleanliness and organization of station facilities and emergency vehicles. Maintaining these expectations ensures a safe, efficient, and respectful workspace for all personnel.



Vehicle Standards

- **What are the vehicle specifications for Garrard County EMS?**
 - All EMS vehicles used by Garrard County EMS must meet specific **industry standards** for emergency medical services, including size, design, and equipment storage capabilities. Vehicles must be properly outfitted for patient transport, medical intervention, and operational safety.
 - **Ambulance specifications** include:
 - **Patient care compartment:** Must have enough space to accommodate personnel, the patient, and medical equipment comfortably.
 - **Medical equipment storage:** Must include secure storage areas for all necessary medical supplies and devices, such as oxygen tanks, IV supplies, and airway management tools.
 - **Communication systems:** Must be equipped with reliable communication devices, including radios, for dispatch and emergency communications.
 - **Lighting and sirens:** Emergency vehicles must be outfitted with appropriate lighting and sirens that meet state and federal requirements to ensure safe emergency responses.
- **Vehicle outfitting and compliance:**
 - Vehicles must comply with **state and federal regulations** for EMS vehicles, including safety standards set by agencies such as the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and local governing bodies. This includes regular **certifications and inspections** to ensure vehicles meet all operational requirements.



Ambulance End-of-Shift Preparation

- **Purpose**

- The purpose of this guideline is to ensure that all Garrard County EMS ambulances are clean, stocked, and prepared for the incoming shift. This process promotes operational readiness and guarantees a seamless transition between shifts, ensuring that ambulances are always prepared for immediate response.

Guideline

1. **End-of-Shift Cleaning and Restocking Requirements**

- All EMS personnel are required to have their assigned ambulance:
 - **Swept:** The interior of the ambulance must be swept to remove any debris, dirt, or loose items from the floor.
 - **Mopped:** The floor of the ambulance must be mopped with an approved cleaning solution to maintain a sanitary environment.
 - **Restocked:** All equipment, supplies, and medications must be checked and replenished according to the agency's restocking checklist. This includes verifying that all critical supplies and medications are within expiration dates and stored correctly.

2. **Restocking Schedule**

- Restocking of all necessary supplies and equipment must occur at **1800** and **0600** each day. This ensures that the ambulance is always fully equipped and ready to respond to calls.
- A thorough check at these times ensures that any missing or used items are replaced before the start of the next shift or prior to night coverage.

3. **Completion Time**

- All cleaning and final restocking tasks should be completed by **0630** to ensure the ambulance is fully prepared for the **next shift**.

Accountability

- **Responsibility of On-Duty Personnel**

- It is the responsibility of the crew ending their shift to ensure that the ambulance is cleaned, stocked, and ready for the next shift.



Medical Equipment Specifications

- **What are the specifications for medical equipment used by Garrard County EMS?**
 - All medical equipment used in Garrard County EMS vehicles must be **approved by the agency's medical director** and meet the relevant standards set by the state.

Defibrillators and Lifesaving Equipment

- **What are the requirements for defibrillators and other lifesaving equipment?**
 - **Automated external defibrillators (AEDs)** and **manual defibrillators** must be maintained in each vehicle, regularly inspected for proper functionality, and equipped with charged batteries and backup supplies such as pads and electrodes.
 - All **lifesaving equipment**, such as airway management tools, trauma kits, and medication administration tools, must be properly calibrated, functional, and readily accessible.



Routine Maintenance and Inspections

- **How is routine maintenance conducted for vehicles and equipment?**
 - **Daily inspections:** Drivers and crew members must conduct **daily inspections** of their assigned vehicle at the beginning of each shift. This includes checking:
 - Fuel levels and fluid levels (oil, coolant, etc.).
 - Tire pressure and tread wear.
 - Functionality of lights, sirens, and communication systems.
 - The presence and readiness of all medical supplies and equipment.
 - **Medical equipment checks:** All medical devices, such as cardiac monitors, defibrillators, and ventilators, must be inspected at the start of each shift to ensure they are fully functional and calibrated.
 - **Scheduled maintenance:** Vehicles must undergo **scheduled maintenance** in accordance with manufacturer recommendations, including routine oil changes, brake inspections, and engine checks. Equipment must also be regularly serviced to ensure it meets operational standards.
- **What should personnel do if issues are discovered?**
 - Any mechanical issues, equipment malfunctions, or deficiencies discovered during daily inspections or routine checks must be **reported immediately** to the **Captain** or **Assistant Director**. Vehicles or equipment that do not meet safety standards should be taken out of service until repairs or replacements can be made.



Compliance

The Compliance Section of the Garrard County EMS Standard Operating Guidelines outlines the agency's commitment to operating within all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and ethical standards. These policies serve to safeguard the agency, its personnel, and the public by ensuring consistent, accountable, and lawful practices in all aspects of EMS operations.



HIPAA Privacy and Security Compliance

Applies to: All Garrard County EMS Personnel

Version: 1.0

Effective Date: 06/09/2025

Category: Compliance

Reviewed/Revised: N/A

Purpose:

To ensure all protected health information (PHI) handled by Garrard County EMS is secured and maintained in compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and related federal privacy and security regulations.

Policy:

All Garrard County EMS personnel shall maintain the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of patient health information in both electronic and physical formats. Employees must handle, transmit, access, and store PHI only as required for the performance of their duties and in accordance with HIPAA regulations.

Operational Guidelines:

- Access to PHI is granted only to authorized personnel with a legitimate job-related need.
- ePCR systems must be password-protected and locked when unattended.
- Verbal disclosures of PHI must occur only in private, professional settings.
- Mobile devices used to access PHI must be encrypted and approved by administration.
- Printed records containing PHI must be stored in locked areas and shredded when disposed of.
- Transport of PHI (e.g., face sheets, billing info) must be minimized and conducted securely.
- Breach Notification: Any unauthorized access, loss, or disclosure of PHI must be reported immediately to a supervisor.



Documentation Requirements:

- All personnel must complete annual HIPAA training and sign acknowledgment forms.
- HIPAA-related incidents must be documented in the Incident Tracking System within 24 hours.
- Copies of HIPAA compliance records and training logs shall be maintained by administration.



Medicare Medical Necessity Documentation Compliance

Applies to: All Garrard County EMS Personnel

Version: 1.0

Effective Date: 06/09/2025

Category: Compliance

Reviewed/Revised: N/A

Purpose:

To ensure all patient care reports meet Medicare and Medicaid billing requirements by clearly documenting the medical necessity for ambulance transport and the level of care provided, while strictly prohibiting any false or misleading documentation or claims.

Policy:

All patient transports billed to Medicare or other third-party payers must include documentation that supports medical necessity, appropriate level of service, and justification for ambulance transport. Under no circumstance shall any employee knowingly create or submit false, exaggerated, or misleading documentation or claims. Any such actions will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination, and may result in civil or criminal penalties under state and federal law.

Operational Guidelines:

- Narratives must include a concise statement of medical necessity that explains:
 - The patient's clinical condition requiring EMS care and transport
 - Why ambulance transport was necessary
 - Why other forms of transportation were unsafe or inappropriate
- ALS or BLS Level must be medically justified through assessment findings, interventions, and patient status.
- False or misleading documentation is strictly prohibited, including:
 - Creating entries for services or conditions that did not occur
 - Altering or omitting relevant patient information to justify billing
 - Using "copy and paste" practices that result in inaccurate or non-specific narratives



- Medical Necessity Generators (e.g., MedNarrate) should be used as tools to support accuracy and compliance, not to fabricate or embellish clinical documentation.
- Supervisors and QA staff will conduct audits and reject reports that do not meet compliance standards.

Documentation Requirements:

- All billable transports must contain a clear and factual medical necessity statement in the narrative.
- ALS interventions must be clinically necessary and described in detail.
- False documentation or billing claims will result in immediate investigation and possible disciplinary action.
- All staff must complete annual training on documentation compliance and fraud prevention.



Controlled Substance Handling and Documentation

Applies to: All Garrard County EMS Personnel

Version: 1.0

Effective Date: 06/09/2025

Category: Compliance

Reviewed/Revised: N/A

Purpose:

To ensure the secure storage, accurate documentation, and lawful use of controlled substances in accordance with DEA regulations, Kentucky Board of EMS rules, and agency protocols. This policy also aims to prevent diversion, misuse, or loss of narcotics and to support accountability through strict documentation.

Policy:

Controlled substances must be handled with the highest level of care, integrity, and accountability. Only authorized personnel may access, administer, or document these medications. Any discrepancies, losses, or suspected diversion must be reported immediately. Falsification of controlled substance records or failure to follow procedures may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination and criminal prosecution.

Operational Guidelines:

- **Storage:**
 - Controlled substances must be stored in double-locked containers (narcotic safes) when not in use.
 - Ambulance narcotics boxes must remain sealed with tamper-evident tags when not actively accessed.
- **Access:**
 - Login credentials for electronic narcotic tracking systems must be kept confidential.



- **Daily Inventory:**
 - All controlled substances must be inventoried at the beginning and end of each shift.
 - Inventory counts must match documented amounts and be tracked by the incoming crews through Operative IQ.
- **Administration:**
 - All administrations must be documented in the ePCR, including drug name, dose, route, time, indication, effect, and waste amount (if any).
- **Wasting and Returns:**
 - Medication waste must be witnessed and signed by another credentialed provider and logged through narcotic waste form.
 - Expired or damaged medications must be reported immediately and logged for return or destruction.
- **Discrepancy Reporting:**
 - Any discrepancy in count, missing drug, broken seal, or suspected diversion must be reported immediately to a supervisor.
 - Internal investigations will be initiated immediately upon discrepancy notification.

Documentation Requirements:

- All controlled substances must be logged electronically and reconciled with the ePCR or narcotic tracking sheets.
- Narcotic logs must be reviewed weekly by designated administrative personnel.
- DEA-compliant records shall be maintained and readily accessible for inspection.
- Personnel found falsifying controlled substance records or diverting medications will face immediate suspension and potential legal consequences.



Run Report Completion and Submission Deadlines

Applies to: All Garrard County EMS Field Personnel

Version: 1.0

Effective Date: 06/09/2025

Category: Compliance

Reviewed/Revised: N/A

Purpose:

To ensure that all patient care reports (PCRs) are completed in a timely, accurate, and compliant manner in accordance with agency policy, state regulation, and billing requirements.

Policy:

All EMS run reports must be fully completed, submitted, and locked prior to the end of the employee's shift. Timely documentation ensures accurate recall, maintains continuity of care, supports billing compliance, and meets legal and regulatory standards. Exceptions are permitted only for calls occurring late in the shift under specified circumstances.

Operational Guidelines:

- **Standard Completion Deadline:**
 - All PCRs must be fully completed and submitted by the end of the employee's assigned shift.
 - Reports must include all required elements.
- **Late-Call Exception:**
 - If a call occurs after 2200 hours (10:00 PM), the employee may remain up to one hour past shift end to complete documentation.
 - If more time is required, the employee must notify the on-duty supervisor and receive approval for extended completion time.
- **Multiple Late Calls:**
 - In cases of back-to-back calls after 2200, employees should prioritize run completion in chronological order and may request approval for additional time as needed.



- **QA Holds and Corrections:**

- Reports flagged by QA for correction must be updated within **24 hours** of notification.
- Reports not completed in a timely manner may be placed on hold and not submitted for billing until resolved.

- **Failure to Comply:**

- Incomplete, rushed, or falsified documentation is not acceptable and will result in progressive disciplinary action.
- Repeated failure to meet documentation deadlines may result in suspension or reassignment.

Documentation Requirements:

- Completed ePCRs must be submitted before shift end, unless qualifying for the after-hours extension.
- Reports must include valid times, clinical assessments, treatments, signatures, narrative, and a Medicare-compliant medical necessity statement.
- Employees must sign off on their reports electronically.
- The training coordinator will monitor compliance through QA reviews and reporting tools.



Employee Credential Tracking and Renewal Compliance

Applies to: All Garrard County EMS Personnel

Version: 1.0

Effective Date: 06/09/2025

Category: Compliance

Reviewed/Revised: N/A

Purpose:

To ensure all EMS personnel maintain current, valid certifications and licenses required for their job functions, in accordance with state law, KBEMS regulations, and Garrard County EMS policy.

Policy:

All employees are responsible for maintaining valid professional credentials, including but not limited to state EMS licensure, CPR, ACLS, PALS, and EVOC as applicable. The Training Coordinator shall oversee the tracking and renewal compliance process and will notify staff of upcoming expiration dates. Personnel are not permitted to work with expired or invalid credentials.

Operational Guidelines:

- **Credential Requirements:**
 - Employees must maintain all certifications required for their level of care and assignment.
 - Required credentials include, at minimum:
 - Kentucky EMS License
 - CPR Certification (AHA or equivalent)
 - ACLS (Paramedic only)
 - PALS (Paramedic only)
 - EVOC (all driving personnel)
 - CEU compliance as required by KBEMS



- **Training Coordinator Responsibilities:**
 - Maintain a credential tracking system with current expiration dates.
 - Notify employees at least 30 days before any credential expires.
 - Assist in coordinating recertification opportunities where applicable.
- **Employee Responsibilities:**
 - Provide updated copies of all credentials to the Training Coordinator.
 - Renew credentials prior to expiration to avoid suspension from active duty.
 - Respond promptly to renewal reminders and training assignments.
- **Lapsed Credentials:**
 - Employees with expired credentials will be immediately removed from the schedule until renewal is confirmed.
 - Working under an expired certification or license is grounds for disciplinary action and may be reportable to KBEMS.

Documentation Requirements:

- Copies of current credentials must be kept on file by the Training Coordinator.
- Credential records must be available for inspection by KBEMS and administrative staff at all times.
- Any changes to credential status must be reported within 24 hours to administration.



QA/QI Participation and Compliance

Applies to: All Garrard County EMS Personnel

Version: 1.0

Effective Date: 06/09/2025

Category: Compliance

Reviewed/Revised: N/A

Purpose:

To support continuous quality improvement, patient safety, and regulatory compliance through active participation in the Garrard County EMS Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement (QA/QI) process.

Policy:

All personnel are required to participate in the agency's QA/QI process. This includes responding to QA feedback, completing required corrections, attending QA meetings when directed, and contributing to a culture of continuous clinical and operational improvement. Participation in QA/QI is a condition of employment and critical to maintaining agency compliance with local, state, and federal standards.

Operational Guidelines:

- **QA Reviews:**
 - Patient care reports are reviewed regularly by the training coordinator, billing specialist, assistant director, and/or director to ensure clinical accuracy, documentation quality, billing compliance, and adherence to protocols.
 - Reports may be reviewed randomly or triggered by high-risk interventions, unusual circumstances, or complaints.
- **Feedback and Corrections:**
 - Personnel must respond to QA requests for clarification or correction within 24 hours of notification unless otherwise approved by a supervisor.
 - Edits must be made accurately and professionally in accordance with the QA reviewer's instructions.



- **Mandatory Participation:**
 - Employees may be required to attend QA/QI reviews, case reviews, or remediation sessions as directed by administration.
 - Repeated QA concerns may result in the assignment of corrective action plans or targeted retraining.
- **Confidentiality:**
 - QA/QI records and discussions are confidential and shall not be disclosed outside the agency unless required by law.
- **Failure to Comply:**
 - Noncompliance with QA directives, failure to correct documentation, or refusal to participate in QA processes may result in disciplinary action.

Documentation Requirements:

- All QA feedback and required corrections will be logged in the internal QA system through ESO.
- Attendance at QA/QI sessions may be tracked for training compliance.
- QA/QI activities and findings will be reviewed quarterly by administration to identify trends, training needs, and protocol updates.



Incident Reporting and Investigation

Applies to: All Garrard County EMS Personnel

Version: 1.0

Effective Date: 06/09/2025

Category: Compliance

Reviewed/Revised: N/A

Purpose:

To ensure that all operational, safety, behavioral, and clinical incidents are promptly reported, thoroughly investigated, and appropriately resolved in accordance with agency policy and applicable legal or regulatory requirements.

Policy:

All Garrard County EMS personnel are required to report any incident that may pose a risk to patient safety, employee safety, agency liability, or regulatory compliance. The agency will investigate all reported incidents in a timely, confidential, and objective manner. Failing to report an incident, or providing false or misleading information during an investigation, is grounds for disciplinary action.

Operational Guidelines:

- **What to Report:**
 - Patient care concerns, medication errors, equipment failures, vehicle accidents, workplace injuries, exposure incidents, safety hazards, behavioral issues, harassment, and violations of policy or protocol.
- **Reporting Process:**
 - All incidents must be reported via the official Incident Report Form or system within 24 hours of the occurrence or awareness of the issue.
 - For time-sensitive or serious incidents, verbal notification to the on-duty supervisor is required immediately.



- **Investigation Process:**
 - The on-duty supervisor or designated administrator will initiate a preliminary review.
 - For clinical or safety incidents, additional review may involve the QA/QI Officer, Medical Director, or external agencies as needed.
 - All parties involved may be interviewed, and supporting documentation (e.g., PCRs, logs, security footage) may be reviewed.
- **Resolution and Action:**
 - Findings will be documented and retained.
 - Based on the outcome, corrective actions may include counseling, training, equipment replacement, or disciplinary measures.
 - Employees will be notified of the outcome when appropriate.
- **Confidentiality and Retaliation:**
 - Incident reports and investigations are confidential to the extent permitted by law.
 - Retaliation against individuals who report incidents in good faith is strictly prohibited.

Documentation Requirements:

- All incident reports must be submitted within 24 hours using the designated system.
- Investigations must be documented, including findings, actions taken, and any follow-up plans.
- Records will be retained by administration in a secure manner and reviewed periodically for risk trends.



Billing Compliance and Fraud Prevention

Applies to: All Garrard County EMS Personnel

Version: 1.0

Effective Date: 06/09/2025

Category: Compliance

Reviewed/Revised: N/A

Purpose:

To ensure that all billing practices are accurate, ethical, and in full compliance with Medicare, Medicaid, and private payer regulations, and to prevent fraudulent or improper claims that could expose the agency to civil or criminal liability.

Policy:

Garrard County EMS maintains a zero-tolerance policy for billing fraud, upcoding, or false documentation. All claims must be based on accurate patient care documentation that reflects the actual services provided. Any suspected billing irregularities or misconduct must be reported immediately to a supervisor or compliance officer.

Operational Guidelines:

- **Billing Integrity:**
 - Claims must be supported by complete and truthful ePCR documentation.
 - Clinical impressions, interventions, mileage, and level of service must match the care documented.
 - Use of vague or generic language such as "routine transport" or "patient requested ambulance" without justification is not acceptable.
- **Prohibited Practices:**
 - Falsifying narratives or assessment findings to justify billing
 - Upcoding level of service (e.g., billing ALS when only BLS care was provided)
 - Billing for services not rendered (e.g., unused supplies, treatments not provided)
 - Duplicate billing for the same transport or service



- **Mileage Documentation:**
 - Loaded miles must be measured accurately and recorded clearly in the ePCR.
 - Round-trip or standby miles must not be billed unless specifically authorized.
- **Employee Responsibility:**
 - All providers are responsible for ensuring their documentation is accurate and complete prior to submission.
 - Employees must complete required billing and compliance training annually.
- **Internal Audit and Oversight:**
 - Routine audits will be conducted by administrative or billing personnel.
 - Reports identified as noncompliant will be returned to the crew for correction and may result in retraining or disciplinary action.

Documentation Requirements:

- All billable PCRs must include a compliant medical necessity statement and clearly justify the level of service billed.
- Mileage and times must be documented with precision.
- Billing audits and findings will be logged and retained for agency and regulatory review.