



Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS

Standard Operating Procedure: 2.04	Effective Date: May 5, 2023
Subject: Duties & Responsibilities of Employees	Section: Human Resources
Authorized: Chief Michael Robinson	Revision Date: N/A

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a code of ethics and explain the conduct expected of on-duty Carroll County Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services (DFEMS) employees. These rules are established by the Director/Chief of the Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS under authority granted by Chapter 37 of the County Code.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Inefficiency – Any lack of productivity that results in a reduction of service or that endangers the safety of or causes injury/death to other employee or the public. This includes, but is not limited to, failure or inability to perform assigned duties properly, a lack of performance based upon a reasonable standard, and/or a blatant disregard for duties.
- B. Insubordination – Disobedience and/or refusal to perform assigned duties.
- C. On-duty – Employees who are engaged in any operational or administrative activities while acting as a representative of DFEMS.

III. PROCEDURES

- A. All on-duty employees are expected to maintain an exemplary standard of personal integrity and ethical conduct in their relationships with each other and with the public at all times. On-duty employees must conduct themselves in a professional manner that is beyond reproach.
 - 1. Every employee of DFEMS shall be punctual in reporting for duty and for all assignments and shall quickly respond to all emergency calls.
 - 2. Employees of DFEMS shall not feign illness, avoid responsibility, or attempt to shirk their duties.
- B. Compliance with Other Applicable Standards and Statutes
 - 1. All on-duty employees must comply with all applicable Federal, State, and local laws, and regulations, including DFEMS and County Government ordinances, policies, and procedures.
 - 2. Employees of DFEMS shall maintain in good standing any licenses,

certificates, educational degrees or diplomas, or other credentials necessary for them to properly perform their DFEMS duties.

C. Orders and Directives

1. All on-duty employees must obey a supervisor's order or directive, unless it would require the on-duty employees to commit an illegal, reckless, or unethical act.
2. A supervisor or higher-ranking officer must not issue an order that he or she knows, or reasonably should know, would require a subordinate to commit an illegal, reckless, or unethical act, or that would violate these or other established policies.
3. If a supervisor or higher-ranking officer issues an order to an individual that conflicts with a previously issued order, policy, or procedure, the individual must immediately call attention to the conflicting order. If the conflicting order is not rescinded by the supervisor or higher-ranking officer, that order will stand.
4. The responsibility for an order rests with the individual that issues the order.
5. The authority of a DFEMS officer shall extend to all employees of lower rank, whether or not the subordinate employee works in the same division, section or unit as the officer.
6. No employee of DFEMS shall act or speak in an insubordinate or disrespectful manner to any superior officer.

D. Personal Conduct

1. On-duty employees must behave in a professional manner that always reflects favorably on the DFEMS. They must not commit any act that constitutes conduct unbecoming a member of the fire and rescue service.
2. On-duty employees will not accept any inducement to perform or fail to perform assigned duties.
3. On-duty employees will not engage in acts that endanger the safety of or cause injury to other employees or the public.
4. On-duty employees must be courteous and respectful toward the public, each other, and one another's DFEMS affiliation, and maintain proper decorum and behavior. On-duty employees must not use violent, insolent, or obscene language at any time.
5. On-duty employees must not refer to or speak to any other person or group in a way that may reasonably be construed as demeaning or constituting discrimination.

E. Use of equipment

1. On-duty employees must treat County or local fire and rescue corporation property appropriately, and maintain the property in good, clean, and operating condition.
2. On-duty employees must not take, tamper with, maliciously damage, or borrow without permission any County or local fire and rescue corporation-owned equipment or property, or the personal property of another. Employees must obtain permission from the DFEMS on-duty Shift Commander before putting any DFEMS property to personal use. Employees must obtain permission from the highest-ranking local fire and rescue corporation designee before putting local fire and rescue corporation property to personal use.

F. Horseplay

1. On-duty employees must refrain from any horseplay that a reasonable person should know may injure someone, or damage DFEMS or local fire and rescue corporation equipment or property, or the personal property of another.

G. Guests

1. On-duty employees are responsible for the conduct of their guests at all times while on County or local fire and rescue corporation property.
2. The behavior of guests must not impair, disrupt, damage, delay, or otherwise negatively affect DFEMS operations, or violate any provision of this regulation.
3. If a guest fails to comply with any request to cease offensive behavior, on-duty employees must notify the DFEMS Shift Commander, local fire and rescue corporation chief, or president, who must take appropriate action.
4. Guests under the age of 18 shall be accompanied by an adult.

H. Honesty and Integrity

1. On-duty employees shall not give false, inaccurate, or misleading statements to any County Official, employee, or member of the public.
2. On-duty employees must not alter, materially misrepresent, or otherwise misuse any DFEMS document, rule or regulation, policy, or financial report.
3. DFEMS employees must not make any false or misleading statements during an investigation, or to initiate an investigation.

I. Confidentiality

1. All DFEMS employee records are confidential under Sec. 10-616(i) of the State Government Article, Maryland Public Information Act. Under this Act, a custodian of records must deny inspection of an individual's employee record. These records include an application, performance rating, or scholastic achievement information. However, a custodian must permit inspection by the person in interest, or an elected or appointed official who supervises the work of that individual.
2. All DFEMS records relating to training and education provided with U.S. Department of Education funding shall be applicable to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

J. Reports/Records

1. On-duty employees must submit all required reports in accordance with established policy and procedures. The reports must be accurate, truthful, complete, and timely.
2. Maintenance of records- All employees of DFEMS whose duties require them to maintain Department records shall do so in accordance with the provisions of the law and the established procedures of DFEMS.
3. Access to Department records- No person shall be allowed access to, nor be allowed to make a transcript or copy from any Department record, unless authorized to do so by the Director/Chief or Department policy.
4. Removal of records- No employee of DFEMS shall remove any official document or file belonging to DFEMS or any bureau of DFEMS without the authority of the Director/Chief, or as required by law, or as permitted by the Standard Operating Procedures.
5. Application of rule- The provisions of this rule and any other Department policy apply equally to written and electronically stored or processed records.

K. Enforcement

1. The Director/Chief, DFEMS or designee is the enforcement authority for all policies and procedures of the DFEMS.
2. Applicable Provision- If a county law, regulation, policy, or other standard that has a specific enforcement provision is violated, the specific enforcement provision applies.
3. Reporting Alleged Violations- If this policy is violated, or if a policy is violated for which an enforcement provision is not otherwise described, the procedure below must be followed:
 - a. On-duty employees who witness a violation, or to whom a third party documents a violation, must promptly verbally notify the on-duty DFEMS Shift Commander, DFEMS Station Lieutenant or Corporation Chief. The initiating on-duty employees must also provide the DFEMS Shift Commander, DFEMS Station Lieutenant or Corporation Chief with a Complaint Intake Report describing the alleged violation.
 - b. After completing an investigation, the appropriate supervisor must promptly take necessary action.

L. Courtesy Services

1. Employees are often called upon to provide services that are not emergency oriented, but which relate to the public good or order or have an impact on the public's general safety. When this occurs, employees are to provide, within reasonable means, courtesy services that are consistent with DFEMS policies and procedures, County policy, and the law.

M. Other

1. Giving personal information to the public- Employees of DFEMS, when on duty, shall, upon request, furnish their name and duty assignment to any person.
2. Improper influence prohibited- No employee of DFEMS shall attempt to bring improper influence from within or outside DFEMS in order to secure promotion, transfer or other preferential treatment, or to avoid discipline or punishment.
3. Political activity- Employees of DFEMS, while on duty or while wearing the DFEMS uniform, on or off duty, shall not engage in any political activity except to exercise their rights of suffrage.
4. Public comment or criticism- No employee of DFEMS, while on duty, shall publicly criticize or comment upon the official action of any employee of DFEMS in such a manner as to reflect discredit upon DFEMS or in a manner which is prejudicial to the good order and discipline of DFEMS.
5. Commercial Use of Department Name- No employee shall lend their name, as an employee of DFEMS, to any business or commercial enterprise, nor shall any employee condone or countenance the use of the name and the prestige of DFEMS for any purpose without the written approval of the Director/Chief.
6. Emergencies encountered while off duty within DFEMS jurisdiction- In the event that employees of DFEMS, while not on duty, are at the scene of a fire, medical or other emergency, they are authorized to take whatever professional and reasonable action they may deem necessary for the protection of life and property.
7. Changes in personal information- Every employee of DFEMS shall, within five days of its occurrence, report any change in residence, personal and emergency contact telephone number, or any other item of personal

information kept by DFEMS.

8. Misuse of Electronics- No employee of DFEMS shall, except in emergencies, use DFEMS computer system for any personal or improper use, nor shall they use the telephone for personal calls. Personal electronic devices shall not be used for personal purposes during emergency operations.
9. Infractions of Rules and Regulations- Infractions of Department Rules and Regulations resulting in punishment or reprimand shall be recorded as provided in the established policies of DFEMS.
10. Carrying and use of weapons- Unless expressly authorized by the Director/Chief of DFEMS, no employee may carry or use, while on duty, or bring onto Department property at any time, any firearm or other dangerous or deadly weapon as described and defined by Md. Ann. Code, Art. 27, Section 36. This prohibition includes, but is not limited to firearms, switchblade knives, chemical mace, pepper mace, and tear gas devices.

IV. RECISION

- A. This Standard Operating Procedure rescinds all directives regarding Duties & Responsibilities of Employees or similar content previously issued for employees of the Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS.