

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

Title: Leave and Overtime Distribution
Policy: 116.00
Purpose: To provide procedures for requesting/scheduling leave and the distribution of overtime.

This policy consists of the following numbered sections:

- 1. Leave Policy**
- 2. Overtime Distribution Policy**
- 3. Accountability and Compliance**

1. Leave Policy

- A. Okaloosa County EMS will utilize TeleStaff to manage employee shift schedules. Each employee will be able to view and request changes to his/her schedule via this program.
- B. Leave requests must be submitted on TeleStaff at least 14 days in advance to allow the time to cover employee vacancies (the program will not allow you to submit leave requests within 14 days). The Section Commanders and/or the EMS Division Chief have the authority to accept leave requests submitted with less than 14 days' notice in certain emergency cases. Request for leave will be accepted up to one year in advance (rolling year). No request for leave should be considered granted until it appears on the TeleStaff program. Employees must have the amount of leave they are requesting in their current pay periods' leave 'bank' when they are making the request.
- C. Requests for leave will be granted on a first-come, first-serve basis except for the ten (10) County designated holidays to ensure fairness.
- D. No more than two employees per 24 hour period (excludes command staff) will be allowed to take scheduled leave without the approval of the Section Commanders or EMS Division Chief.
- E. Sick calls will be made by telephone only to the on duty Branch Commander; calls to the Communications Center, other employees, voicemail messages, or text messages are not acceptable.
- F. Scheduled personnel who report for duty any later than 3 hours after their scheduled time without contacting a supervisor are considered absent without leave (AWOL) and may be subject to disciplinary action. "Late" is defined as arriving after the scheduled start time of a shift.
- G. Employees who call out sick for their assigned duty shift will be ineligible to work a voluntary overtime shift for the next forty-eight (48) hours.
- H. Compensatory time may be used only as a means of compensating an employee for overtime work actually performed. The employee may accrue compensatory time as an alternative to overtime pay. All compensatory time will be issued in accordance with the Okaloosa County Compensatory Time Policy contained in the Okaloosa County Human Resources Policy Manual. Compensatory time will be documented as follows:
 1. All time will be documented on the official county time sheet and submitted to payroll.
 2. The Payroll Department will track accruals and usage of Compensatory Time.
- I. Swap time may only be done between full-time employees of the Department of Public Safety that are of the same position classification level; for example, a Branch Commander can only swap with another Branch Commander and a paramedic can only swap with a paramedic, etc. If an employee swaps time with another employee ('Swap, working') and they are unable to work the scheduled shift (suspension, illness, etc.), it will be the

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- responsibility of the person originally scheduled ('Swap, not working') for that day to find coverage or report to work as originally scheduled.
- J. Swaps cannot be open-ended; you must specify a date to be paid back and that date must fall within six months of the scheduled swap.
 - K. All types of leave may be canceled during times of disaster or declared State of Emergency. The TeleStaff system will be used to notify and recall staff in these cases. Therefore, it is required that all employees and command staff keep all their contact information up to date in TeleStaff. This will be done using the Human Resources Employee Information Change Form (located at Human Resources or under the "Human Resources Forms" section on the county website). The form should be completed whenever an employee has a change in name, phone number, address, or emergency contact. The employee is to complete the form and give to their Branch Commander. The Branch Commander will ensure the North and South Commander phones have been update and will send the form to the EOC. The Section Commanders will ensure the employees Telestaff profile and personnel file is updated. The form will then be sent to Human Resources.

2. Overtime Distribution

- A. Full Time employees requesting overtime shifts and all Relief employees shall place themselves 'available' in TeleStaff for the days and hours desired. The Branch Commanders will place employees marked 'available' into open shifts only if the TeleStaff system has not. Overtime will be distributed with an emphasis on spreading the hours evenly and fairly utilizing the automated TeleStaff system first; Branch Commander can interface secondly, if needed. If an employee has a need to alter the start or end time to a shift after it was accepted by him/her, he/she must contact the Branch Commanders via email. At no point should any employee contact the Branch Commander to request a particular station or partner. If the employee is placed into an open shift that is over 72 hours away, the Branch Commander shall send a notification to the employee via the TeleStaff program informing them they have been placed on a shift. If the Branch Commander places the employee into an open shift that is within 72 hours, he/she will contact that employee via phone call to ensure he/she is still able to work the shift. However, it is ultimately the employee's responsibility to check TeleStaff for their work schedule and station assignments after placing themselves 'available'. If the Branch Commander has to move or cancel an employee's station assignment or shift, they must contact the employee via phone call prior to the start of their shift. Full time employees will not be placed in an open overtime shift that is over 14 days away. Relief employees may 'bump' a full time employee from an overtime shift; however, no 'bumping' is allowed within 72 hours of the shift. The command staff maintains the right to alter schedules to best fit the operational pace of the Department, to include "bumping" of any overtime personnel.
- B. 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.
- C. Any employee that receives a written reprimand will be excluded from eligibility to work overtime for a two (2) week period from the date of the receipt of the reprimand; any employee that receives a suspension will be ineligible to work overtime for a four (4) week period from the date of notification of the suspension. The EMS Division Chief may waive this directive at his/her discretion to better serve the operational needs of the Department.
- D. When messages and vacancies are sent through the TeleStaff system, employees are required to acknowledge the message or vacancy with an either 'Accept' or 'Reject' selection. Employees are not allowed to ignore the message/vacancy. Failure to

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acknowledge these messages and vacancies will result in progressive discipline as described in the Okaloosa County Human Resources Policy Manual.

- E. The following, but not limited to, may lead to termination of Emergency Relief employees:
 - 1. Canceling a scheduled shift with less than 24 hours' notice (unexcused).
 - 2. Not working 24 hours within a 30-day period.
 - 3. Knowingly accepting any shift assignment that would place them over 40 hours weekly (that has not been approved by a Section Commander and/or the EMS Division Chief).
- F. No more than 24 consecutive hours will be worked without 12 hours off. The EMS Division Chief must approve any exceptions to this policy. Two person paramedic teams may be split-up and EMT's utilized for coverage, as needed.

3. Accountability and Compliance:

- A. The EMS Branch Commanders, or delegates, will utilize email notifications or other forms of communication to track complaints of system errors with TeleStaff and/or scheduling. These system errors will be tallied and reported to the EMS Division Chief at the monthly Senior Staff Meeting along with the resolution to the system error.

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