

**OKALOOSA COUNTY
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

Title:	Staffing
Policy:	404.00
Purpose:	To provide continuous and adequate staffing to maintain EMS operations

Policy:

All requirements of the State of Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Emergency Medical Oversight will be met.

1. All in-service OCEMS units are designated as either Basic Life Support (BLS) and/or Advanced Life Support (ALS) in accordance with the State of Florida Department of Health.
2. All ALS ambulances shall be staffed with a minimum of one Florida certified paramedic as well as one Florida certified EMT (or another Florida certified paramedic).
3. All BLS ambulances shall be staffed with a minimum of two Florida certified EMT's.
4. If necessary, and with approval of the Operations Section Commander, ALS ambulances may be put in service by combining un-partnered Paramedics, using relief Paramedics, or utilizing the Paramedics on call.
5. In the absence of one of the Branch Commanders, an alternate Branch Commander (sergeant) may be assigned to the Branch Command role until such time the assigned Branch Commander returns.

Employees are free to leave when the assigned duty shift ends, after the on-coming shift personnel have arrived, and all operational responsibilities have been fulfilled (i.e., run reports completed, paperwork, vehicle fueled and cleaned, supplies restocked, etc.). Any unfinished work at the end of a shift must be done as expeditiously as possible.

Staffing Contingencies:

1. The goal of Okaloosa County Emergency Medical Services is to provide high quality, timely care to our customers. The minimum number of units in operation will be 8 transport units 24 hours a day. With this in mind, every effort will be made to ensure that the employee is allowed to leave on time. It should be noted that there will be times when coverage or calls dictate the employee staying over after the regularly scheduled shift time ends. These hours are mandatory.
2. The goal of the branch commanders shall be to ensure that an adequate number of trucks (minimum of 8 transport units [5 South/3 North]) are kept in service at all times. Factors such as time of day, time of year, weather, special events, day of the week, and current system status will come into play when deciding on the number and type of units necessary to care for our customers on a day to day basis. The Branch Commanders will work in collaboration with one another and the Operations Section Commander to ensure that an adequate number of trucks is maintained. On call personnel will be utilized in the instance where it is determined that additional transport units are needed and no other personnel are available to be utilized.
3. Every attempt will be made to plan for coverage in advance. Open/available shifts will be placed in the TeleStaff schedule as soon as possible. Open/vacant shifts will be staffed utilizing employees who are marked 'available' on Telestaff (per Policy 116.00 Leave and Overtime Distribution).
4. Once an employee has signed up for an available shift, he/she is responsible for covering the shift. If the employee later decides that they do not wish to fill the open shift, it is that employee's responsibility to find coverage.

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5. Branch Commanders will make a dedicated effort to fill open positions no fewer than seven days in advance. The following strategy will be utilized, while being mindful of overtime usage:
 - a. Relief employees
 - b. Fulltime employees – on overtime
 - c. Relief employees – on overtime
 - d. One on duty Branch Commander
 - e. On call fulltime employees. All employees should be aware that circumstances may arise where it will be necessary to utilize an on call employee for the full 24 hours. Every effort will be made to minimize this occurring.
 - f. Second on duty Branch Commander (Section Commander assuming county command)
 - g. Off duty Branch Commanders (mandatory)
 - h. Section Commanders (mandatory)
 - i. EMS Chief (called in to assume county command)

On-Call Strategy:

Employees may be ordered into work for any of the following reasons, but not limited to:

1. Coverage for leave or other staffing deficiency,
2. Long distance transport augmentation,
3. Deployment to other areas of the state,
4. Any large scale incident in-county,
5. Any naturally occurring or manmade disaster.

Use of On Call (Stand-by) For Coverage:

The Command Staff desires to provide the least amount of disruption to the employee while maintaining adequate staffing requirements.

All full time non-exempt shift personnel permanently assigned to an ambulance are subject to being on call (stand-by). Those on call do receive pay in accordance with the County's HR Manual which reads:

“A non-exempt employee on stand-by, regardless of whether he or she is called to work, will be paid the following:

(1) One hour per day on weekdays;

(2) Two hours per day on weekends and county-approved actual calendar holidays.

Stand-by pay will be at the employee's applicable straight time or overtime rate. Any employee called into work while working standby will also receive pay for all hours worked at his or her applicable straight time or overtime rate. Hours worked includes travel time from and to the employee's home.”

Employees shall submit their available days to be on call to the designated commander by the first day of the month prior. If no days are submitted by the deadline, on call day(s) will be assigned to the employee. The schedule for being on call will be posted in TeleStaff along with the work schedule. On call day(s) and times can be swapped, through mutual agreement, by following the same procedures outlined for shift swaps.

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All employees of the department shall maintain an active telephone for contact. The employee shall furnish the department with their telephone number and must keep the department informed when their telephone number changes (as per Policy 414.00 Emergency Recall).

The employee on call is to be available by this phone for the entire time they are scheduled to be on call and will receive stand-by pay accordingly.

There may be emergency situations that require on call personnel to be contacted more than once during their on call period. Attempts will be made to minimize the number of calls they receive during their standby.

The on call employee may not sign up for voluntary overtime on his/her scheduled on call (standby) day.

On Call Responsibilities:

It is the on call (standby) employee's responsibility to monitor and answer their phone, ensure the battery is charged (if a cellular phone), and that the device is working properly. It is his/her responsibility to return the phone call within thirty (30) minutes.

Employee's on call (standby) will report to duty as assigned within 2 hours of notification and in the expected physical condition needed to perform those duties.

There may be circumstances that would prohibit the employee from responding to work when notified; these will be considered on a case by case basis by the applicable Branch Commander and Section Commanders. These instances should be rare in occurrence and will be monitored.

Accountability and Compliance:

1. The EMS Chief, Section Commanders, and Branch Commanders will have a daily understanding of the seven day staffing forecast and will make themselves available for staffing requirements whenever necessary.
2. Each employee is expected to arrive at work on time, in proper uniform, and prepared for assignment. Once the shift begins, the employee is expected to work until relieved from duty. Employees will utilize their timesheet to monitor arrival and departure times from their shift; any discrepancies will be forwarded to the Branch Commander for evaluation.
3. Employees who abandon their duty obligations before the end of their shift without the permission of a Branch Commander, are subject to appropriate discipline up to, and including, termination.

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