



NORTHAMPTON COUNTY

Department of EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES



STANDARD OPERATING GUIDELINES

TOPIC: Anti-Substance Abuse	SOG #: 2.26
Status: ACTIVE	Written: 11/22/2014
Written by: Hollye B. Carpenter	Revised:
Approved by: Hollye B. Carpenter	Adopted: 02/22/2015

PURPOSE

This policy is enacted to ensure a safe and drug-free work environment by prohibiting specific behaviors and by instituting alcohol and drug testing.

In accordance with 12VAC5-31-940 (Drugs and substance abuse), “EMS personnel may not be under the influence of any drugs of intoxicating substances that impairs their ability to provide patient care or operate a motor vehicle while on duty or when responding or assisting in the care of a patient. In addition, the Northampton County Department of EMS (NCEMS) shall have a drug and substance abuse policy which includes a process for testing for drugs and/or intoxicating substance.”

SCOPE

All department EMS personnel that perform safety-sensitive functions

CONTENT

Definitions

- A. *Alcohol* – Any substance that may be consumed and contains ethanol.
- B. *Controlled Substance “Drug or Drugs”* - As defined in Schedules I through V of Section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act (21 U.S.C. Section 812; 21 C.F.R. Part 1308 (1989) or in Schedules I through VI of the Drug Control Act of 1970 (VA Code Sections 54.1-3400, 54.1-3446, 54.1-3448, 54.1-3450, 54.1-3452 and 54.1-3456, as amended).
- C. *Drug Paraphernalia* – Any article or equipment intended to be used to administer or consume drugs
- D. *On-Duty* – Anytime a member or employee is engaged in a safety-sensitive function
- E. *Safety-Sensitive Functions* – A broad term that applies to all activities encountered in the mitigation of emergency incidents that include but are not limited to: EMS delivery, training activities, duty crew assignment, home response, operation of vehicles and equipment, public education programs, public services and other activities that involve the public trust or presents a safety risk.



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- F. *Reasonable Suspicion* – A belief based upon objectives, articulable facts and reasonable inferences drawn from those facts a person has engaged or is engaging in the conduct prohibited by this policy.

Program

- A. It is the policy of the NCEMS all members will be free from the effects of drugs and alcohol while performing safety-sensitive functions.
- B. Prohibited Conduct
1. The possession, consumption or distribution of alcohol on duty.
 2. Having any blood alcohol level while on duty (zero tolerance).
 3. The unlawful purchase, sale, trade, use, possession or distribution of a controlled substance.
 4. The unlawful purchase, sale, trade, use, possession or distribution of drug paraphernalia.
 5. Refusal to comply with any portion of the detection/testing requirements of this policy.
 6. Attempts to alter or substitute any specimen provided in compliance with the detection/testing requirements of this policy.
- C. Affected Members/Employees
1. Applicants for membership or employment who intend to perform safety-sensitive functions shall be tested for drug use as part of the selection/approval process.
 2. All members/employees who perform safety-sensitive functions shall be subject to alcohol and drug testing as required by this policy to include marijuana, PCP, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, opiates, blood alcohol and breathe alcohol.
- D. Frequency of Testing
1. All affected applicants for membership/employment shall be subject to drug testing as part of their entrance selection process.
 2. All affected members/employees shall be subject to a drug test as part of their periodic (typically biennial) medical physical in determining fitness for duty.
 3. Any affected member/employee may be ordered to submit to a drug and/or alcohol test for reasonable suspicion of being under the influence.
 4. Any member/employee involved in an accident meeting either of the below criteria shall submit to a drug and alcohol test:



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- If the accident results in death, bodily injury or property damage that appears to exceed \$2,000;
- If determined to be at fault by law enforcement on the scene;
- If anyone involved in the accident is transported to the hospital;
- If one or more vehicles involved in the accident are towed from the scene of the accident.

Procedure

A. The collecting and testing of samples will be conducted under the following guidelines:

1. Drug screening will usually be conducted by the Northampton County Sheriff's Office (NCSO). If this facility not available, a secondary facility may be utilized.
2. Drug screening will consist of urinalysis testing utilizing an appropriate test kit provided by NCSO.
3. The individual to be tested will provide a urine sample in accordance with the instructions provided by the testing facility. The testing facility will ensure the individual does not have access to foreign substances that could be used to taint or alter the specimen.
4. At the time of the urine sample collection, the involved member/employee will complete a form indicating all medications used in the preceding two (2) week period.

B. Drug Screen Results

1. Drug screening results will be provided to the EMS Director/Chief. These test results will be considered confidential and dissemination of said information will be limited to those designated by the EMS Director/Chief. (Members/Employees will have access to their individual test results.)
2. NCEMS will maintain a record of the drug screening results in a confidential and secured file.
3. A positive reading (one where the presence of illegal drugs is detected), will be deemed as a reasonable suspicion to order a confirmation test for the individual involved.
4. Members/employees testing positive will be placed on administrative leave till a confirmation test can be administered and results received.

C. Confirmation Test

1. The EMS Director/Chief or designee will authorize all confirmation testing.
2. Once the EMS Director/Chief orders a confirmation test, the Human Resource Coordinator will coordinate the process.
3. The confirmation testing will involve urinalysis or blood testing.



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4. Confirmation testing will be conducted by an independent, private laboratory certified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (SAMHSA).
5. The member/employee requiring confirmation testing will be ordered to give sample(s) as needed. Confirmation testing via urine sample collection may be observed by the most appropriated licensed health care professional.
6. The collection facility will deliver the sample(s) for confirmation testing to the designated laboratory for analysis. Laboratory test results will be returned to the Human Resource Coordinator for review.
7. Members testing positive by means of confirmation test will be placed continue on administrative leave. All positive tests will result in appropriate follow-up action.

D. Alcohol Related Testing

1. When there is a reasonable suspicion that a member/employee is under the influence, or may have alcohol on their person while on duty, that member will be required to submit to a breathalyzer test to determine the presence of alcohol in their blood. Random screenings will not be conducted for alcohol use.
2. The EMS Director/Chief shall be notified; and, in coordination with the Human Resource Coordinator, alcohol related testing shall be conducted and documented.
3. Members/Employees directed to submit to a breathalyzer or blood test must be informed of the facts giving rise to a reasonable suspicion for which the test is being directed.
4. All positive tests will result in appropriate follow-up action.

E. Notifications to Members/Employees Who Are to be Screened for Drugs or Alcohol

1. Members/Employees who are ordered by the EMS Director/Chief or designee to provide a sample of their urine, blood, breath or hair for screening purposes shall report to the designated location on the date and time specified by the order.
2. All persons required to submit substance abuse testing, shall be escorted by the appropriate designee to and from the testing site.

F. Random Screening

1. The EMS Director/Chief or designee shall, through random process, identify members for drug screening on a quarterly basis.



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2. The random process shall involve the placement of the names of all members/employees into a suitable receptacle for random drawing. The drawing will typically occur at a staff meeting, however may occur at an officer's meeting.
 3. The EMS Director/Chief or designee will schedule and notify members for random drug testing.
 4. The EMS Director/Chief or designee shall confirm the collection facility the member/employees have kept their scheduled appointments.
 5. NCEMS shall keep appropriate records concerning selection, notification, scheduling and results for all testing.
 6. Confirmed positive tests will result in appropriate follow-up.
- G. Rehabilitation – NCEMS recognizes that substance abuse is a problem that can often be effectively treated. Members/Employees who may be suffering from any type of problem, including drug or alcohol related problems, are encouraged to voluntarily seek diagnostic counseling and treatment services available through the Employee Assistance Program.
- H. Due Process – Any complaint of illegal drug use by a member/employee or any member testing positive, as outline in this procedure, will result in an investigation by the EMS Director/Chief or designee. All disciplinary actions taken will be administered in accordance with Northampton County Personnel Policy and Procedures.