

# Bertie County Board of Commissioners



November 3, 2014

**BERTIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

**November 3, 2014**

**Meeting Agenda**

*This agenda is only a tentative schedule of matters the Commissioners may address at their meeting and all items found on it may be deleted, amended or deferred. The Commissioners may also, in their absolute discretion, consider matters not shown on this agenda.*

**(A)**

**\*\*\* APPOINTMENTS \*\*\***

- 10:00-10:05** Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance by Commissioner Wesson
- 10:05-10:15** Public Comments
- 10:15-10:25** Presentation of Bertie County Ombudsman Annual Report by Mid-East Commission Area Agency on Aging Regional Ombudsman, Tameka Riggsbee (A-1)
- 10:25-10:35** NC Works Center Update by NC Works Center Manager, Andre Rowe
- 10:35-10:45** NET Billing Update by David Pickren of Colleton Software
- 10:45-10:55** EMS presentation of Employee Handbook and 2014 Standard Operating Guidelines for approval (A-2)

**Board Appointments (B)**

- 1. There are no Board Appointments.

**Consent Agenda (C)**

- 1. Approve minutes for Public Hearing 10-16-14 (C-1)
- 2. Approve minutes for Regular Session 10-20-14 (C-2)
- 3. Approve minutes for Closed Session 10-20-14
- 4. Approve minutes for Closed Session 10-21-14
- 5. Approve minutes for Regular Session 10-27-14 (C-3)
- 6. Accept Register of Deeds Fees Report – October 2014

**\*\*\*OTHER ITEMS\*\*\***

**Discussion Agenda (D)**

- 1. Soil & Water Conservation District project proposal for alligator weed eradication on the Cashie River, and consideration of proposed Resolution (D-1)
- 2. Department of Social Services update on Medicaid and food stamp applications and processing requirements as directed by the State (D-2)

**Commissioners' Reports (E)**

**County Manager's Reports (F)**

**County Attorney's Reports (G)**  
Pending Closed Session minutes – update

**Public Comments Continued**

**Closed Session**

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(3) to go into closed session to consult with the County Attorney in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege that exists between the attorney and this public body.

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(4) to discuss matters relating to the location or expansion of industries or other businesses in the area served by the public body, including agreement on a tentative list of economic development incentives that may be offered by the public body in negotiations. The action approves the signing of an economic development contract or commitment, or the action authorizing the payment of economic development expenditures, shall be taken in an open session.

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(5) to establish, or to instruct the public body's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the public body in negotiating (i) the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease; or (ii) the amount of compensation and other material terms of an employment contract or proposed employment contract.

Pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of employment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee.

**Adjourn**



*People Working Together*

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October 7, 2014

My name is Tameka Riggsbee, Regional Ombudsman with the Mid-East Commission for Beaufort, Bertie, Hertford, Martin and Pitt counties. As Ombudsman, my primary role is to advocate for residents residing in long-term care facilities including Adult Care Homes and Family Care Homes.

As the Regional Ombudsman for the 5 County Region, it is my responsibility to:

- Serve as a liaison and promote community involvement
- Receive and resolve complaints
- Collect data about the number and types of complaints handled
- Work with long term care providers to resolve issues of common concern
- Work with long term care providers to promote increased community involvement
- Offer assistance to long term care providers in staff training regarding Residents' Rights
- Report collected data and activities to the Office of the State Long Term Care Ombudsman
- Provide training and technical assistance to Community Advisory Committees
- Provide information to the general public on long-term care issues

Enclosed you will find your perspective counties Annual Report based on data collected through the Ombudsman Program during Federal FY October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014. This information will also be submitted to local Department of Social Services and to the Office of the State Long Term Care Ombudsman.

Please feel free to contact me for further information pertaining to the Annual Report or the Ombudsman Program.

Sincerely,

*Tameka Riggsbee*

Tameka Riggsbee, MHA LRT/CTRS  
 Regional LTC Ombudsman  
 Mid-East Commission Area Agency on Aging

**Serving: Beaufort County • Bertie County • Hertford County • Martin County • Pitt County**

# ANNUAL REPORT

## ADULT CARE AND NURSING HOME COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEES

County: Bertie

Reporting year: 2014

Committee: Bertie County Nursing Home/Adult Care Community Advisory Committee

1. Were all the homes in the county served by the committee? If not, why?

The committee failed to make visits to the Family Care Homes in the county. Once again, retaining members to the committee has proven to be difficult. During this FY, 2 members have resigned or decided to not continue with their term. 1 new member has been trained and added to the CAC. Continued marketing efforts will be needed to strengthen the committee and increase committee activity.

Another issue continues to be travel. Many volunteers are not able to reach those homes located on the outskirts of the county. Mileage reimbursement may be a consideration for the future.

2. Describe educational efforts by the committee.

Community Advisory Committee members continue to stay updated regarding current Long Term Care (LTC) issues. Members are frequently provided relevant articles, workshops and conferences available within the area. Members continue to build a strong knowledge of the Ombudsman program and their role as Resident Advocates within the facility. CAC members establish rapport with family and residents and provide educational materials regarding primary concerns of long term care: facility selection, care plans and LTC activities.

3. Describe community involvement by the committee.

Members engage with the community through local church groups, Senior Center's and attending facility events throughout the year. Community involvement is an active piece in many facilities in Bertie County. Other activities include: participation with Senior Expo, Elder Abuse Awareness activities and participation with other community volunteer organizations.

4. Describe problems encountered by the committee.

Inability to retain CAC members making it difficult to complete facility visits.

Many residents at Family Care Homes are active participants in day programs and are not always available to be interviewed during visits.

5. Was the committee involved in grievance resolution during the year?

The Community Advisory Committee refers all grievances to the Regional LTC Ombudsman.

6. Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the facilities in the county.

Bertie County is able to offer facilities that meet the needs of the general population. The county continues to have a working knowledge of the role of the Ombudsman and CAC members as Resident Advocates.

There have been an increased number of residents with a primary diagnosis of mental illness in Family and Adult Care Homes. With this shift in population, continued education and training is required for staff when addressing inappropriate or aggressive behaviors. As well, many of the residents with this diagnosis have been able to successfully transition back into the community to live independently. This has left many facilities with an overall low patient census.

7. Other comments:

There are currently 11 Family Care Homes, 1 Adult Care Home and 2 Nursing Homes located within Bertie County.

The Bertie County Nursing Home/Adult Care Community Advisory Committee currently has 5 members. Marketing has increased to attract new members to join the Bertie County Community Advisory Committee.

**Areas of concern:**

- Clutter or items left in hallway unattended
- Activities scheduled not offered
- Medicine cart unlocked and unattended
- Odors
- Care Plan concerns
- Bathing schedule
- Increased noise level at night
- Call light not answered timely
- Food cold when delivered to residents in their rooms
- Improper discharge/transfer
- Access to personal funds

Prepared by: Tameka Riggsbee, Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Date prepared: October 7, 2014



**PERSONNEL HANDBOOK**

**&**

**STANDARD OPERATING**

**GUIDELINES 2014**

## **Personnel Handbook Authorization**

**This document contains rules, regulations, and guidelines as authorized by the Bertie County Board of County Commissioners, based on recommendation by the Bertie County Manager, pursuant to the authority of the County of Bertie Personnel Policy Manual, Article I; Section 7. While every attempt is made to avoid conflict between this Handbook, and the Bertie County Personnel Policy Manual, in the event a conflict between these two documents arises, the Bertie County Personnel Policy Manual will have authority and supersede this Handbook.**

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# **Section 1**

## **Organizational Information**

## **Welcome to our Organization**

On behalf of the Administrative team for Bertie County Emergency Services, the Bertie County Manager, the Bertie County Commissioners, and the rest of Bertie County's employees, we'd like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Bertie County Emergency Services! We are excited to have you as a part of our Department, and hope that you will enjoy your time with us.

While we are still a young Department, it is our goal to provide the highest level of care possible at all times to the citizens and visitors of Bertie County. Excellence in patient care, and conducting ourselves in a professional manner at all times are things that we hold each employee accountable for, whether an EMT or Department Head. There is no single thing we can control in the business of Emergency Services more than our attitude and clinical skill.

This Handbook was written with the goal of helping you succeed as a member of our team, and give you the tools to be productive. The rules, regulations, guidelines, and procedures found in this Handbook are intended to help guide your work performance, as well as provide a sense of protection for your rights as an employee within the Department.

This Handbook provides answers to many of the questions you may have about working here. This includes our responsibilities to you as a member of our Department, as well as your responsibilities to Bertie County Emergency Services as a staff member. If anything in this Handbook is unclear, please feel free to contact your Shift Captain or an appropriate member of the Administrative Team.

You are responsible for reading and understanding this Handbook, and your performance evaluations as well as when necessary, appropriate disciplinary action, may be a reflection of your adherence, or lack thereof, to the policies of Bertie County, including those outlined in this Handbook. You will be asked to sign an acknowledgement statement indicating your receipt of this Handbook. In addition to clarifying responsibilities, we hope this Handbook also gives you an indication of Bertie County Emergency Services' interest in your welfare.

While Bertie County Emergency Services follows the policies set forth in this Handbook, you should understand that this Handbook is not an expressed or implied "contract" or guarantee of continued employment. Administration has the right, except where prohibited by law, in its sole discretion, to change, modify, delete, or revise any policies, including this entire Handbook, at any time and for any reason with or without notice.

There are likely a number of factors that resulted in you choosing deciding to work for Bertie County Emergency Services. Whatever your individual reasons may be, we want you to understand that it is our goal as Administration, to assist you in meeting whatever personal and/or professional goals have brought you to work for Bertie County. We extend to you our sincerest appreciation for choosing Bertie County Emergency Services, and we wish you all the best during your time with us.

Once again, welcome to Bertie County Emergency Services!!

## **Introduction to this Handbook**

As a new staff member, you will be going through a period of adjustments at Bertie County Emergency Services. You may have questions about Bertie County Emergency Services, such as your day-to-day duties and what you can expect from us and what we can expect from you. This Handbook has been prepared as a guide to answer many questions. Each of the policies in this Handbook is important in providing the structure, rules, and guidance related to your employment with Bertie County Emergency Services. Please read it carefully and keep it handy to use as a reference tool.

If you cannot find an answer in the handbook, your Shift Captain will be your first source of information, but you are always free to contact Administration with specific questions as well regarding clarification of rules. Many of the policies included in this handbook reference other policies within our organization. Our entire Administrative team prides itself on an “open door policy,” and you are encouraged to approach any member of management with thoughts, problems, or other ideas for improving our organization. You should review and be familiar with all County and Department policies during your service here.

Bertie County Emergency Services may, from time-to-time, make deletions, changes, or additions to this handbook. When this occurs, you will receive updates as soon as possible.

## **Communication**

Open communication is essential to the overall success of the organization. We encourage open and positive communication between management and staff. In addition to periodic visits to the stations, we hold a staff meeting following each monthly continuing education session so that employees can hear, first-hand, information that is important to their work, as well as ask questions of Administration.

Experience has shown that concerns can very often be resolved by getting them out in the open as quickly as possible. You should communicate any problem situations or concerns you have directly to your Shift Captain. We encourage our Administrative team to be effective problem solvers. They should be able to answer most of your questions or resolve any issues or concerns that you raise in a prompt fashion, in most cases. If you are not satisfied with the resolution of your concern, or, if for some reason, you do not wish to discuss it with your Shift Captain directly, you may discuss the matter with any member of the Administrative team. If the problem is of a personal nature, feel free to voluntarily schedule an appointment with a member of management. We will make every effort to keep these discussions confidential if they involve sensitive issues.

## **Personnel File & Updating Personal Information**

It is important that Bertie County Emergency Services maintains complete and accurate personnel records for all employees. It is equally important to have certain information about all personnel on file. In order to keep these records up-to-date for operational, emergency and insurance purposes, it is essential that you notify the Department as soon as possible if there are any change to any of the following items:

- a. Legal name
- b. Home address
- c. Home and/or cellular, to include provider, telephone number.
- d. Person to contact in an emergency.
- e. Driving record of status of driver's license.
- f. Military status
- g. Certifications expiration dates

Since we refer to your personnel file when making decisions in connection with promotions, corrective counseling and other important events, it is to your benefit, and at times required of you, to be sure your personnel file includes all relevant information about you. Completion of educational or training courses and documentation of interest and skills that may not be part of your current position requirements may have an impact on future assignments or promotions. The personnel file will also retain work related information gathered about you during your employment, including both positive and negative occurrences.

Bertie County Emergency Services reserves the right to keep records related to investigation of possible criminal offenses, reference letters, documents prepared for criminal, civil, or grievance procedures, and materials used for other operations. This includes the results of criminal background checks, driving history, and medical examinations performed as part of employment. To the extent possible, these records will be kept confidential.

### **Non-Discrimination Commitment/Equal Employment Opportunity**

Bertie County Emergency Services follows a strict policy that we do not discriminate in providing services and care to the patients we serve, or in the terms and conditions of employment for our staff. We will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class. It is at all times, the intent of Bertie County Emergency Services to comply with State, as well as all federal discrimination and employment laws.

All personnel are encouraged to report to any member of management any incident in which he or she feels that there has been discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class, Please refer to the Bertie County Personnel Policy Manual for further

guidance on these matters.

### **Mission & Values Statement**

The mission of Bertie County Emergency Services is to provide the highest level of care and compassion to the citizens and visitors of Bertie County. This includes, but is not limited to the promotion, access, education, and provision of basic and advanced life- support treatment and transport in both a 911, and non-emergency transport setting, to definitive and/or specialized care facilities, with the utmost professionalism, with service based on equal availability to all persons.

**Bertie County Emergency Services adheres to the following values, abbreviated by the acronym, PACER:**

#### **Professionalism**

We treat everyone, regardless of condition, ability to pay, race, sex, ethnic origin, age, or any other difference, with the highest degree of professionalism. We do not pass judgment, belittle, or otherwise treat our patients with anything less than a positive, reassuring attitude.

#### **Accountability**

We are responsible for our actions, both positive and negative. As such, we expect every employee to take responsibility for their actions and practice honesty in all that they do and say.

#### **Compassion**

We treat persons with illness and injury in our community with care and compassion, utilizing principles and practices of patient care, and we strive for excellence through ongoing evaluation and improvement.

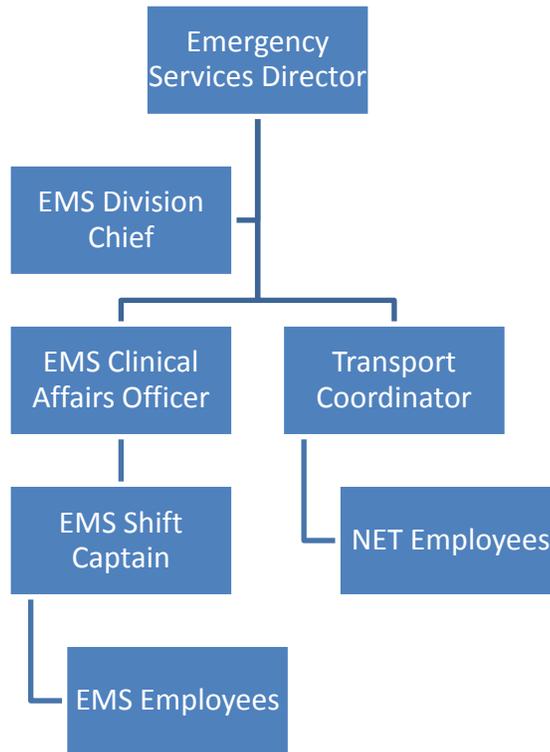
#### **Ethical**

We expect every employee to perform their duties in an ethical manner. This includes patient care, but also includes interactions with coworkers, management, other public safety members, and the public at large.

## Organizational Structure and Authority

All administrative and operational questions or complaints that may arise are to be handled through the chain of command. EMS officers may assume on scene command authority over EMS technicians at their discretion. It is the policy of Bertie County Emergency Services to adhere to the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and utilize proper Incident Command Procedures (ICS).

The Chain of Command is as follows:



## Compliance

Bertie County Emergency Services has a strong focus on compliance. We must comply with all applicable laws and regulations that govern the highly regulated EMS and medical transportation field. We strive to meet the expectations of the regulatory bodies and our patients and customers. While we expect and understand that mistakes will happen, we encourage you to self-report instances in which you feel compliance was not met on yours, or your partner's behalf. Honesty truly is the best policy, and while it can't always prevent consequences for mistakes, it is our goal to build successful clinicians here at Bertie County Emergency Services.

Bertie County Emergency Services may be required to report certain violations of law to appropriate oversight authorities. Be aware that inappropriate actions, not in compliance with the law, may subject you to discipline or corrective counseling.

Negligence in the performance of duties, whether actual or perceived, will not be tolerated and may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. If at any time you feel that we are not being fully compliant with the law of regulations, we encourage you to express your concerns to a member of the management team.

## **Professional Conduct Policy**

**Purpose:** To outline the conduct that is expected of Department members so as to project a positive and professional image.

**Policy:** As a member of a public safety agency, it is expected that its members are above reproach. How one conducts himself/herself both on and off duty may have a direct reflection on the service. Members are expected to conduct themselves appropriately at all times, and especially when representing the Department.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Professional Conduct**

Members are required to read, understand, and comply with all rules, regulations, policies and procedures of the Department and/or the County, and the written or verbal orders of a superior. It shall be considered to be neglect of duty to fail to inquire of a superior any questions as to the meaning or application of any law, rule, regulation, policy, or procedure, written or verbal order.

All Department members shall conform to the Bertie County Personnel Policy Manual, Emergency Services Personnel Handbook, as well as all applicable local, state, and Federal laws and regulations.

Members are required to obey and fully execute any lawful order, written or oral, given by a superior officer which shall include, but not be limited to, rules, regulations, policies, procedures of the Department and/or the County. The term "lawful order" shall be defined as any order in keeping with the performance of any duty prescribed by law or by the rules, regulations, policies, or procedures, or for the preservation of good order, efficiency, and proper discipline which is not in conflict with these rules, regulations, policies, or procedures.

Members shall refrain from public expressions or actions, including those made on social networking sites, concerning the Department and/or the County's policies and procedures that are:

- defamatory
- obscene
- unlawful, or
- which tend to subvert the good order, efficiency or discipline of the Department and/or the County, or any member thereof, or that are prejudicial to the efficiency and discipline of the Department and/or the County.

The wearing of an improper uniform, failure to carry all necessary equipment including

PPE, or failure to maintain one's uniform and/or equipment in good order as outlined in the Department's Handbook is prohibited.

Members are required to maintain mental and physical conditioning necessary to performed prescribed duties.

Insubordination shall be prohibited and shall include, but not be necessarily limited to, any failure or deliberate refusal to obey a lawful order given by a superior; any disrespectful, mutinous, insolent, or action toward a superior, whether in or out of the presence of the superior, lying or giving misleading statements to a superior, or failure to answer a direct question asked by a superior.

Neglect of duty is prohibited. There shall be no failure to give appropriate attention to the performance of duty. Examples include but are not limited to failure to take appropriate action; absence without leave; failure to report for duty at the time and place designated; unauthorized absence during one's duty; failure to perform duties or comply with any rule, regulation, policy, or procedure; failure to conform to Department and/or County policies and/or procedures.

Members are required to work diligently and with an image of professionalism. Examples of unprofessional conduct may include, but are not limited to:

- late for duty
- taking excessively long meal or refreshment breaks
- failure to respond promptly to a call when dispatched
- failure to clear promptly from a call
- lack of courtesy to an individual either on the telephone or in person
- gambling, fighting and/or quarreling
- scuffling and/or horse playing
- lying or intentionally providing misleading statements

Stealing, altering, forging, or tampering with any kind of official record or report is prohibited. The removal of any record, report, letter, document, or any other official files from the Department, except as directed by a superior, is prohibited. Additionally, the obtaining/duplicating of any information from Department files, sources or reports other than that which one is properly entitled to in accordance with one's duties is prohibited.

The Department of Emergency Services has a zero tolerance policy for substance abuse of any kind. Employees found to be violation of the Departmental and/or County policies regarding substance abuse, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Examples of violations of these standards include, but are not limited to:

- Using, purchasing, selling, possessing, distribution or accepting illegal drugs, or drug-related paraphernalia while on or off the job.
- Consuming, purchasing, selling, possessing, distributing or accepting alcohol while on the job.
- Reporting for duty or being on the job while under the influence of illegal drugs

or alcohol.

- Reporting for duty or remaining on duty any time there is quantifiable presence of a prohibited drug in the body, including prescription drugs, above the minimum threshold defined in 49CFR Part 40, as amended.
- Reporting for duty or remaining on the job while having an alcohol concentration greater than 0.00, regardless of when the alcohol was consumed.
- Transporting illegal drugs, or drug-related paraphernalia in a Department and/or County insured fleet vehicle.

Members are required to immediately report all damage to vehicles and equipment and file any required reports, which shall contain all known facts surrounding the cause and nature of the damage. In the event that Department and/or County property bears evidence of damage, which has not been reported, it shall be prima facie evidence that the last person using the property or vehicle was responsible.

Members shall return all equipment owned/issued by the Department and/or County when they retire, resign, transfer, or otherwise leave the Department, and shall return any equipment when ordered to do so because of suspension or other absence from work.

Allowing unauthorized persons to ride in Department vehicles is prohibited. Unauthorized persons are those who are not engaged in official, authorized business. Official visitors or guests of the Department and/or the County may be conveyed in vehicles, but must not respond with the vehicle in the event of an emergency call without the proper approval of Emergency Services Administration.

Unauthorized use of station, Department, or county-insured vehicles, property or equipment is prohibited.

Destroying or defacing any official written notice relating to Department business is prohibited. The posting or circulation of any notices of non-official, derogatory character relating to any person, group, or public safety activity is prohibited.

Withholding information concerning criminal activities, which are job-related, is prohibited.

Members are required to answer questions, respond to lawful orders, render material and relevant statements in a Department investigation when such orders, questions and statements are directly related to job responsibilities. Nothing in this section is intended to violate a member's federal and/or state constitutional rights.

Members are required to report another members' or their own violation of a law, rule, regulation, policy, or procedure. All such violations shall be reported, in writing, to a member of management.

Members are required to notify either the EMS Division Chief or the Emergency Services Director of any criminal convictions, criminal detainment, driving conviction,

and/or loss of driver's license.

Giving a deposition, affidavit, or appearing as a witness in a criminal or civil matter stemming from official duties as a member of the Department, without prior knowledge of the Department is prohibited.

Members may be required to furnish information as is consistent with their duties. To this end, a member shall furnish their name, certification level, and station affiliation in a respectful manner when requested.

Members are required to make available for inspection by a superior, any and all assigned equipment and/or gear.

Maintaining a residence in any station when not on duty is prohibited.

Members shall immediately report to management any accident, sickness, or injury occurring to them while on duty. Management shall be responsible for ensuring that the member receives medical care if required, and shall also ensure that all necessary paperwork is completed and forward to Human Resources for processing.

Members who handle employee files, records, and reports, are responsible for keeping such information within the confines of his/her professional jurisdiction. Personnel matters and information are to be discussed only with the individual(s) it concerns and the person(s) to whom the report is being made.

Members shall wear their County ID badge at all times while providing patient care or acting in any capacity as a member of the Department.

No member shall use, or attempt to use, his/her official position, ID badge, or credentials for personal gain. Where special privileges are extended to all members of a private organization, the use of Department identification is not considered a violation of this order.

While on duty, while acting as an official of the Department, or while in Departmental uniform, members shall not take part in any political management or in political campaigns other than to cast their vote and privately express their opinion. Members shall not, directly or indirectly, solicit or receive, or be in any manner concerned in soliciting or receiving, any assessment, subscription or contribution for any political party or political purpose, or for a testimonial for any official.

Members shall not, orally or in writing, solicit, or in any manner concerned in soliciting any assessment, subscription or contribution for any political party or purpose from any County employee or volunteer.

Members shall not address public gatherings, appear on radio or television, prepare articles for publication, act as correspondents to a newspaper or a periodical, or release

or divulge investigative information or any other matters of the Department while holding themselves out as representing the Department and/or County in such matters, without prior authorization.

Soliciting, making speeches, distributing, posting, copying, or displaying of campaign literature for or against any candidate to public office shall not be permitted in or on Department property, or using Department equipment and supplies.

# **Section II**

## **General Guidelines**

## **Alcohol and Substance Abuse & Testing**

**Purpose:** To follow state and federal laws consistent with our commitment to the well-being of our personnel and patients we serve by maintaining a safe work environment.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services will not tolerate personnel under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or those who use alcohol or illegal drugs (or misuse legal drugs) while on duty, while operating Department vehicles, or while representing Bertie County Emergency Services.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Definition of Terms**

- a. **Legal Drug:** A prescribed drug or over-the-counter drug that has been legally obtained and is being used for the purpose for which it was prescribed or manufactured.
  
- b. **Illegal Drug:** Any drug which cannot be legally obtained (e.g. marijuana, hallucinogens, etc.) or which, although legal:
  - 1. Has been illegally obtained or prescribed.
  
  - 2. Is not being used for its prescribed purposes.
  
  - 3. Is being used in larger doses than recommended.
  
- c. **Premises:** Used in its broadest sense, it includes all land (including leaseholds, easements, and other job sites), property, buildings and other structures, vehicles owned by, or leased to, Bertie County Emergency Services.
  
- d. **Reasonable Suspicion:** Aberrant or unusual behavior of personnel who exhibit any of the following:
  - 1. Symptoms that are commonly associated with intoxication or impairment caused by illegal drugs or alcohol.
  
  - 2. Behaving in a manner that is not reasonably explained as resulting from causes other than the use of controlled substances.

3. Observed using or in the possession of illegal drugs or alcohol. All such observations must be made by a supervisor or member of management, and must be documented in writing by the observer(s).

## **II. Prohibited Acts**

- a. The use or possession of alcohol or illegal drugs on the premises, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while performing Bertie County Emergency Services duties or representing Bertie County Emergency Services, is prohibited at all times.
- b. Personnel should be aware that the use of some prescriptions or over-the-counter drugs might also affect their ability to properly perform their job duties. Therefore, you have the responsibility to report such use of legal drugs that may have side-effects to your supervisor when you are aware of potentially adverse effects on performance or in the safe operation of Department equipment.
- c. You may continue to work even though you may be taking a legal drug (such as over the counter cold medications), as long as such use does not pose a threat to your safety or the safety of other personnel or patients and you can safely perform the duties of your position.

Depending upon the severity of the situation, personnel who violate this Policy may be offered the opportunity for appropriate treatment and rehabilitation through any Employee Assistance Program (EAP), which may be available through health insurance coverage or an appropriate treatment source of the staff member's choice. Referral for assistance does not preclude corrective discipline for violation of rules or Policies. Personnel failing or refusing appropriate treatment or testing shall be subject to corrective discipline up to and including termination. Failure to successfully complete the program or intentional violations of the program will result in termination of employment.

## **III. Drug Testing**

- a. This Policy, regulating the use, possession, and testing for presence of alcohol and drugs shall be administered fairly and consistently to all personnel.
- b. Pre-employment screening shall be performed (pending vendor approval).

Additionally:

1. All applicants will be requested to sign an authorization and release agreeing to submit to a drug screen. Applicants who refuse to sign the authorization or to submit to the drug screen will not be

considered for employment.

2. An applicant who fails the drug screening test will be advised to consult with a physician or a counseling center. A new application may be submitted for employment ninety (90) days from the date of the last conditional offer of employment if the applicant provides medical evidence that a physician has found no sign of alcohol or drug abuse or that the applicant had undergone prescribed treatment.

c. Routine testing of personnel may occur.

1. Personnel may be required to submit to drug testing under the following circumstances:
  - A. Where state or federal regulations require such testing.
  - B. Where Bertie County Emergency Services has reasonable suspicion of on-the-job impairment or intoxication in accordance with this Policy.
  - C. Where a staff member has been referred to treatment for alcohol and/or drug abuse, in which event the personnel shall be subject to random testing for one (1) year after he or she has returned to work. Personnel will also be required to furnish Bertie County Emergency Services with a copy of the treatment facility's prescribed after care program and proper verification of the staff member's compliance with the aftercare program or revisions thereto.
  - D. Anytime following a motor vehicle accident, however minor, in which the employee was the operator of the vehicle. The employee will be placed on administrative leave, with pay, pending the outcome of the testing.

2. Personnel required to submit to drug testing shall be informed of the reason for such testing. In the case of "reasonable suspicion" testing, personnel shall be given a copy of the written order from the management team member involved, including documentation of the specific objective facts constituting "reasonable suspicion" in accordance with this policy. The

staff member will be requested to sign an acknowledgment that testing has been requested and that he or she consents to such testing.

3. Personnel who refuse to sign a requested testing agreement or who refuse to submit to testing after signing the agreement shall be immediately suspended, and an investigation shall occur to determine whether the refusal was reasonable. If the refusal is found to be unreasonable, it will be treated as an intentional violation of this Policy, and may lead to discipline, up to and including termination.
  4. Testing procedures shall conform to accepted practices, and Bertie County Emergency Services may utilize an outside or contracted person or organization for this purpose.
- d. Test results shall be communicated to Bertie County Emergency Services Administration as soon as possible upon receipt of the results from the testing facility. Further:
1. Copies of all documents including test results, computer printouts, graphs, interpretations and chain of custody forms may be given, at the discretion of management, to personnel upon request.
  2. Any staff member who, as a result of testing is found to have alcohol or illegal drugs in his or her system will be considered in violation of this policy.
  3. All records and information obtained by Bertie County Emergency Services regarding drug testing, requests for testing, the test results, and treatment of personnel for chemical dependency will be confidentially maintained by Bertie County Emergency Services as fully as possible, and will be used in accordance with the law. Test results may need to be shared with designated management personnel, or others on a “need to know” basis.

## **Background Checks**

**Purpose:** To follow state and federal laws, and to ensure the highest degree of safety for our personnel and patients by adequately screening the background of our personnel.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services shall perform all necessary background checks, including criminal history, child or elder abuse history, driving record, and other required background checks prior to any service performed by a potential employee. Each employee must satisfactorily complete the background check process prior to performing any services.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Criminal History Record Background Checks**

- a. Each applicant must provide necessary information required for the necessary regional state or federal criminal background check form.
- b. Bertie County Emergency Services will perform the background check, following signed acknowledge from the applicant, releasing permission for the County to run the background check. The applicant will ordinarily not be permitted to perform services until the results of the background check are received.
  1. If a criminal history record check indicates that a potential employee has been convicted (including a plea of “no contest”) of any crime that is relevant when considering employment he or she may not be eligible for employment. Additionally, any employee who is later convicted of a crime may be subject to immediate termination of employment. (Convictions for offenses will not necessarily preclude employment, but will be considered in making employment decisions based on the relevance of the conviction to the work performed).
  2. If the criminal background check returns with no record of conviction, the applicant may be permitted to perform services and may be hired.
  3. If the criminal background check returns with a record of a conviction that is relevant to preclude employment, the applicant will receive notice that he or she is precluded from employment because of the results of the criminal background check.
- c. Any applicant who does not cooperate with the criminal history records check process will not be considered for employment.

- d. In addition to cooperating with the background check, each applicant is expected to disclose, as part of their application, a list of all criminal convictions. Convictions will be considered based on factors that relate to suitability for employment in the position applied for, including the type and severity of the crime, and when the conviction occurred.
- e. Bertie County Emergency Services may periodically request that additional criminal background checks occur throughout employment. Full cooperation with such periodic checks is expected, and failure to cooperate will result in discipline.
- f. All personnel have an ongoing obligation to disclose to Bertie County Emergency Services any convictions during their employment. Personnel who fail to make such a disclosure will be subject to appropriate discipline.

**b) Driving Record Background Check for All Personnel Whose Participation Involves the Operation of a Motor Vehicle**

- a. Individuals with a poor driving record may not be permitted to operate Department vehicles, and will not be considered for employment. Each applicant is required to submit necessary information to Bertie County Emergency Services to enable the County to obtain a copy of the driving record. Any applicant who does not cooperate with the driver record check process will not be considered for employment.
- b. At all times during employment, personnel must meet the following criteria while operating Department vehicles:
  1. They must have a valid North Carolina driver's license.
  2. They must observe all traffic laws.
  3. They must not be addicted to, or under the influence of, alcohol or drugs.
  4. They must be free from physical or mental impairments that may adversely affect the person's ability to drive and pose a danger to self or others, if those impairments cannot be reasonably accommodated.
  5. If operating Department emergency vehicles, they must have successfully completed an Emergency Vehicle Operator's Course ("EVOC") of instruction.
- c. Any changes in a personnel driving record (such as conviction for speeding, or any conviction for a moving traffic violation) must be reported to a supervisor immediately. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## Cellular Phone Use

**Purpose:** To prevent distractions in the workplace and help ensure the safety of all personnel and the patients we serve.

**Policy:** Personal cell phones should not be used during any patient encounter, unless approved by Bertie County Emergency Services Administration

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Personal Cellular Telephones**

- a. Personal cellular telephones are permitted to be carried to all outlying stations, as well as on an employee's person.
- b. At no time is a personal cell phone to be used to answer or make a telephone call, send/receive texts or emails, interact on social networking sites, etc. from the time in which a unit is dispatched to a call, until the time that the call is completed and the truck is ready to return to its next call.

#### **II. Department-Issued Cellular Phones**

**Cellular phones are issued by the Department to conduct business related to provision of emergency medical services in the most effective and efficient manner. Due to the nature of our business Departmental personnel who are assigned cellular phones are directed to carry and have them active at all times, with the phone in an audio on position. These phones serve as an emergency contact and communication device for immediate contact with personnel on and off duty.**

- a. Department-issued cellular phones or PDAs shall be used for including, but not limited to, making contact with dispatch, administration, other units, or a receiving hospital. Personal phone calls are not permitted via Department-issued cell phones, except in emergency circumstances as approved by Administration. Personal calls that cause the monthly cellular charge to exceed the customary fee will be the responsibility of the individual making the call(s) to reimburse the County for the overage charges. The Department will review the cellular phone statements monthly to assure compliance, and will notify and collect from individuals any reimbursements necessary.
- b. Personnel should not use a cellular telephone or PDA while driving. If cellular communication is necessary, the passenger should handle the telephone. If there is no other personnel available (i.e. QRV), phone use should be limited to essential communication only, and use of a hands-free device (i.e. Bluetooth) should be used whenever possible to limit distractions.

## Computer, Internet & E-Mail Use

**Purpose:** To maintain a respectable and ethical work environment as well as ensure the proper use of all electronic equipment.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services permits the proper use of computers, Internet and electronic mail in accordance with these guidelines to ensure appropriate communications and to protect the integrity and security of our information system.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Background**

- a. Bertie County Emergency Services provides all employees access to the World Wide Web and encourages the use of this powerful tool for work-related research and fast retrieval of up-to-date information on a wide variety of subjects relevant to our Department's mission.
- b. The Internet is a vast, chaotic, unregulated, unorganized, confusing, and potentially dangerous place. To ensure that Internet access is used to enhance Departmental objectives and to provide a measure of control and structure as to its use, Bertie County Emergency applies the following guidelines to Internet access.

#### **II. Permitted Uses of the Internet**

- a. Internet access is a resource involving the use of Bertie County Emergency Services assets. In order to maintain network access and reduce equipment damage to the system, employees are not permitted to use County-issued computers and equipment to routinely access the internet. Each station maintains a wireless internet modem, which allows for connection of personal computers, phones, tablets, etc. to the network, without risk to the County system; however prohibited uses of the internet apply even to personal computer use while on duty.

#### **III. Prohibited Uses of the Internet**

- a. The following uses of the Internet are prohibited:
  1. Viewing and accessing sexually explicit or offensive materials, or which may be offensive, hostile or harassing with respect to anyone's race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class.
  2. Use of the Internet for unlawful purposes such as:
    - A. Downloading or copying information (e.g., sounds, images, documents, etc.) or programs in violation of copyright and

- software licensing laws.
- B. Using the Internet for unauthorized access to other computer systems.
- C. Using the Internet to distribute or receive destructive programs (i.e., viruses and/or self-replicating code), etc.
3. Use of the Internet for personal commercial or profit-generating activities or for personal advertisements, solicitations, promotions, political material, or any other similar purposes.
4. The downloading of programs and other executable files (without prior permission from the management), since typical work related Internet research and use should not require the download of any additional programs. Downloading programs without authorization is prohibited.
5. Other specific violations include, but are not limited to:
- Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, or threatening messages or images.
  - Accessing any web sites that are pornographic in nature, including any “adult sites.”
  - Using the organization’s time and resources for personal use or pleasure without prior authorization.
  - Stealing, using, or disclosing someone else’s code or password without authorization.
  - Copying, pirating, or downloading software and electronic files without permission.
  - Sending or posting confidential material, including information about internal Bertie County Emergency Services matters.
  - Violating copyright law.
  - Failing to observe licensing agreements.
  - Engaging in unauthorized transactions that may incur a cost to the organization or initiate unwanted Internet services and transmissions.
  - Sending or posting messages or material that could damage Bertie County Emergency Service’s image or reputation.
  - Participating in the viewing or exchange of pornography or obscene materials.
  - Sending or posting messages that defame or slander other individuals.
  - Attempting to break into the computer system of another organization or person.
  - Refusing to cooperate with a security investigation.
  - Sending or posting chain letters, solicitations, or advertisements not related to Bertie County Emergency Services purposes or activities.

- Jeopardizing the security of the Bertie County Emergency Service's electronic communications system.
- Sending or posting messages that disparage another organization's products or services, including other EMS Providers.
- Passing off personal views as representing those of the organization.
- Sending anonymous e-mail messages.
- Engaging in any other illegal activities or assisting others to engage in such activity via the computer equipment, electronic mail or the Internet.
- Sending offensive or sexually explicit messages, or viewing websites with sexually explicit, pornographic, or offensive materials.

#### **IV. E-Mail Use**

- a. E-mail is not a private communication system that may be used freely and is subject to monitoring by Administration to ensure compliance to applicial polices and guidelines. Personnel shall not use e-mail to send personal information or discuss private matters about anyone, including themselves.
  1. Except as may be specifically permitted under our organization's privacy policies, patient information should not be discussed over e-mail.
  2. Any defamatory, insulting, derogatory or sexually offensive remark about any person or group of persons utilizing electronic or other communication is prohibited.
  3. Any member or employee who violates this requirement may be subject to disciplinary action.
  4. Improper use of e-mail may also expose personnel to criminal charges separate and apart from disciplinary action.
- b. E-Mail use is reserved primarily for business purposes.

#### **V. Access and Security**

- a. Under no circumstances should personnel be logged in under someone else's user name or use any computer on which they have not logged in under their own name.

1. When a member or an employee uses a machine not assigned to him or her, he or she should, out of courtesy, ask the permission of the employee who is assigned to that particular machine.
  2. For security purposes, personnel should log out of the computer system when they will be away from their desk for a prolonged period of time or use an automatic screensaver password to prohibit others from utilizing an unauthorized machine.
- b. Accessing Internet sites may identify to third parties both the user's name and the Bertie County Emergency Services' name. Appropriate caution must be exercised in accessing sites.
1. Disclosing privileged and/or confidential information and offering opinions or advice over the Internet must not occur.
  2. Many Websites have software, which can identify the user accessing the site. When accessing sites, be aware that such access may be tagged or identified with an identifying name and the Bertie County Emergency Services name.
  3. The intentional access and use of Internet sites in a manner that could compromise Bertie County Emergency Services in any manner is prohibited.
- c. Bertie County Emergency Services has the ability to monitor Internet access (all messages sent, sites accessed, and information downloaded). All such information is the property of Bertie County Emergency Services. Bertie County Emergency Services reserves the right to review and disclose such records or information with or without prior notice. Computer hard drives will contain a history of sites recently visited and information (such as text and graphics) from those sites.

## Social Media/Networking Policy

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to outline expectations of members of the Department of Emergency Services with respect to their use of social media and social networking, and to make employees aware of the direct and indirect effects such use may have upon the public perception, reputation, confidence, and effective functioning of Bertie County Emergency Services, and Bertie County.

**Policy:** This policy is designed to preserve the employee's right to engage in social networking and sharing of information through various on-line media forums, while maintaining compliance with Bertie County Emergency Services' policies, standards of conduct and patient privacy rules. The purpose of these guidelines is to help employees understand how Bertie County Emergency Services' policies apply to these newer technologies for communication, so they can participate with confidence in blogs and other social media platforms.

### **Procedures:**

#### **I. Definition:**

- A. **Social media** means the online sites and tools that people use to share content, profiles, opinions, insights, experiences, perspectives, and media itself, thus facilitating conversations and interaction between groups of people. Examples of these tools include, but are not limited to, blogs, message boards, podcasts, micro blogs, livestreams, bookmarks, networks, communities, wikis, and vlogs. Commonly known social media sites include, but are not limited to, Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Google Circles, Twitter, and many others.
- B. **Authorized "down time"** for the purposes of this policy means that time during the work day when a member of the Department is not assigned to a request for service, any administrative duty, when the vehicle is at a station or authorized post, and when all required station, vehicle, education, and response-related duties have been completed.
- C. **Detrimental to the Department** means any activity that impairs working relationships within the Department for which loyalty and confidentiality are important; which impede the performance of duties; which impairs discipline and harmony amongst co-workers; which negatively impacts the relationship between the Department and other emergency response, public safety, or health care organizations or personnel; or which may negatively impact the public perception of or confidence in the Department.
- D. **Member** means any employee, regardless of job status or classification, uniformed or non-uniformed; volunteers, contractors; and those otherwise formally associated with the Department.

## II. Guidelines

- A. Department members shall not use any form of social media, as defined in this policy, in any way that may tarnish the Department's reputation, cause conflict within the EMS system (including 911/emergency dispatch, partner response agencies, other health care providers and organizations that interact with pre-hospital care providers), or otherwise harm the public perception, reputation, confidence, and effective functioning of the Department of Emergency Medical Services, and the Bertie County EMS System.
- B. While the Department encourages its employees to enjoy and make productive use of their personal time, certain activities on the part of employees may become a concern if they have the effect of impairing the work of any employee, harassing, demeaning, or creating a hostile working environment for any employee, disrupting the smooth and orderly flow of work within the organization, harming the goodwill and reputation of the County among its citizens, or eroding public confidence in the Emergency Services Department or EMS System.
- C. In the area of social media (print, broadcast, digital, blogs, personal websites, and online services such as Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace, Plaxo, Twitter, news media comment boards, and others), employees may use such media in any way they choose, as long as such use does not produce the adverse consequences noted above for the County and/or the Department. For this reason, the Department reminds its employees that the following guidelines apply both while on duty, as well as in their use of social media on their own personal time and personal computer resources.
- D. If an employee publishes any personal information about themselves, another employee, the Department, the County, another EMS System member or agency, a citizen, or a customer in any public medium (print, broadcast, digital, or online) that:
  1. Has the potential or effect of involving the employee, their coworkers, or the County in any kind of dispute or conflict with other employees or third parties;
  2. Interferes with the work of any employee;
  3. Creates a harassing, demeaning, or hostile working environment for any employee;
  4. Disrupts the smooth and orderly flow of work, or the delivery of services to the County's citizens, harms the goodwill and reputation of the County among its citizens or the community at large,
  5. Erodes the public's confidence in the County or the Department, or tends to place in doubt the reliability, trustworthiness, or sound judgment of the person who is the originator or subject of the information;
  6. Is perceived as defamatory, obscene, or unlawful ; disrespectful, mutinous, or insolent towards a superior.
  7. Sharing Protected Health Information (PHI). PHI includes, but is not limited to the patient's name, address, age, race, extent or nature of illness or injury, hospital destination, and crew member names.

- 8. Posting photos, videos, or images of any kind which could potentially identify patients, addresses, vehicle license plate numbers, or any other PHI.
  - 9. Sharing confidential or proprietary information about Bertie County Emergency Services.
  - 10. Endorsement of commercial products, services, or entities.
- E. Employees should be aware that others, including peers and other employees, may be actively reading what is published online. In choosing words and content, it's a good practice for employees to consider that their superiors and family members may read everything they post, and therefore, employees should exercise judgment before posting. Using a Weblog to bash or embarrass Bertie County Emergency Services, our stakeholders, co-responders, or co-workers or supervisors is inconsistent with Bertie County Emergency Services' Mission.
  - F. Bertie County Emergency Services, as well as Bertie County Human Resources, reserves the right to monitor employees' off-duty activity with regard to social networking or blogging and apply appropriate disciplinary action should it be determined that an employee's conduct is inconsistent with our policies.
  - G. Any employee(s) responsible for violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, depending on the severity and nature of the offense.
  - H. Speech of any form may constitute the basis for discipline if deemed detrimental to the Department and/or the County.

### **III. Posting Online Comments on Third-Party Sites (response to news articles, posts on other people's sites, or blogs)**

- A. Employees should consult with Bertie County Emergency Services' Administration prior to engaging in communication related to Bertie County Emergency Services' issues or activities through blogs or comment sections of materials posted on the Internet.
- B. If employees communicate in the public Internet about Bertie County Emergency Services or Bertie County Emergency Services-related matters, they should disclose their connection with Bertie County Emergency Services and their role within the Department. Employees should use good judgment and strive for accuracy in their communications; errors and omissions reflect poorly on the Department and may result in liability for the employee, the Department and/or Bertie County.
- C. Employees should be respectful and professional to fellow employees, community partners, co-responder, and patients and avoid using unprofessional online personas.

#### **IV. Personal Blogs or Other Social Networking Content**

- A. Employees should ensure that their blogging and social networking activity does not interfere with work commitments.
- B. Where a connection to Bertie County Emergency Services is apparent, employees should make it clear that they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of Bertie County Emergency Services. In these circumstances, the following disclaimer is recommended: "The views expressed on this [blog; website] are my own and do not reflect the views of my employer." Furthermore, employees should consider adding this language in an "About me" section of their blog or social networking profile. This disclaimer does not by itself exempt employees from a responsibility or liability when blogging; employees should remember that their online behavior should still reflect and be consistent with Bertie County Emergency Services' established standards of conduct.
- C. Employees should always ask Administration if they have any questions about what is appropriate to include in their personal blog or social networking profile. Again, employees should remember that if they wouldn't want their superiors or others at Bertie County Emergency Services to see their comments, it is probably unwise to post them.

#### **V. Bertie County Emergency Services Sponsored Sites or Content**

As Bertie County Emergency Services engages in official conversations on the internet, the following code of ethics applies, both in Bertie County Emergency Services sponsored sites and in official comments on other sites.

- A. Bertie County Emergency Services blog posts and comments will be accurate and factual.
- B. Bertie County Emergency Services will acknowledge and correct mistakes promptly.
- C. When corrections are made, Bertie County Emergency Services will preserve the original post, showing by strikethrough what corrections have been made, to maintain integrity.
- D. Bertie County Emergency Services will delete spam and/or comments that are off-topic.
- E. Bertie County Emergency Services will reply to emails and comments when appropriate.
- F. Bertie County Emergency Services will link directly to online references and original source materials.
- G. Bertie County Emergency Services may choose to utilize various social networking tools to communicate and engage the public and workforce. Those tools (Facebook, YouTube videos, Twitter, etc.) shall be used in support of Bertie County Emergency Services' business objectives and must be approved and coordinated through Administration. Members may be asked to

participate in development and/or maintenance of such tools, in coordination with Administration.

- H. Use of external web sites for work-related purposes (photo sharing or video posting) must be first approved by Administration.

## **Conflict Resolution & Problem Solving**

**Purpose:** To provide for an effective working relationship between staff members and to have a mechanism in place to resolve problems as they occur.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services will handle and resolve misunderstandings, conflicts, and complaints that may arise in a systematic and non-discriminatory manner to ensure appropriate resolution.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Conflict Resolution.**

- a. When a complaint or conflict is apparent, personnel should first discuss the situation with a member of management, preferably immediately following the event or incident.
- b. Complaints received by any personnel coming from non-personnel (e.g. patients, family members, vendors, and business partners, regarding incidents of quality care and poor relations) shall be forwarded to Administration as soon as possible.
- c. The nature of the problem or complaint will be documented by the supervisor.
- d. The supervisor will conduct an investigation of the problem.
- e. In cases where the problem relates to compliance, HIPAA, or raises a question of federal or state law, appropriate management persons shall be notified.

#### **II. Scope.**

- a. Personnel are encouraged to present good faith concerns of any nature to their Shift Captain or Administration. Such concerns may pertain to any work-related subject, including the following:
  1. Scheduling conflicts.
  2. Alleged harassment.
  3. Perceived Policy violations.
  4. Perceived HIPAA or other compliance issues.
  5. Benefit or pay issues.
  6. Personal conflicts among co-workers (e.g. incompatibility, or inability to work together).

7. Disciplinary actions.
8. Any perceived violation of the law, or any perceived unethical conduct.

### **III. Investigation Procedure.**

- a. Management engaged in an investigation of any complaint will gather all appropriate information, and interview all persons involved, or believed to be involved.
- b. Personnel interviewed by management regarding a concern, complaint, suggestion, or conflict are expected to fully cooperate and offer information in a truthful manner.
- c. All attempts will be made to resolve problems in a quick and fair manner. Presenting conflicts, complaints, and suggestions is a useful mechanism to improve working conditions.
- d. Personnel offering complaints, conflicts and problems in good faith will not face retribution or retaliation.

## **Firearms, Weapons & Explosives**

**Purpose:** To maintain a safe working environment by prohibiting dangerous weapons and devices in the workplace.

**Policy:** Personnel are prohibited from carrying firearms, weapons, explosives or other dangerous devices while on duty, or bringing such items to the workplace.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Definitions.**

- a. For purposes of this Policy, “weapons” include both offensive and defensive weapons, including but not limited to, pepper spray/mace, firearms and explosives including fireworks, TASER/stun gun, black jack, or any night stick or billy club.

#### **II. Standards.**

- a. This Policy does not apply to law enforcement officers who are serving in an authorized law enforcement capacity.
- b. This Policy does not apply to legitimate Bertie County Emergency Services equipment and supplies that may have dangerous potential (e.g. rescue knives, needles), or may have explosive tendencies (e.g. compressed gasses).
- c. All weapons are prohibited from being on Bertie County Emergency Services property, including lockers, personal backpacks or other carrying cases while on Department property, and in Department vehicles. This also includes that no employee is to possess a firearm, weapon, or explosive in their personal vehicle while on Department property, or property granted for use by the Department by another municipality, agency, or department.
- d. If you have any question or concern about what may constitute a prohibited weapon under this Policy, you should immediately consult your supervisor.

## **General Compliance Policy**

**Purpose:** To remain in compliance with all federal, state, and local rules, laws, and ordinances that relate to the provision of ambulance services.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services expects all personnel to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that is compliant with all laws related to reimbursement, confidentiality, and other areas.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. General Standards of Care.**

- a. Conduct that is dangerous to others, dishonest, immoral, illegal or abusive will not be tolerated. Violation of these standards of conduct will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- b. Notwithstanding the “Progressive Discipline” Policy, Bertie County Emergency Services reserves the right to dismiss any employee or member without warning, progressive discipline, or notice, if we determine that continued employment is not in the best interests of Bertie County Emergency Services, other employees, or the people we serve. In other words, at all times, employment and membership is “at will.”
- c. Bertie County Emergency Services reserves the right to suspend an employee (with or without pay) as it deems appropriate, as part of its investigation of a staff member’s conduct. Bertie County Emergency Services reserves the right to take any action, which differs from the progressive disciplinary steps, outlined in this Handbook, including suspension and termination from employment as a first step.

#### **II. Legal Compliance.**

- a. Bertie County Emergency Services expects its personnel to refrain from conduct that may violate the federal fraud and abuse laws (i.e. Anti-Kickback Statute; False Claims Act). These laws prohibit:
  1. Direct, indirect, or disguised payments in exchange for the referral of patients.
  2. The submission of false, fraudulent, or misleading claims to any government entity or third party payer, including claims for services not rendered, claims which characterize the service differently than the service actually rendered, or claims which do not otherwise comply with

applicable program or contractual requirements.

3. Making false representations to any person or entity in order to gain or retain participation in a program or to obtain payment for any service.
  4. Submitting false claims to the government by seeking payment by:
    - A. Up-coding (increasing the level of service actually rendered).
    - B. Fabricating transports (billing for transports that did not occur).
    - C. Falsifying claim information (adding false information to demonstrate medical necessity when the original documentation fails to support medical necessity).
- b. All personnel must comply with applicable antitrust and similar laws that regulate competition. Examples of conduct prohibited by these laws include:
1. Agreements to fix prices, bid rigging, collusion (including price sharing) with competitors.
  2. Boycotts or certain exclusive dealing and price discrimination agreements.
  3. Unfair trade practices including bribery, misappropriation of trade secrets, deception, intimidation, and similar unfair practices. Personnel are expected to seek advice from Bertie County Attorney when confronted with business decisions involving a risk of violation of the antitrust laws.
- c. All personnel shall treat all other personnel, patients, family members, vendors, and business partners fairly and equitably. In accordance with the non-discrimination commitment, Bertie County Emergency Services will treat patients without regard to the race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class.
- d. All personnel shall be recruited, hired, trained, promoted, assigned, transferred, laid off, recalled and terminated based on ability, achievement, experience and conduct without regard to race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class.
- e. Personnel shall act in accordance with the “Sexual and Other Harassment” Policy, and any form of harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class will not be tolerated. Each allegation of harassment or discrimination will be promptly investigated in accordance with applicable Policies.

## **VI. Personal Conduct.**

- a. All personnel shall conduct themselves professionally at all times, with respect for fellow personnel and the public.
  1. Inappropriate conduct, including intimate, sexual, affectionate, or other behavior between individual employees, or outside persons (as defined in the “Sexual and other Harassment” Policy) while on Bertie County Emergency Services premises or while engaged in Bertie County Emergency Services activities is prohibited.
  2. Such inappropriate conduct seriously undermines our ability to function and to maintain a cordial and professional atmosphere.
  3. If the personal conduct or relationships between personnel causes others to feel uncomfortable or make it difficult for them to function, then the conduct creates a particularly difficult situation for morale, discipline, and the ability to work together as a team. This type of behavior cannot be tolerated.
- b. All policies within this Handbook that relate to personnel conduct shall be followed, including standards contained within this Policy.
- c. The following conduct shall not be tolerated. This list is not all inclusive and simply provides examples of prohibited conduct, each of which may be grounds for discipline:
  1. Calling someone a derogatory name.
  2. Excessive use of profanity.
  3. Display of sexually explicit literature, photographs, movies, videotapes or computer images.
  4. Use of pornographic material (such as magazines) or use of pornographic devices or paraphernalia on Bertie County Emergency Services premises or its vehicles.
  5. Internet access and viewing of sexually explicit web sites.
  6. Sending sexually explicit or offensive e-mail messages, notes or letters.
  7. Watching sexually explicit or offensive television programs or videotapes while on Bertie County Emergency Services premises.
  8. Unwelcome physical contact with another person, or purposely detaining or restricting another person’s movement.

9. Exhibiting inappropriate outward personal affection of a sexual nature toward another employee, or outside person.
10. Telling jokes or stories that are based on race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class.
11. Posting sexually explicit or otherwise offensive material on bulletin boards or walls.
12. Violation of the non-discrimination commitment and the “Sexual and Other Harassment” Policy.
13. Wearing inappropriate clothing that is sexually provocative or distracting to others so as to interfere with their ability to function.
14. Tampering with another person’s time record, work papers, or personal belongings and/or in any way falsifying personnel records (including time cards, job application or other work records).
15. Falsifying patient records.
16. Removing or discarding records, material, or other property from the premises without permission.
17. Any other type of theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property.
18. Having intimate personal relations with other employees or any outside person while on Bertie County Emergency Services premises, in its vehicles, or while engaged in its activities.
19. Fighting with or threatening others.
20. Defacing another person’s personal effects.
21. Gambling on Bertie County Emergency Services property, in its vehicles or at its functions.
22. Possession of weapons on Bertie County Emergency Services property or in its vehicles (except for approved work knives, or other exception as outlined in the “Firearms, Weapons and Explosives” Policy).
23. Abuse, unprofessional behavior, insubordination, or disrespect to patients, family members, or other employees, or supervisors.

24. Accepting tips or gratuities from patients, family members of patients, or gifts of significant value.
25. Solicitation or distribution in violation of the no solicitation and distribution rules.
26. Unauthorized or careless use or, malicious destruction or damage of property, tools or vehicles.
27. Unlawful or unauthorized release of confidential patient or proprietary information.
28. Unlawful or unauthorized manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, sale, transfer or use, of any controlled substance or alcohol on Bertie County Emergency Services property or while performing Bertie County Emergency Services duties.
29. Reporting to work or working under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or a legal drug that adversely affects safety or job performance.
30. Poor or unsatisfactory work performance or conduct.
31. Disorderly conduct or boisterous or disruptive activity such as but not limited to horseplay in the workplace.
32. Violation of established safety rules (including smoking rules).
33. Unreported or excessive absenteeism or tardiness.
34. Gossip about fellow employees or management.
35. Failure to report a workplace accident or damage to Bertie County Emergency Services property.
36. Refusal to accept a job assignment.
37. Creating unsafe or unsanitary conditions.
38. Use of computer equipment for personal use without permission.
39. Any other unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other Bertie County Emergency Services-owned equipment.
40. Violation of personnel policies.

- d. Personnel should exercise care to ensure that intellectual property rights, including patents, trademarks, copyrights, and software are carefully maintained and managed to preserve and protect its value.
  
- e. Salary, benefits, and other personal information relating to personnel shall be treated as confidential. Personnel Files, payroll information, disciplinary matters, and similar information shall be maintained in a manner designed to ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws. Personnel will exercise due care to prevent the release or sharing of information beyond those persons who may need such information to fulfill their job/position.

**VII. Monitoring Compliance.**

- a. Bertie County Emergency Services shall monitor itself and all of its personnel to ensure compliance with the applicable state and federal statutes and regulations, including filing reports of improper conduct, where applicable.

## **Illness in the Workplace**

**Purpose:** To comply with state and federal laws regarding absences and ability to work involving illness of a staff member.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services will permit personnel with certain illness and/or disease to continue to work, so long as their condition does not affect patient care and they can continue to perform the essential functions of the job, with or without reasonable accommodation.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards.**

- a. Personnel with life threatening illnesses, such as cancer, heart disease, and AIDS, often wish to continue their normal pursuits, including work, to the extent allowed by their condition.
- b. Bertie County Emergency Services supports these endeavors as long as personnel are able to meet acceptable performance standards, and not affect patient care or jeopardize the well-being of fellow personnel.
- c. As in the case with any disabilities, Bertie County Emergency Services will make reasonable accommodations in accordance with all legal requirements, to allow qualified personnel with life threatening illnesses to continue to perform their jobs.
- d. Bertie County Emergency Services will take reasonable precautions to protect confidential medical information received by personnel concerning their health condition from inappropriate disclosure and/or access. Managers and supervisors have a responsibility to respect and maintain the confidentiality of employee medical information. But it may also be necessary to have the ability to review the information to the extent reasonable accommodations may be made to properly deal with returning to work issues, or to determine if continued service is possible.

#### **II. Inapplicability.**

- a. This Policy is not intended to apply to personnel with temporary or minor contagious or communicable diseases (e.g. flu, cold). Persons with such types of infectious disease that could easily spread to other personnel or patients should refrain from working until their condition improves.
- b. This Policy is also not intended to cover any illness that is contagious to the extent that patient care or the well-being of other personnel may be jeopardized.

## **Inclement Weather**

**Purpose:** To ensure adequate emergency response 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, regardless of weather conditions.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services requires all personnel to report for their scheduled shift no matter what the weather conditions.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards.**

- a. As a public safety service organization, Bertie County Emergency Services is committed to providing continuous and quality service to our community at all times.
- b. Unfortunately, weather conditions (snow or ice) or natural disasters (earthquake or hurricane) can make the commute to work difficult and time consuming.
- c. Unless otherwise notified, all personnel are expected to report to work regardless of the weather conditions, and Bertie County Emergency Services will attempt to operate under our normal work schedules in all weather conditions.
- d. During inclement weather, personnel should plan ahead and allow sufficient time for a safe trip to work.
- e. In times of serious weather conditions, at the discretion of management, these requirements may be relaxed, and on-duty employees may be required to remain on duty until replacements can safely arrive at work.
- f. During times of severe weather (i.e. hurricanes, tornadoes, etc.), Administration reserves the right to suspend responses if sustained wind speed exceeds 50mph, or if road conditions become too treacherous for safe travel (i.e. ice, snow, etc.). This decision is made solely at the discretion of the Department Administration, at no time is a member authorized to suspend response without direct order from Administration.

## **Issuance and Use of Department Equipment**

**Purpose:** To provide a safe and effective work environment with equipment that remains in good working condition.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services will not tolerate misuse or misappropriation of Department equipment, as respect for Department equipment is expected at all times.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Bertie County Emergency Services Property**

- a. Any Bertie County Emergency Services property issued to personnel, such as keys, pagers, radios, gas cards, or uniforms, must be returned prior to receipt of any final paycheck.
- b. Personnel may be responsible for paying for any lost or damaged items, as well as for any unreturned items at the time of separation from service. "Damaged items" are items damaged beyond what would be expected with normal "wear and tear."
- c. No item purchased or supplied by Bertie County Emergency Services should be removed from the premises without express written authorization of a supervisor. Further:
  1. Personnel found possessing any Bertie County Emergency Services property without express written authorization may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.
- d. It is the responsibility of all personnel to understand the equipment needed to perform his or her duties. All personnel must remember that:
  1. Good care of any equipment used during the course of employment, as well as the conservative use of supplies, will benefit Bertie County Emergency Services.
  2. If equipment is not working properly or in any way appears unsafe, or damaged, personnel are to notify a supervisor immediately so that repairs or adjustments may be made.
  3. Any knowledge of misuse or damage to Bertie County Emergency Services property shall be promptly reported to a supervisor.
- e. Personnel of Bertie County Emergency Services work with delicate and expensive equipment. Care must be taken in handling and using such equipment. Personnel will be held responsible for equipment caused by carelessness, misuse, or neglect, and will be responsible for reimbursement for replacement or repair costs, and could be subject to discipline.

## **II. Controlled Substances and Pharmaceuticals.**

- a. Bertie County Emergency Services has in its control, and has general access to controlled substances, narcotics, and various other drugs that are carried in the ambulances and administered under appropriate circumstances, by approved and certified personnel.
- b. Under no circumstances shall personnel take from Bertie County Emergency Services, misappropriate, or otherwise distribute, steal, sell, or inappropriately administer (to self or others) these controlled substances.
- c. Persons found in violation of this provision will be subject to immediate discipline, up to and including termination. Additional penalties may include discipline by the state regulatory agency including loss of certification. Refer to the Narcotics Policy in this document, Protocols, Policies, & Procedures for additional information regarding Narcotics.

## **III. Bertie County Emergency Services Equipment.**

- a. Personnel must treat all equipment including vehicles, tools, devices, and other items in ambulances and in the station with respect and care.
- b. Equipment shall only be used for its intended purpose.
- c. “Clowning around” or horseplay with equipment will not be tolerated, as much of the equipment is both expensive and/or dangerous.
- d. Misuse and wasting of equipment and supplies will not be tolerated.
- e. Personnel shall ensure that ambulances are stocked, that equipment is in working order, and that supplies are checked at the beginning of each shift and are replaced prior to the end of shift.

## **Lockers**

**Purpose:** To regulate the use of Department owned lockers for the safety of staff and to prevent contraband and dangerous materials from entering the workplace.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services may provide lockers for use by staff members under certain conditions, but those lockers may be subject to search to ensure the safety of everyone.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards.**

- a. Lockers may be provided to staff members while on-duty.
- b. Staff members will provide their own lock for the locker, which must be removed at the end of their shift.
- c. Lockers must be kept neat and clean. Additionally:
  1. All Personal belongings shall be removed at the end of the shift.
  2. Food should not be stored in lockers.
- d. The Department reserves the right to inspect lockers without notice for any legitimate business related reason, including searching for contraband, alcohol, drugs, weapons, or organization property that may have been improperly obtained.
- f. Staff are reminded that lockers are Department property and staff members should have no expectation of privacy when it comes to locker use.

## **Non-Fraternization**

**Purpose:** To maintain a professional work environment dedicated to providing the highest level of patient care possible with minimal interference from personal relationships.

**Policy:** Personal relationships among co-workers must not enter the organization in any manner that interferes with work or creates potential conflicts among our staff.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards.**

- a. Personal relationships between employees outside of work can often have an adverse effect on the working relationship. Uncomfortable strain, allegations of sexual harassment, and other workplace distractions are all negative side effects of a personal relationship that may occur among employees outside of the workplace.
- b. Bertie County Emergency Services recognizes that it cannot specifically dictate how its employees may act outside of the workplace. Bertie County Emergency Services discourages personal romantic relationships among employees to the extent that such activity has an effect on the workplace.
- c. In the interest of maintaining a professional atmosphere in the workplace, Bertie County Emergency Services discourages romantic relations among personnel. However, in the event that a romantic relationship exists, the following activities are prohibited:
  1. Dating activities on Department time or Department property.
  2. Use of Department property to arrange dating activities.
  3. Hand holding, kissing, hugging, sexual comments and other behavior generally associated with a dating or romantic relationship on Department time or Department property.
  4. Failure to report to management personal relationships involving personnel at different levels of the organizational structure.
- d. To the extent that a dating relationship or romance occurs among two employees, and the relationship interferes with the ability to perform job duties, or leads to a breach of our professional standards or inappropriate behavior, one or both of the employees involved in the romance may be subject to discipline, change in scope of job duties, or dismissal.

- e. In general, Bertie County Emergency Services will not permit two staff members involved in a romantic relationship to work together directly, or for one person to supervise the other person.

## Call Back Notification

**Purpose:** To maintain adequate staffing Bertie County Emergency Services may need to call personnel to report to work when multiple vacancies occur on a shift.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services will utilize the EMS Manager scheduling software built-in messaging to contact BCES personnel, as well as using phone, email, and text messaging when multiple personnel are needed to be called in for duty.

**Procedure:**

- A. When an on-coming shift is going to be down 2 personnel due to call outs the on-duty Shift Captain or Administration will utilize EMS Manager to being working on finding replacement coverage.
- B. Personnel receiving a notification via phone, cell phone, text message, and/ or email will contact the on-duty supervisor within 30 minutes of the notification to make him/her aware of their availability.
- C. Personnel are responsible to make sure their contact information is up to date. This includes cell phone provider.

## **Patient Relations**

**Purpose:** To maintain a positive image and maintain good standing with our patients and the community that we serve.

**Policy:** All personnel shall be good ambassadors for the goodwill of Bertie County Emergency Services and treat others with respect and dignity at all times.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards.**

- a. Personnel must act competently and deal with patients and their families in a professional, courteous, and respectful manner. The way we perform our individual jobs presents an image reflective of our entire organization.
- b. Personnel shall communicate pleasantly and respectfully with other personnel, patients, family members, vendors, health care associates and business partners at all times. Positive relations not only enhance the public's perception or image of Bertie County Emergency Services, but also pay off in loyalty and future service requests.
- c. Personnel are expected to follow-up on orders and questions promptly, provide professional replies to inquiries and requests, and perform all duties in an orderly manner. Serving the best interests and needs of all patients is our ultimate goal.
- d. Personnel should take great pride in the work they do, and to perform at the best level possible. Individual behavior and professionalism, as well as that presented by Bertie County Emergency Services, is important for all persons with whom we deal.

#### **II. Patient Care.**

- a. Personnel must treat all patients equally and without respect to race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class.
- b. Personnel must provide patients, family members, and others with the highest degree of care they are certified to provide and as appropriate to the situation. At no time shall any personnel be expected to perform a service that he or she is not qualified to perform.
- c. Personnel shall follow all relevant patient care procedures. Following these standards helps to assure that the highest level of patient care is provided.

### **III. Patient Requests and Complaints.**

- a. Patient requests and complaints shall be handled in a professional and courteous manner. Nothing is more important than being courteous, friendly, helpful, and prompt in the attention given to patients, since that is the way in which Bertie County Emergency Services will be judged.
- b. Patient requests for information should be handled in accordance with HIPAA release of information policies.
- c. Patient requests (or refusals) during care and/or transport shall be made in accordance with relevant patient care policies and applicable protocols.
- d. In all cases, HIPAA considerations must be evaluated. When possible, a Shift Captain or member of Administration should be contacted, who should field the request or complaint. To the extent that these persons are not available, the staff member should record the information from the caller, and make sure that the appropriate personnel is notified.
- e. Efforts should be made to make management aware of such a complaint as soon as possible, so that quick resolution may be made. Additional information on handling patient complaints can also be found as part of the “Conflict Resolution and Problem Solving” Policy.

### **IV. Patient Bill of Rights.**

- a. In dealing with patients and in rendering care, all personnel are expected to respect the patient's rights, and to provide medical care and transportation at all times in accordance with certain rights. Failure to do so is a basis for discipline, up to and including dismissal.
- b. Patients have the following rights:
  1. To receive respectful care given by competent personnel.
  2. To receive every consideration of his or her privacy concerning medical care. Case discussion, examination and treatment are considered confidential and should be conducted as discretely as possible.
  3. To have all records pertaining to medical care treated as confidential, except as otherwise provided by law.

4. To receive quality care and high professional standards that are continually maintained and reviewed.
5. To expect emergency procedures be implemented without delay.
6. To refuse drugs, treatment or procedures offered to the extent permitted by law, and to be informed of the medical consequences of the refusal of any drugs, treatment, or procedure.
7. To receive medically appropriate services without discrimination based upon race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class.
8. To receive appropriate pre-transport assessment, evaluation and treatment; careful handling, preparation, and monitoring of conditions, including thoughtful regard for those individuals associated with the patient; attention to all medical needs during transport; and a comfortable, safe ride to the acute care facility of their choice and/or the most medically appropriate facility.
9. To be served with state of the art, strictly maintained, and properly functioning emergency medical equipment, including the ambulance, stretchers, and portable equipment.
10. To receive professional, cheerful and attentive service throughout the course of the transport.

## **Privacy and Security of Patient Information**

**Purpose:** To remain in compliance with all state and federal laws designed to protect the privacy, confidentiality, and security of patient information.

**Policy:** All personnel shall maintain the confidentiality of patient and other confidential information in accordance with applicable legal and ethical standards.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Background.**

- a. Bertie County Emergency Services and its personnel are in possession of, and have access to, a broad variety of confidential, sensitive, and proprietary information. Inappropriate release of this information could be injurious to individuals, business associates, and Bertie County Emergency Services itself. All personnel have an obligation to actively protect and safeguard confidential, sensitive, and proprietary information in a manner designed to prevent the unauthorized disclosure of such information.
  1. All personnel have an obligation to conduct themselves in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and Bertie County Emergency Services' Policies that have been enacted to address patient confidentiality. Personnel are advised to consult appropriate HIPAA Policies or Administration for additional information.
  2. There shall be periodic training on patient privacy issues and all personnel are expected to become familiar with all patient privacy policies in addition to those contained in the Handbook.

#### **II. Privacy.**

- a. Information pertaining to a patient's medical situation may generally only be shared with other health care professionals involved with the treatment of the patient. Information may also be shared for other limited purposes, such as payment activities and health care operations, or other purposes specifically permitted by law, in accordance with Bertie County Emergency Services policies regarding the privacy of patient information.
- b. At no time, should a patient's information including, but not limited to, name, age, condition(s), address, sex, race, or other identifying information be released in any form to any type of social media network, print, television, or other media source.

### **III. Security.**

- a. Much of the patient information that we collect is maintained on computers, and stored and transmitted electronically. In order to preserve the integrity of that data, and protect the confidentiality and security of this patient information, personnel must follow all applicable computer use and data security policies.

### **IV. Privacy/Security Officer.**

- a. Bertie County Emergency Services Clinical Affairs Officer has been appointed as the member who is responsible for overall Privacy and Security Policies. If you have any questions about the use or release of any patient information, you should contact the Clinical Affairs Officer.

## **Release of Information to Media**

**Purpose:** To prevent the inappropriate release of confidential patient information and other confidential Department information to the media, and to ensure a consistent approach to media relations.

**Policy:** As a general rule, only designated personnel may contact and/or speak with the media or release information to members of the media. All personnel shall refer any media requests for information to the designated person within the organization to handle media requests.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards.**

- a. Personnel may from time to time, receive media inquiries from various news/media agencies, including:
  1. Newspapers and television stations, for reporting a rescue, accident response, fatality, or reporting on EMS activity, or general “coverage” of EMS.
  2. Magazines or periodicals, interviewing personnel related to incidents or general EMS issues of interest to the public.
- b. When contacted by the media you must notify management with general information about the nature of the request and contact information for the reporter/writer. When contacted by the media you should refer the request to management.
- c. All communication with the media must be approved by management. When approved, personnel may discuss general topics of interest and ambulance and EMS related issues with the media. In talking with the media about non-patient or organization specific issues, all personnel should follow the following guidelines:
  1. Refrain from giving an “off the record” comment. Never consider any comment as “off the record.”
  2. The following types of information should NEVER be released:
    - A. Patient-specific information, including names, addresses, assessment of injuries, treatment provided, and history/diagnosis. As a covered entity, we are bound by HIPAA to preserve patient

confidentiality. Release of patient-specific information to the media is not permitted.

- B. Information that may be prejudicial to law enforcement investigations (e.g. “I think the driver that caused the accident was drinking alcohol”).
  - C. Information that is not known for certain such as subjective or your “opinion” (e.g. “The car must have been speeding at the time of the accident”).
  - D. Information that may be an invasion of privacy, such as suicide information, AIDS status, overdose, psychiatric transport, cause of death.
- 4. Personnel are encouraged to respond to requests for media interviews to discuss your job, your role as an EMT, and your experiences at Bertie County Emergency Services. As long as patient information is not discussed, the name of Bertie County Emergency Services is not placed in a negative light, and confidential business information is not released, such interviews will generally be approved and permitted. All requests for media interviews must be approved by Administration prior to the interview.
  - 5. In any situation where an interview becomes uncomfortable, you are free to stop it at any time. You are not required to talk to members of the media. You are also free to completely refrain from speaking to the media about any topic at all.
- c. We must balance providing the public with information about the services we provide against the individual rights of the patient to keep their medical information confidential. We fully respect the right of the public to know about our activities as we are a public agency subject to public scrutiny. But we can provide information to the public only to the extent that the law allows us.

## II. Specific Standards for Dealing with Media Requests for Patient Information.

- a. General information about a response may be released, provided that patient identifying information is not offered. For example, acceptable releases include:
  1. Name of hospital. You may provide the name of the hospital to which patients have been transported. (Acceptable Example: The media calls about “the accident at Third and Main earlier this afternoon.” You may inform the media “a patient was transported from the accident scene to County General Hospital.”). **THE NAME OF THE PATIENT SHOULD NOT BE RELEASED TO THE MEDIA.** It is not appropriate for us to confirm or deny the identity of a patient. Requests for patient identity should be directed to a law enforcement agency or to the hospital. Law enforcement agencies are not subject to the strict requirements of protecting patient information as we are under HIPAA.
  2. Number of patients. You may provide the total number of patients involved in an accident or transported to a facility. You may not indicate specifics about the vehicle a patient was driving or which patient went to a particular facility. (Acceptable Example: You may inform the media that “four patients were transported from the fire at the XYZ Chemical Factory. Two were taken to County General Hospital and two were taken to the Regional Medical Center.”)
  3. Age & Gender. You may provide the age of a patient and the gender of the patient, unless it could reasonably be used to identify the patient. (Acceptable Example: You may inform the media “a 39 y/o male was transported from the accident on the Interstate.” You would not want to disclose to the media “a 39 y/o male was transported from 124 Main St.” since this information can be used to determine the identity of the patient.)
  4. Designation of crew members. The designation of crew members as paramedics or EMTs is not protected health information. You may state, for example, that one paramedic and two EMTs were involved in caring for the patients involved in a motor vehicle accident. (You could identify the names of the personnel who responded, but some services prefer not to release this information). You are not permitted to describe the specific type of care rendered to patients at the scene or on the way to the hospital. Nor may you speculate on what injuries a patient may or may not have sustained. (Acceptable Example: “Personnel on the scene of the incident included two paramedics and a supervisor and advanced life support was administered.”)
  5. Type of Transport. You may indicate that a particular call was an

emergency and that transportation was facilitated by ambulance or helicopter. Do not speculate on the patient's condition even if you are sure of that condition. (Acceptable Example: "Of the 3 patients on the scene of the incident, one was transported by helicopter to the ABC Trauma Center and two were transported as non-emergency patients to the local hospital emergency department.")

6. Non-PHI. Information that is not classified as PHI may be released to the media consistent with Policy and state law. For instance, information about a fire response or a standby that did not involve patient care may be released to the media, as may general information about an event. (Acceptable Example: "We treated 45 patients during the two-day festival, and 6 were transported to local hospitals for various heat-related complaints").
7. Disclosures Authorized by the Patient. In the event that the patient or the patient's legally responsible decision maker signs a HIPAA authorization form, disclosures of information, including PHI, may be made so long as they are done in accordance with the express terms of the written authorization. Authorization forms for this purpose must be HIPAA-compliant and must be approved by Clinical Affairs Officer and Administration.

- b. If at any time you are unclear about whether information may be disclosed to the media, always err on the side of caution and do not disclose.

## **Scheduling (Work Hours, Vacation, Trading Shifts)**

**Purpose:** To ensure adequate emergency response and ambulance service 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year with the necessary complement of professional personnel.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services requires you to arrive on time for your scheduled shift, or contact the on-duty supervisor as to why you are unavailable to report as assigned. Personnel should arrive in full regulation uniform.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards.**

- a. Bertie County Emergency Services reserves the right to schedule personnel at any time, or change the schedule in accordance with operational needs and demands.
- b. Bertie County Emergency Services will develop a staffing schedule on a monthly basis utilizing EMS Manager web based software. All scheduling will be done via this tool.
- c. No more than 2 employees will be scheduled off at one time from EMS, 1 from NET.
- d. New employees will generally not be granted vacation leave for the first 3 months of employment, unless cleared by Administration during the initial hiring process.
- e. It is your responsibility to arrive for work in complete uniform for your scheduled shift, unless:
  1. A pre-approved request for vacation has occurred:
    - A. All requests for vacation shall be made through EMS Manager no later than 2 weeks prior to the first day of the time being requested. Vacation is not guaranteed, and is instead based on availability of coverage.
  2. The scheduled personnel has arranged for coverage with another person subject to the following:
    - A. When arranging coverage with another person, equal “swapping” or trading shall occur. Personnel shall not expect another person to cover part or an entire shift without covering an equal amount of time for that other person. Swaps will be arranged through EMS Manager at least 1 week prior to the first day of the trade.

- B. The shift swap and pay back must occur in the same week.
  - C. Shift trades in coverage must be made between persons who are equally credentialed, i.e. Paramedic for Paramedic or EMT-Basic for EMT-Basic.
  - D. Shift Captains or Administration must be advised of any and all trades as promptly as possible. The Department reserves the right to refuse to permit a swap to the extent that it will pose scheduling or other personnel conflicts.
3. The scheduled person is working light duty due to an illness, injury, or medical condition. Light Duty requests and approval area as follows:
- A. The purpose of light duty is to provide an appropriate duty station for personnel unable to perform normal work requirements as an Emergency Services employee due to an illness, injury, or medical condition. Light duty will assist personnel who may be out for a long recuperation period and require additional time prior to returning to full duty without having to exhaust all available leave time.
  - B. Light Duty can be requested for recuperative period including but not limited to”
    - Major Surgical recuperation period
    - Fracture of a major bone
    - Pregnancy
    - Other conditions/situations as may be determined.
  - C. Personnel may request light duty by a written request to the EMS Division Chief, through the chain of command. The written request shall include:
    - Medical condition requiring light duty
    - Written confirmation of condition by their primary care physician to include medical necessity for light duty and the extent of physical exertion permitted by the physician.
    - Time period light duty will be necessary.
    - Light duty may be granted on a case-by-case basis after review by the Division Chief, Emergency Services Director, HR Director, and concurrence with the County Manager. Light duty situations will be reviewed on a monthly basis.
    - Extensions of light duty must be requested and approved prior to the expiration of the original request.
    - Light duty will be granted only if sufficient tasks are available to keep the individual reasonably busy.

- Dress while on light duty shall consist of uniform or business casual attire.
- Light duty will be schedule at the discretion of management, and will not exceed the hours normally scheduled by the individual.
- Overtime/Compensatory time is not allowed while on light duty.
- **Light duty is a privilege, not a requirement of the department and it may be terminated at any time without cause or notice.**

D. From time to time, it may be necessary for personnel to be absent during a scheduled shift. Bertie County Emergency Services is aware that emergencies, illnesses or pressing business that cannot be rescheduled in advance of a scheduled shift may arise. If you are unable to report for a shift or you must arrive late, and you are unable to obtain coverage, you must contact the on duty Shift Captain, or EMS Division Chief immediately with at least two (2) hours' notice. For additional employee related information on absenteeism, please consult the "Absenteeism and Tardiness" Policy.

E. Because all personnel must be alert and able to perform their job at and ready to perform their duties. Personnel that are not well rested, or are physically unable to perform their duties as a result of exhaustion may be sent home, and may be subject to discipline. For additional information concerning the obligation to report to duty well rested, please see the "Reporting to Work Well Rested" Policy.

F. Shift times are:

- 0700-0700 for 24-hour EMS units
- 0600-0600 for 24-hour NET units, and
- 0830-1700 for daytime NET units

G. Employees should plan off-duty appointments and events so as to allow themselves the ability to get off work late without undue disruption to their plans. Due to the nature of Emergency Services work, we can never ensure that employees can leave at the end of their scheduled shift.

H. In the event that an employee's relief will be late, or has called out and no coverage is available, an employee must contact Administration to notify them if they are unable to stay past the end of their scheduled shift. At no point does any field employee have the ability to remove a unit from service without the direct authorization of Administration.

## Schedule Requirements for Part-Time Staff

**Purpose:** To ensure that adequate coverage is maintained and that all part-time personnel are available to work a fair amount of time with the Department.

**Policy:** Part-Time (employees with Bertie County Emergency Services will be **required** to submit 24 hours of availability to EMS Manager (see g – f below) and work a minimum of 12 hours when scheduled. (Special event coverage is not included)

### **Procedure:**

- I. Standards
  - a. Available shifts are continuously posted within EMS Manager, allowing staff the ability to sign-up for open shifts at any time.
  - b. Part-time employees are expected to submit their availability into EMS Manager by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, preceding the month to be scheduled (i.e. August 15<sup>th</sup> for September schedule).
  - c. The primary scheduler will make every effort to have the schedule posted by the 20<sup>th</sup> of each month.
  - d. Once a part-time employee is scheduled for a shift they are responsible for finding coverage for that shift if for any reason, other than a sudden illness, they cannot work that particular shift. Phone numbers are found in the Member Database within EMS Manager.
  - e. Part-Time employees are allowed to swap shifts with other part-time personnel at the approval of the scheduling supervisor and/or the supervisors of the affected shifts.
  - f. The only exception to this policy is having a valid medical excuse with a signed doctor's note indicating the employee cannot perform the required job requirements of an Emergency Services employee.
  - g. Failure to meet the 12 hour minimum requirement for consecutive months may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of part-time employment with Bertie County Emergency Services
  - h. Schedule: <http://www.emsmanager.net/bertie>

## **Sexual and Other Harassment**

**Purpose:** To maintain a work environment that is free of discrimination and harassment in accordance with applicable law.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services will have “zero tolerance” when it comes to any behavior that rises to the level of unlawful discrimination or unlawful harassment.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Harassment Prohibited.**

a. General Prohibition on Discrimination and Harassment.

1. All personnel shall respect the rights, opinions, and beliefs of others. Harassment of, or discrimination against, any person by anyone (regardless of their position) because of a person's race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class, is strictly prohibited, whether directed at an employee, a volunteer, or at a member of the community.
2. Harassment outlined in this Policy is prohibited whether or not it also violates federal and/or state law.

b. Sexual Harassment.

1. Sexual harassment may include *any* unwelcome sexual advance, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

These requests, advances, or sexual conduct constitute unlawful *sexual harassment* when:

- A. Tolerating the conduct is a condition of employment or condition of participation in Bertie County Emergency Services activities.  
For example:

The submission to the improper conduct is made a term or condition of employment or participation in Department activities (Example: Employee is told by a supervisor that she should date him in order to get a good performance review).

- B. The conduct has adverse consequences on the individual. For example:

The submission to or rejection of the harassing conduct is used as a basis for employment or membership decisions affecting the individual (Example: Employee refuses sexual advances or legitimately complains of improper conduct and is assigned a work schedule that is designed to be intolerable).

- C. The conduct offensively interferes with the individual's performance or ability to function in their position. For example:

The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment (Example: Female member feels sick when she comes to the station because whenever she is there, a male staff member (or members) frequently makes comments about her body parts or physical attributes).

2. Sexual harassment is prohibited. That is:

- A. No one may threaten or imply that submission to or rejection of sexual advances will in any way influence any decision about employment or membership, duties, assignment, or other terms or conditions of employment or membership.
- B. No one may take any personnel action based on a staff member's submission to or rejection of sexual advances.
- C. No one may subject another person to any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Some examples of unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature include:
- Unwelcome physical conduct, such as touching, restraining, blocking, staring, making sexual gestures, exposing private body areas to others, and making or displaying sexual drawings, photographs, videotapes, DVDs or other pornographic materials.

- Unwelcome verbal conduct, such as sexual propositions, sexual slurs and insults, comments about private body areas (such as breasts and genitals), jokes with sexually-oriented content and other sexual comments.
- Intentional receipt or transmission of pornographic or sexually explicit jokes, photographs, cartoons, or other material via computer equipment from or through the Internet or via electronic mail.
- No one may engage in consensual or non-consensual conduct of a sexual nature in Bertie County Emergency Services vehicles or on any Bertie County Emergency Services property.
- No one may engage in non-sexual touching that could be perceived or otherwise lead to more intimate sexual conduct, including giving backrubs and other treatment that involves touching.

c. Other Harassment.

1. No one may harass anyone because of that person's race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class. Examples of conduct prohibited by this Policy include using racial and ethnic slurs or offensive stereotypes and making jokes about these characteristics.
2. Physical harassment is prohibited, including but not limited to:
  - A. Kissing, patting, touching, bumping, or other unwanted contact.
  - B. Unsolicited shoulder/body massages.
  - C. Touching or adjusting the clothing of another
  - D. Blocking passageway or cornering a person so they cannot move even if it is just for a brief moment.
  - E. Involuntary seclusion, such as barring the staff member from contact with other crew members while at the station.
  - F. Physical Assault/Rape.
3. Verbal harassment is also prohibited, including, but not limited to:

- A. Obscene noises (grunting, panting, whistling, barking, etc.).
- B. Offensive sexual, racial, or religious comments.
- C. Offensive reference to or naming of body parts with nicknames.
- D. Sexual rumors, innuendos, or inquiring about a person's sexual activity.
- E. Any visual harassment that may accompany (or stand alone) from verbal harassment, including staring at body parts, use of crude notes or gestures, or sexually implicit pictures.
- F. Pestering for a date or personal information/failing to take "no" for an answer.

## **II. Making Complaints and Reporting Violations.**

- a. Personnel who believe they are a victim of harassment are requested and encouraged to make a complaint to any administrator of the Department to whom they may feel comfortable making the complaint, or directly to Human Resources. All personnel are encouraged to report any incident or conduct that is perceived as being in violation of this Policy. Reporting may be verbal or written.
- b. You are not required to first complain to the person who engaged in that conduct, although telling the person engaged in the conduct that their behavior is not welcome or asking them to stop the behavior is a good idea.
- c. Personnel who observe harassment of another staff member are requested and encouraged to report this observation. No reprisal, retaliation, or other adverse action will be taken against any member or employee for making, in good faith, a complaint or report of harassment, or for assisting in good faith in the investigation of any such complaint or report. Any suspected retaliation or intimidation should be reported immediately to any supervisor or manager.
- d. Bertie County Emergency Services will promptly, thoroughly, and impartially investigate any complaint or report of a violation of this Policy. Additionally:
  - 1. Bertie County Emergency Services will protect the confidentiality of information involving individuals involved in harassment allegations to the greatest extent possible. Such information may be shared with those who have a need to know, such as key management personnel and other essential persons involved in the investigation.

2. Investigations will include interviews of persons believed to be involved, or with potential knowledge of the event, and shall include a full report on each investigation, retaining the confidentiality of all such persons involved where possible.

### **III. Penalties for Violations.**

- a. Bertie County Emergency Services will take prompt remedial and possibly disciplinary action if the investigation shows a violation of this Policy. Disciplinary action may include verbal or written warning, suspension, or termination from employment.
- b. A complaint or report that this Policy has been violated is a serious matter. Dishonest complaints or reports not made in good faith are also against this Policy, and appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment will be taken if the investigation shows that deliberately dishonest and bad faith accusations have been made against another staff member.

### **IV. No Reprisals.**

- a. Persons who report a suspected instance of unlawful harassment or discrimination shall not be subject to reprisals, retaliation, retribution or other negative treatment.
- b. Any person who retaliates against a good faith reporter will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

## **Smoking and Tobacco Use**

**Purpose:** To maintain a healthy, clean, and safe environment for all personnel, patients, and visitors.

**Policy:** The use of tobacco containing products, including electronic cigarettes, is prohibited in all Bertie County Emergency Services vehicles, and in undesignated areas at Bertie County Emergency Services building(s).

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards.**

- a. Personnel are prohibited from using tobacco products in all vehicles (both passenger compartment and driver compartment) and in undesignated locations at all buildings of Bertie County Emergency Services. For purposes of this Policy, “tobacco products” includes but is not necessarily limited to cigarettes, including electronic cigarettes, cigars, and smokeless tobacco products, such as chewing tobacco.
- b. Personnel are not permitted to use tobacco products while on the scene of an emergency response.
- c. Personnel are not permitted to use tobacco products at hospitals or in other public places.
- d. The above standards shall apply to visitors and patients as well as personnel.

#### **II. Disposal of Tobacco Products.**

- a. All cigarette butts will be placed in the designated receptacles in the smoking area. Cigarette butts should not be discarded on the ground or in any trash bins.
- b. Smokeless tobacco residue will be deposited in the appropriate receptacle or spittoon. There shall be no spitting of tobacco juice on Department property, including in sinks or toilets.

## **Telephone Procedures and Personal Telephone Use**

**Purpose:** To maintain phone lines accessible for business purposes, avoid distractions, and maintain uninterrupted telephone service.

**Policy:** The telephone system is for Department business. Bertie County Emergency Services limits personal phone calls while on duty.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Personal calls**

- a. Personal incoming and outgoing personal phone calls are discouraged, and should be used for emergency purposes only.
- b. If personal calls must be made or received, conversations should be limited to five (5) minutes.
- c. Long distance telephone calls are only permitted in times of family emergencies and should also be limited to no more than five (5) minutes.
- d. Long distance phone calls for Department business purposes are acceptable, but should be limited in scope to the greatest extent possible.

#### **II. Answering the phone.**

- a. When answering the phone the preferred approach is “Bertie County Emergency Services, this is (state your name), how may I help you”
- b. Appropriate assistance with the call is your responsibility. This includes directing the call to the correct individual. In all cases request the caller’s name and nature of the call.

## **Testifying in Court & Depositions**

**Purpose:** To uphold the requirements of the law, to support civic duty and protect employees from wage loss when called upon to appear in court for Department related business.

**Policy:** Personnel are expected to testify about work related matters, when properly subpoenaed to do so, in an honest and truthful manner. Personnel testifying for work related matters when required shall receive compensation for time spent in providing such testimony. Personnel engaged in court testimony for personal matters will not be paid, and may use vacation time to handle such matters.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards**

- a. At times, personnel may be required to testify in court, for incidents that relate to Bertie County Emergency Services, or personal matters unrelated to Bertie County Emergency Services. In accordance with the “Scheduling” Policy, appropriate provisions for coverage must be made when testimony conflicts with a scheduled assignment.
- b. Personnel who are subpoenaed and must appear for a hearing, deposition, or court appearance because of an action performed while in the course of duty or related to work will be paid a regular hourly rate for the actual time providing testimony.
- c. Personnel who must attend a hearing, deposition or court appearance for reasons other than for testimony related to the performance of job duties with Bertie County Emergency Services, will have to request time off, on either a paid, or unpaid basis, depending upon available accrued time off that may be available. In accordance with Department scheduling policies, appropriate provisions for coverage must be made when testimony conflicts with a scheduled work assignment.
- d. You must submit to the EMS Division Chief a copy of the subpoena or other related court document to indicate the nature of the court appearance and let him or her know the reason for the presence at the hearing or deposition.
- e. You are required to notify a superior if you are the subject of personal action by an individual or agency that has any business or patient relationship, affiliation or contact with Bertie County Emergency Services. This includes patients, customers, or operators of vehicles that may be involved in an accident with Bertie County Emergency Services vehicles, and the employees and staff of organization with whom we work. We will make every effort to respect and maintain the confidentiality of such information.

## **II. Reimbursement.**

- a. All time spent on Department related court business or testimony should be reported to the EMS Division Chief so that it can be properly documented on your timesheet.

## **Uniform, Dress Code & Personal Appearance**

**Purpose:** To maintain a professional appearance at all times within the community, projecting a positive image to the public.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services requires all personnel to meet appropriate dress code and uniform standards for the respective position of the staff member.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. General standards of appearance.**

- a. Pins, jewelry, hats, name/insignia or other identifying symbols which are not professionally related to authorize uniforms are prohibited from being worn.
- b. Hair (including facial hair) is to be neat and groomed at all times. If an employee has long hair, then he or she must arrange it in such a way that it does not present a safety hazard or distract from duties. Mustaches and beards must be clean, well- trimmed, and neat, and must not interfere with the wearing of any safety or medical device, including personal protective equipment (PPE).
- c. Perfume, cologne, aftershave, scented lotion, etc., should be used in moderation or avoided altogether. Jewelry should not be excessive and should be limited to items that do not functionally restrict the employee or create a danger to personnel or others. Facial jewelry, such as eyebrow rings, nose rings, lip rings and tongue studs, is not permitted to be worn during working hours or while on duty.
- d. Personnel are expected to arrive to work in a clean, presentable manner with all appropriate uniform attire in place. Proper bathing and personnel hygiene must be utilized to prevent unwarranted body odor. Employees reporting to work who appear to have a dirty uniform and/or have the appearance of poor hygiene may be asked to return home and put on a clean uniform and/or shower as appropriate. The employee will not receive pay during this time away from work, and may be subject to disciplinary action.

#### **II. Uniform(s).**

- a. Uniform is defined as “alike”. It is the intent of the dress code that all Bertie County Emergency Services personnel shall be uniform in their attire while on duty.
- b. Partners must be dressed alike at all times, i.e. either both in polo shirts, or both in t-shirts.

- c. Bertie County Emergency Services will provide three (3) polo shirts and t-shirts to all full-time 24-hour shift personnel and two (2) to part-time personnel. Daytime NET employees and Administrative staff will receive a minimum of 5 polo shirts.
- d. Only the following uniform items shall be worn while on duty by field staff.
  - Polo-style Uniform shirt (T-shirt only after 1900hrs)
  - White, dark navy, or black shirts only under the uniform shirt. This undershirt should be plain, and thereby free from language or graphics that may be deemed offensive by a reasonable person.
  - Navy pants
  - Black belt
  - Black boots or shoes
  - Baseball style hat (must be EMS related and non-offensive)
  - Other PPE items
- e. Office staff may wear other uniform items, as approved by Administration, including business casual clothing, khaki-style cargo pants, and alternative uniform shirts, including white Class A-style uniform shirts, provided that such shirts bear markings affiliating the employee with Bertie County Emergency Services.
- f. Uniforms must remain clean, unwrinkled, neat, and in good repair. Uniforms items that are faded, torn, or worn are not acceptable.
- g. Pager, radio, or Department-issued phone is considered a part of the uniform and must be worn appropriately.
- h. All personnel are responsible for the care and maintenance of their uniforms. If your uniform becomes soiled during a shift, it should be changed. Employees have sufficient uniform shirts to allow for the changing of uniform shirts should the need develop. It is the employee's responsibility to carry a change of uniform for their own safety, and to ensure professionalism is maintained.
- i. Personnel should not wear their uniform when not on duty, except during travel to and from work. At no time should an employee be wearing a Department issued uniform item at another job, or on their personal time while out in public.
- j. Bertie County Emergency Services will replace uniforms that are contaminated or damaged in the line of duty.
- k. Badges shall be worn in the appropriate location on the left chest of uniform.

Nametags/Serving Since pins shall be worn center over the right shirt pocket, the bottom of the serving since pin even with the top pocket seam.

- l. Patches shall be centered on the sleeve one inch below the shoulder seam. Department patch shall be on the left sleeve and state credential patch on the right sleeve.
- m. Only one addition “certification” pin will be allowed to be worn on the uniform shirt at any time. The pin should be placed centered on the right shirt pocket.
- n. During periods of extreme or inclement weather, certain deviations from standard uniform may be made when approved by the Director or Assistant Director.

**III. T-Shirts:** Can be worn between the hours of 19:00 and 07:00 and at other times as may be determined by Emergency Services Administration

**c) Attire for Classes/Meetings while representing Bertie County  
Emergency Services and Monthly CE Class.**

- a. When an employee attends a class or meeting while representing Bertie County Emergency Services appropriate dress attire is required (weather dependent). All clothing shall be worn in a manner that conveys a professional image and provides a modest coverage and fit. Arms must be covered with a minimum of short sleeved-attire. Sleeveless jumpers, dresses, tops, etc., must be accompanied with a jacket or appropriate top. Approved attire for employees when attending classes as a representative of Bertie County Emergency Services include:
  - 1. Business suits, dresses, pant suits, khaki type pants, golf shirts, and button up long sleeve shirts.
  - 2. Department Uniform.
  - 3. The following is considered not appropriate and may not be worn: mini-skirts, skorts/culottes, shorts, jeans, overalls, leggings, tight clothes, flip-flops, t-shirts, sweatpants, sweatshirts, wind suits, and any other clothing that may contain offensive or suggestive language, graphics, or other inappropriate material.
- b. Monthly continuing educational classes are conducted on County property, and therefore proper attire is required.
  - 1. Department Uniform
  - 2. Business Casual (khaki type pants, golf shirt or log sleeve button up shirt, and pant suits)
  - 3. Jeans that are free of holes and in good condition.
  - 4. Appropriate footwear includes tennis shoes, work boots, or closed toe shoes.
  - 5. The following is considered not appropriate and may not be worn: mini-skirts, skorts/culottes, short-shorts, torn/worn jeans, overalls, leggings, tight clothes, t-shirts, sweatpants, wind suits, and any other clothing that may contain offensive or suggestive language,

graphics, or other inappropriate material.

## **Use of Alcohol While on Duty or On-Call**

**Purpose:** As providers of emergency services, Bertie County Emergency Services is committed to safely serving the community without harm to our members or others. We must be ready to respond at a moment's notice to a variety of situations and to confront numerous hazards. To operate effectively and safely, we must insure that personnel are fully prepared to perform their duties without the influence of alcohol.

**Policy:** No personnel shall be under the influence of alcohol while on duty, when responding to a call, or when otherwise engaged in Department activities.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards**

- a. You shall not respond to any call if you have ingested any alcoholic beverage eight (8) hours prior to your work shift, or if you are on call, eight (8) hours prior to being called out.
- b. Personnel who appear to be under the influence of alcohol at a scene (based on the reasonable judgment of the officer in charge) will be immediately dismissed from the scene may be required to undergo alcohol testing and may face disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- c. Any personnel who drive either a Bertie County Emergency Services vehicle or a personal vehicle to the scene while under the influence of alcohol may face criminal prosecution for driving under the influence and may be reported to the appropriate authorities
- d. On-call staff members who have consumed alcoholic beverages and are thereby unable to respond to a call, will be subject to appropriate discipline.

#### **II. Violations**

- a. If any member of management reasonably believes a staff member is under the influence of alcohol, that person may remove the staff member to a medical facility for alcohol testing.
- b. Any staff member who refuses to be tested is subject to immediate suspension and may face termination.

## **Visitors**

**Purpose:** To prevent possible harm, maintain patient confidentiality, and prevent distraction of personnel while on duty that may occur with personal visits.

**Policy:** Visitors in the workplace shall be restricted to specified areas and may be limited in the time of their visit.

**Procedure:**

- Visitors of a BCES employee will only be allowed to visit for one (1) hour at any time during the shift. No visitor will be allowed to remain at an EMS station after 22:00 or if no employee is present.
- Visitors of an BCES employee will not be present at shift change as not to interfere with the exchange of information.
- Small children shall not be left unattended in any part of the station.
- When a visitor comes to the building, the visitor must be met in the lobby, or other public area near the entrance to the station, or (when possible) outside. This is to prevent unnecessary visitor access to areas of the station that may house patient information and to prevent possible injury. A staff member must remain with the visitor at all times during the visit.
- Visitors are not permitted in areas where patient information is stored or may easily be viewed or in other areas that could negatively impact operations.
- Visitors unattended by Emergency Services personnel attempting entrance or in the building that you do not recognize you must challenge them and determine who they are (see ID). Then determine their purpose and escort to the appropriate office or out of the building.
- Employees should not invite visitors to the station that they have just met, such as in the case of meeting someone from an online dating/matchmaking service. While it is good practice to meet someone new in a public place, the station is not an appropriate place. In the event a potential romantic interest becomes problematic, the person should have been readily invited into our workplace and create a potentially unsafe situation for yourself and others.

## Workplace Safety

**Purpose:** To maintain a safe working environment staff members participating in reporting and preventing injuries is essential.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services fosters a safe work environment, free from unsafe or dangerous activities, and Bertie County has created a Safety Committee to coordinate safety training and provide input on safety related issues. Staff members are expected to promptly report unsafe conditions.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards**

- a. Workplace safety is of utmost concern to Bertie County Emergency Services. Personnel and patients alike must be protected from unsafe conditions.
- b. Personnel shall always act in a professional manner, especially during patient contact. Horseplay or inattention to work assignments or patient care will not be tolerated.
- c. Our jobs require rapid response, but this response must be a safe response. Reckless driving to arrive at a scene is not permitted, as dangerous driving can pose a danger to personnel and other drivers.

#### **II. Reporting Unsafe Conditions.**

- a. Personnel must immediately report any unsafe condition to a supervisor. This includes unsafe storage or use of equipment, instances of horseplay, or unsafe driving or other dangerous activities that may pose a danger to patients and others.
- b. Personnel who violate safety standards, who cause hazardous or dangerous situations, or who fail to report (or, where appropriate, remedy) such situations, may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- c. Where reports of unsafe situations are made in an honest manner, personnel should have no fear of possible reprisals in the event that a violation is found, or discipline against a violator occurs.

#### **III. Safety Committee.**

- a. Bertie County has created a Safety Committee that is responsible for reviewing safety requirements, learning about safety updates (e.g. OSHA publications and

warnings), reviewing safety-related incidents, providing recommendations for safety improvements, and assisting with the training of staff as to proper safety procedures.

- b. The Safety Committee will entertain feedback on safety related issues that need to be explored and focused upon.

## Workplace Searches

**Purpose:** To safeguard the property of all personnel, and prevent possession, use and sale of illegal drugs and other dangerous things in the workplace.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services may conduct random searches of persons and their property while on, in or adjacent to Bertie County Emergency Services property in conformance with applicable laws.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards**

- a. Bertie County Emergency Services reserves the right to question any person as well as inspect packages, handbags, backpacks, duffle bags, briefcases, lunchboxes, or other packages, possessions, articles of clothing, or items entering or exiting Bertie County Emergency Services property.
- b. All personnel are expected to comply with a search request. The Department will initiate a search only when absolutely necessary, and based on reasonable suspicion that an issue requiring such search is needed.
- c. Bertie County Emergency Services also reserves the right to search the desk, office, locker, or other assigned space of any personnel, at any time, whether or not the personnel is present, since such areas remain the property of Bertie County Emergency Services.
- d. Searches are intended to discover weapons, drugs, contraband and/or improperly obtained Department property, and may be done randomly, at the discretion of management based upon a complaint or suspicion, and usually in conjunction with local law enforcement officials to ensure employee rights, as well as evidentiary findings are legal and valid.

#### **II. Violations**

- a. Any visitor who refuses to consent to a search when requested will be denied access to the building.
- b. Any employee who refuses to consent to a search, or who is found to possess an item that is prohibited by these policies or by law, will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **Workplace Violence**

**Purpose:** To help prevent incidents of violence from occurring in the workplace, and to further ensure as safe workplace as possible.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services forbids acts or threats of violence by any staff member against any other person, customer, visitor, or patient in or about Bertie County Emergency Services vehicles and buildings, or on Bertie County Emergency Services premises at any time.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Background**

- a. Bertie County Emergency Services expects all its personnel to conduct themselves in a professional and courteous manner at all times. All staff should treat others in a manner that they would want to be treated.
- b. Any behavior that a reasonable person would construe as indicating a potential for violence are strictly prohibited. Examples of improper behavior include, but are not limited to: shouting angrily at others, swearing at others, making threatening gestures towards others, throwing or tossing things, slamming down equipment with the intent to startle another person, pounding or punching a wall, purposely breaking things, etc.

#### **II. Prevention of Workplace Violence**

- a. In keeping with the spirit and intent of this Policy, Bertie County Emergency Services shall strive to:
  1. Provide as safe a work environment as possible.
  2. Take prompt remedial disciplinary action against any personnel who engage in any threatening behavior or acts of violence or who use any obscene, abusive, or threatening language or gestures.
  3. Take appropriate action when dealing with customers, former employees, or visitors who engage in such behavior. Such action may include notifying the police or other law enforcement personnel.
  4. Establish viable security measures to ensure that facilities are safe and secure to the maximum extent possible and to properly handle access to Department facilities by the public, off-duty employees, and former employees.

- b. In keeping with the spirit and intent of this Policy, Personnel shall:
  - 1. Notify management of any suspicious workplace activity or situations or incidents that they observe or that they are aware of that involve other employees, former employees, customers, or visitors and that appear problematic. This includes, for example:
    - A. Threats or acts of violence.
    - B. Aggressive behavior.
    - C. Offensive acts.
    - D. Offensive comments or remarks.
  - 2. Not participate in any form of retaliation against other personnel for making a good faith report under this Policy.

# **Section III**

## **Employee Guidelines**

## Absenteeism & Tardiness

**Purpose:** To establish attendance standards to maintain an effective work force.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services expects habits of good attendance and punctuality on the part of its employees. The use of sick leave is not a right but a privilege granted by the Bertie County Board of Commissioners. Employees must report to their assigned station and be prepared to respond to calls at the designated start time. Excessive absenteeism (use of sick leave) and/or tardiness interfere with Emergency Services efficiency and is detrimental to quality patient care. In addition, it causes undue hardship on fellow employees. Excessive absenteeism and tardiness will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Absence**

- a. If you are absent due to an illness for two (2) or more consecutive work shifts, Bertie County Emergency Services requires written documentation from a doctor to verify that you were ill. Similar written documentation may be required to verify you are medically cleared to return to work after a two (2) consecutive shift absence.
- b. A physician's note must come from the primary care provider. If an employee is seen in the Emergency Department a copy of the discharge statement must accompany the physician's note.
- c. Sick Leave may be used for an illness, injury, or death in the employee's immediate family. Immediate family is defined as spouse, mother, father, children, brother, sister, grandparents, grandchildren, in addition to a combination of half, step, in-law, and adopted relationships that can be derived from those named.
- d. When you will be absent for consecutive shifts, you must call in each shift to ensure proper scheduling. BCES will never presume consecutive days of absence for sickness, and always expects each employee to arrive for work on time, unless otherwise notified in accordance with this Policy.
- e. If an employee is scheduled for a mandatory class and does not attend the absence from class will be considered an absence and will count toward absence occurrence.
- f. Employees that do not call in to indicate that they will be absent will be considered to have voluntarily terminated employment.
- g. Employees that call out sick shall not work their outside employment until they are capable to work their regular schedule with Bertie County Emergency Services. Failure to adhere will result in employee needing to choose between their outside employment and employment with Bertie County Emergency Services.

## **II. Excessive Absenteeism**

- a. Examples of excessive absences, but not limited to, that will result in disciplinary action.
  - Four (4) or more absences in a 12-month period.
  - Absent on days when requested time off has been denied.
  - Other patterns of excessive absenteeism.

## **III. Tardiness**

- a. Employee does not report to assigned station and/or is not prepared to begin work at designated start time.
- b. Employees must report to work by their assigned start time. Any employee who is unable to arrive prior to the start of their shift should make notification to Management, and to the crew member that they are relieving.
- c. Full-time employees should not be late to work for Bertie County Emergency Services because of coming from their part-time job. Any employee found in violation may have their secondary employment authorizations revoked.
- d. It is the employee's responsible to ensure proper coverage if they will be unable to report to work at the start of their shift. At no point should coverage be assumed. If coverage is not ensured, the employee who is tardy will be held accountable, not the employee waiting for them to arrive.

## **Jury Duty Leave**

**Purpose:** To accommodate employees called for civic duty.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services shall permit employees called for jury duty to serve, without negatively impacting their employment status or benefits, and to compensate them accordingly.

**Procedure:**

**I. Standards**

- a. Employees are encouraged to fulfill their civic responsibilities by serving jury duty when required.
  - 1. Personnel on jury duty will receive base pay from Bertie County Emergency Services,
  - 2. Employees are not required to use accumulated leave time to serve on jury duty.
- b. Any employee that has been called for jury duty must provide notice to his or her supervisor, as soon as notified by the court.
- c. If it is determined that serving jury duty will create an operational hardship, Bertie County Emergency Services may make efforts to ask to have the person excused from such service, if the employee agrees.
- d. All other benefits will be covered and will accrue during any jury duty leave as if the employee was continually working.
- e. The employee must provide verification of the jury duty leave, including official court attendance verification.

## **Moonlighting/Outside Work**

**Purpose:** To prevent conflicts of interest, maintain a high level of patient care, and help ensure that the focus of an employee's work is with Bertie County Emergency Services.

**Policy:** Any outside employment or volunteer service must be reported to management. At all times any outside employment or volunteer activities with another agency cannot interfere with job responsibilities at Bertie County Emergency Services.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards.**

- a. Any employee engaged in or contemplating outside employment must divulge the relationship, or contemplated relationship to his or her supervisor.
  1. Employees are expected to devote full efforts to their employment with Bertie County Emergency Services.
  2. Bertie County Emergency Services will work with employees to coordinate second jobs that are necessary out of need and/or desire.
- b. Requests for outside employment shall be reviewed, and will generally be approved, when the outside employment:
  1. Does not conflict with responsibilities, including the ability to work overtime as required in your position. Specifically:
    - A. Any outside employment shall not take precedence over Bertie County Emergency Services employment.
    - B. Employees are not permitted to arrive late or leave early, to meet obligations with any outside employment.
  2. Does not interfere with job duties and expectations. Specifically:
    - A. Outside employment that affects the ability to perform job function (including the requirements that employees arrive for work well rested) will be denied.
- c. Employees that are granted a request to work outside employment, but where the outside employment interferes with their ability to complete job duties with Bertie County Emergency Services, may be asked to cease the outside employment, or make schedule changes.

- d. Employees that are denied a request to work outside employment, yet continue to do so, will need to choose between the outside employment and employment with Bertie County Emergency Services.
- e. To the extent that the outside employment is a home-business or other business that can be conducted by phone or computer, under no circumstances shall an employee be permitted to conduct such outside employment while on work-time with Bertie County Emergency Services.

## Off-Duty Response

**Purpose:** The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance when an employee may feel compelled to respond a call on their personally owned vehicle (POV).

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services does not require or encourage personnel to respond to calls when off-duty. If an employee of Bertie County Emergency Services does respond to a call that they are in close proximity to there are requirements they must follow.

### **Procedure:**

- Response will be non-emergency, unless authorized by Administration. You must obey all traffic laws if responding in your POV.
- No employee should respond on their POV without direct authorization from Administration. This is to help reduce liability and maintain safety of all persons involved in the scene.
- Must not have consumed or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Incident you are responding to must be in close proximity to your location.
- You should have on proper attire to protect yourself from any potential hazards you may face when on duty.

## **Orientation Program**

**Purpose:** To help new employees become accustomed to Bertie County Emergency Services and how it operates, and to ensure that they have the opportunity to learn all relevant Policies and Procedures.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services will provide initial orientation training and will monitor new staff member performances during the nine-month Probationary Period.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards.**

- a. The Orientation Program is designed to help all employees become familiar with essential operating procedures, patient care protocols, and policies of Bertie County Emergency Services.
- b. As part of the Orientation Program, all employees will receive information about the requirements of the position, compensation and benefits, policies, and other relevant information regarding both employment and patient care.
- c. During the Orientation Program, new employees are expected to attend all mandatory and other scheduled training sessions. Training sessions may include such topics as patient care, HIPAA and patient privacy, legal compliance, and other relevant patient care and employment related topics.
- d. Employees are encouraged to ask questions about their employment or the policies of Bertie County Emergency Services during any of the Orientation Programs. Even after the Orientation Program and Probationary Period ends, employees are encouraged to voice their concerns and pose questions to their supervisor or other member of management.

## Overtime/Compensatory Time

**Purpose:** To comply with state and federal laws concerning pay practices.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services will pay non-exempt employees overtime utilizing a rate of 1 ½ times their normal base rate for hours worked over 40 scheduled hours in a work week. Exempt employees will not earn overtime/compensatory time for time over 40 hours in a work week.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Eligibility**

- a. All non-exempt full-time personnel can be eligible for overtime/compensatory time.
- b. Any and all scheduled work actually performed in excess of forty (40) hours in a week will be paid at a rate of 1.5 times the employee's regular rate for scheduled overtime.
- c. Time spent on vacation, sick, holiday, or personal days will not count as hours worked, and will not be eligible in either calculating the number of hours worked in the week, or in making overtime payments.

#### **II. Standards**

- a. Due to operational demands, emergencies, weather conditions, or other job requirements, overtime work may be required. When required, employees are to report for duty as directed. Failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.
- b. All unscheduled overtime must receive the supervisor's authorization.
- c. All employees should be willing to work and make accommodations as necessary in the interest of patient care and the needs of Bertie County Emergency Services, especially that of always having adequate coverage for its ambulances.
- d. Salaried employees who also meet the duties established under the law for executive, administrative and professional employees are not eligible for overtime. Exempt personnel are expected to work the number of hours necessary to complete their job.

- e. When an employee works an extra shift or covers a special event they will receive overtime for the hours worked if it occurs in excess of 40 hours worked, otherwise, it will be paid as regular hours.
- f. All hours worked must be properly documented to ensure proper payment calculation, including overtime, where applicable.

## **Performance Feedback**

**Purpose:** To improve the quality of care that is provided to our patients through careful monitoring of staff performance, and to provide for wage increases to reward good job performance.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services will evaluate its employees to identify strengths and weaknesses and establish goals, with the objective of improving overall job performance.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Job Description**

- a. Each employee will receive a copy of his or her job description outlining the duties of that position. This includes new hires and individuals promoted to new positions within Bertie County Emergency Services.

#### **II. Performance Review**

- a. Bertie County Emergency Services will periodically monitor employee performance and provide informal and formal feedback based on performance evaluation criteria. Performance Feedback and Goal Setting will usually be done:
  1. At the end of the initial Probationary Period.
  2. During the annual review period.
  3. At the end of a new Probationary Period following a job transfer or reassignment to new duties.
  4. Following a significant change in job performance, for which an employee is placed on probation.
- b. Administration will review job descriptions with all employees at each annual performance appraisal date. At that meeting:
  1. An action plan will be established based for future appraisals.
  2. Strengths and weaknesses, and areas that are in need of improvement will be discussed.
  3. An evaluation will be based upon actions as they relate to job duties, as well as personnel, patient, and outsider interactions.

4. A review of any disciplinary actions, and appropriate course of action required in light of any disciplinary history may occur.
- c. Comments or disagreements with performance should be discussed openly during the review session. If an employee is not satisfied with a supervisor's explanation of a performance appraisal, he or she may review the objection with the next highest ranking official.
- d. Periodic informal review may also occur. Administration may provide regular verbal feedback to staff to continually monitor performance and to serve as a resource for the staff member.

## **Progressive Discipline**

**Purpose:** To ensure that staff members adhere to all essential policies and standards of performance and behavior established by Bertie County Emergency Services, and to initiate corrective action when those standards are not met.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services will follow a progressive discipline approach whenever possible and as appropriate based upon the severity of the offense, and other important factors to help ensure compliance with established policies and standards.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Background**

##### **a. Progressive Disciplinary Model**

1. Bertie County Emergency Services follows a progressive discipline model. It is a structured, but flexible disciplinary plan, whereby discipline will be handled in phases, and the severity of the discipline will generally increase based upon the severity or frequency of the violation.
2. Bertie County Emergency Services will use this model where appropriate and necessary, but certain violations may warrant immediate and more serious action, based upon the nature or degree of the violation and other factors.
3. Progressive discipline is accomplished through four levels of sanctions for disciplinary violations - verbal warning, written warning, final written warning, and termination. Bertie County Emergency Services will attempt to follow this progression whenever possible, but it may skip a step or move to more serious discipline in its discretion, depending on the particular circumstances.
4. An overlying theme to administration of discipline is to ensure thorough review of each situation and to make an objective determination. Staff members subject to discipline will have an opportunity to be heard and to present their “side of the story” whenever possible, so that “due process” is provided.

#### **II. Standards**

- a. Depending upon the nature and severity of the offense, interviews and statements of persons involved in the incident may be required.

- b. A supervisor or other member of management will initiate corrective counseling and impose appropriate discipline if necessary after an investigation of the incident has occurred.
- c. All personnel involved in any incident investigation are expected to fully cooperate with any such investigation.
- d. Corrective counseling will be used whenever possible to correct work performance and improper conduct, or in situations where policies such as our Privacy and Compliance Policies have been violated.
- e. Disciplinary action will be imposed only when necessary, depending on the facts and circumstances of the incident. At no time will any disciplinary action be based upon race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class.

### **III. Levels of Violations**

- a. Bertie County Emergency Services' Progressive Discipline Model is structured as follows:
  1. Verbal warning. Note is placed in the personnel file as a reminder only of the date of violation. Verbal warnings are cleared after one (1) year.
  2. Written warning. Written documentation shall be placed in the personnel file.
  3. Final Written Warning. Written documentation of the nature of the offense is placed in the personnel file.
  4. Termination from employment.
- b. Minor violations will typically begin with a verbal warning, while more serious violations can result in a Final Written Warning or in rare cases, termination. At all times, because of the at-will nature of employment, Bertie County Emergency Services reserves the right to impose any level of discipline upon any employee for any type of violation as is necessary to maintain operational integrity.

### **III. Types of Violations**

- a. The following are examples of the types of conduct that can result in discipline, as imposed at the discretion of a supervisor or other member of management, based upon the degree and frequency of the offense.

1. Violations of any Policy contained within this Handbook, including but not limited to:
  - Repeated absence or tardiness.
  - Failure to maintain required personnel records.
  - Rules infractions.
  - Damage or loss of Department property due to carelessness.
  - Inappropriate language or conduct toward other personnel, patients, healthcare facility staff, guests or vendors, in violation of the “Sexual and Other Harassment” Policy and Non-Discrimination Commitment.
  - Violation of the “Professional Conduct” or “General Compliance” Policies.
  - Participating in dangerous practical jokes and horseplay.
  - Violation of policies pertaining to patient privacy.
  - Unsatisfactory performance or conduct.
  - Falsification of timekeeping or reimbursement records.
  - Insubordination.
  - Deliberate and willful destruction or misuse of patient information or property.
  - Possession, use, or under the influence of drugs, in violation of the “Alcohol and Substance Abuse” Policy.
  - Violation of the “Workplace Violence” Policy.
  - Theft or other misappropriation of Department property.
2. Any patient care related offense, or other violation related to licensure, certification, or term of employment, based upon Bertie County Emergency Services or State EMS Agency requirements.

#### **IV. Documentation**

- a. All written warnings, investigations, and other documentation related to an incident investigation shall be retained in the staff member’s personnel file.

#### **V. Non-work Activities**

- a. Generally, Bertie County Emergency Services will not initiate corrective counseling or impose discipline for actions and events that occur on non-work time. However, to the extent that unacceptable off duty conduct affects Bertie County Emergency Services, or your ability to perform job duties, appropriate discipline may be imposed.
- b. A supervisor or appropriate member of management shall have the discretion to impose appropriate discipline in situations where off duty activities adversely affect Bertie County Emergency Services, its reputation, its obligations, or your ability to perform your job.

## **Reporting to Work Well Rested**

**Purpose:** To maintain high levels of quality patient care by ensuring that personnel are not overworked and are able to function effectively.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services encourages all employees to report to duty well rested, with a minimum of 8 hours of “down time”, and able to meet the needs of the public and patients that we serve.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards.**

- a. Because we provide emergency patient care, keen judgment, skill, and safe performance of job duties are required at all times. To do this, all personnel must report to work well-rested at the start of his or her scheduled shift.
- b. To the extent that a second job prohibits personnel from being able to perform their duties for Bertie County Emergency Services, because insufficient rest affects the quality of care, the staff member may be asked to go home, and be will not receive any pay for the remainder of the shift. Likewise, in situations where personnel appear overtired or otherwise exhausted due to insufficient rest, for any reason whatsoever, and where patient care may be affected, the personnel may be requested to return home, and be denied pay for the shift.
- c. In addition to other employment, personnel are asked to schedule other personal outside activities appropriately, so as to be well rested and alert when reporting for duty.
- d. Insufficient rest and other symptoms of exhaustion can affect the ability to perform job duties, and jeopardize the well-being of patients and co-workers. In the interest of maintaining a safe work environment, and our commitment to the highest level of patient care, we expect everyone’s cooperation with this Policy.
- e. A staff member who routinely arrives to work not well rested, or who shows signs of exhaustion such that patient care may be jeopardized may also face disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

## **Reporting Workplace Injury/Workers' Compensation**

**Purpose:** To comply with federal and state laws concerning safety in the workplace, to protect employees from injury in the workplace, and to provide wage loss and medical benefits when a staff member is injured on the job and cannot work.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services requires its employees to report all instances of injuries at the workplace so that appropriate steps may be taken. Strict adherence to this Policy is necessary to ensure appropriate benefits are provided when there is a bona fide workplace related illness or injury.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards**

- a. Any personnel suffering an injury while on-duty shall promptly advise their supervisor and complete appropriate paperwork, as required by Bertie County Human Resources and/or the relevant state agency. Injuries include, but are not limited to:
  1. Injuries of any nature sustained in any Bertie County Emergency Services vehicle (received while performing job duties).
  2. Injuries sustained as a result of moving and transporting patients.
  3. Injuries received as a result of patient care (i.e. needle sticks, cuts, possible infectious disease exposure).
  4. Injuries or illness that require medical treatment that occurred as a result of the performance of job duties.
- b. All relevant state agency reporting requirements shall apply.

## **Sleep Time on 24 Hour Shifts**

**Purpose:** To allow all employees who work a shift of at least 24 hours to sleep or rest during designated periods while on duty.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services offers a sleep time program to employees working 24 hour shifts or longer, in accordance with the following procedures.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards.**

- a. Emergency services may be required to work shifts of 24 hours or more to meet the needs of the Department and to ensure prompt provision of emergency medical services. When an employee works a 24-hour shift, the employee will be permitted to sleep or rest during designated rest periods during that shift.
- b. Due to the possibility of long-distance interfacility transfers, as well as standard 911 call volume, EMS and NET employees should report to work well rested for the start of their shifts, but are also permitted to sleep or rest when not actively involved in response or station duties. This is to help ensure the safety of both the crew and the patients in these situations.
- c. Crew members are permitted to sleep or rest at any point during their shift, but only at such time that all daily, weekly, and response duties have been completed in their entirety.
- d. Crew members should not sleep in the common areas of the stations, but rather go to the assigned sleeping quarters for the station. This helps to ensure that your partner is able to move about the station without having to worry about disrupting your sleep. It also reduces the public perception of crews not working should they come by the station.
- e. Only one crew member is permitted to be sleeping at any given time. This is to help ensure that phone calls are answered, radio traffic is monitored, and that someone is available to answer needs of the public should they come by the station.
- f. At no time is an employee to be out of uniform, even while sleeping. This is to both limit the risk of inappropriate contact or sights between employees, as well as continuing to ensure that the 90-second chute time is maintained.

## **Solicitation, Distribution of Literature, and Use of Bulletin Boards**

**Purpose:** To avoid distractions and unnecessary interruptions during work-time, and to avoid excessive clutter at our work sites.

**Policy:** Bertie County Emergency Services prohibits solicitation of one employee by another employee during working time, and distribution of unauthorized literature at all times.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Solicitation**

- a. Personnel are prohibited from solicitation while on “working time.”
  1. “Working time” is defined as all time when ones duties require that he or she be engaged in Bertie County Emergency Services related tasks, but does not include an employee's own time, or break time, or designated rest time or when not engaged in work activities
  2. To avoid annoyance to patients and others, solicitation is prohibited at all times in any patient care areas, including in any vehicle in which a patient is on board, or at the scene of an incident.

#### **II. Distribution of Literature**

- a. Personnel are not permitted to distribute advertising material, handbills, printed or written literature of any kind at any time in the work areas, including in any Bertie County Emergency Services vehicles.

#### **III Solicitation/Distribution by Non-Employees**

- a. Solicitation, distribution of literature, or trespassing by non-personnel on the premises is prohibited at all times.

#### **IV. Use of Bulletin Boards**

- a. Official Department bulletin boards are an important means of communicating information of interest and importance.
- b. Personnel should regularly check these Department boards for important announcements, schedule changes, continuing education classes, and so forth.
- c. These bulletin boards are for items of interest to the Department that are specifically related to Department workplace activities. Only management may post materials on the bulletin boards. These boards are not to be used for any

personal postings, fundraising activities, political views, and other non-Department related issues.

- d. Personnel shall not post or remove any material from the Department bulletin boards without permission from a supervisor.
- e. The Department may, in its discretion, establish a separate bulletin board for postings of general interest to all employees.

## **Wages and Pay Period**

**Purpose:** To ensure high quality of care and maintain integrity in the workplace and to make certain that staff members report to work and document the time worked.

**Policy:** As an emergency response agency, it is essential that all employees report to work on time and that they record work time completely and honestly.

### **Procedure:**

#### **I. Standards**

- a. All employees should be at their assigned workstations ready to respond at the start of their shift.
- b. All employees shall adhere to the terms of the “Scheduling” Policy, including the provisions for calling out, and trading shifts with other personnel.
- c. Due to the nature of our business, there are no designated meal breaks during the scheduled shift for field staff. Field staff members are paid for the full work shift and are permitted to take meal breaks as the call volume permits. All field staff members must remain ready to respond during meal breaks.
- d. Field staff members are expected to work their full shift, as reported on the work schedule, unless provisions have been made and approved by a supervisor, or unless an emergency situation warrants an early departure. In all cases, changes to the schedule must be approved of by your supervisor, and appropriate coverage must occur.

#### **II. Definitions**

- a. For purposes of this Policy, “Field Staff Members” means EMTs, Paramedics, and others actively engaged in patient care in the field.
- b. For purposes of this Policy, “Management Staff” means all administrative and financial staff who perform administrative functions and are not engaged in directly providing EMS or ambulance service.

#### **III. Work Week**

- a. The designated “work week” for Bertie County Emergency Services for calculating overtime eligibility and other purposes for EMS employees is the seven (7) consecutive days starting at 07:00am Sunday and ending at 07:00am the following Sunday. For NET employees, the “work week” is defined as the seven (7) consecutive days starting at 06:00am Sunday and ending at 06:00am the following Sunday.
- b. Because of the nature of our operation, there is no standard work shift. Each employee may have a different work shift, with different days off, within the standard pay week that runs from Sunday to Sunday.

#### **IV. Hours of Work**

- a. All employees will be assigned and expected to work the shift periods assigned to them.

#### **V. Recording Work Time.**

- a. Employees are responsible for clocking in and out using EMS Manager at the start and end of their shift. If an employee forgets to clock in/out, they should do so at the moment that they first remember and include the correct time in their notes.
- b. Anyone found falsifying a time clock entry or anyone clocking in/out another employee will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.
- c. Any employee who forgets to clock in/out may experience a delay in receiving their paycheck.

#### **VI. Pay Day**

- a. The official pay day is the every other Friday for Field Staff members, and last business day of the month for Management Staff.
- b. Paychecks issued on pay day will cover all regular, overtime, and holiday pay for the immediately preceding two weeks for Field Staff, and for the entire month for Management Staff.
- c. All staff is required to participate in Direct Deposit.

# **Section IV**

## **Operational Guidelines**

## OPERATIONS – GENERAL

**Purpose:** To provide continuity among all Bertie County Emergency Services personnel in understanding general operational standards whether they are of an emergency or non-emergency nature and to provide guidance in routine daily activities.

A. **Report between crews:** The off-going and on-coming crews will meet in the designated area. The off-going crew will report the unit status to the on-coming crew. Last minute cleaning and restocking of the unit should take place at this time.

B. **Daily Duties:** The following items are expected to be conducted each and every shift, and all station personnel are expected to participate, unless engaged in other approved activities. No crew member should be sleeping, watching TV, or doing other “down-time” activities while other crew members are actively engaged in daily duties.

- Check EMS Units to ensure all equipment is present and in good working order.
- Wash EMS Units - (Exception: during inclement weather conditions)
- Vacuum, Sweep, and Mop all Interior station floors
- Sweep, and mop, apparatus floor if needed
- Empty all trash cans and replace liners
- Clean and Disinfect all bathrooms and replenish supplies

C. **Weekly Duties:** The following items are expected to be conducted on the appropriate day of the week. These duties are to be performed by all station personnel before engaging in any “down-time” activities.

### **Monday**

- Inspect and replace all expired medical supplies. This includes medications, airway supplies, IV Fluids, catheters etc.
- Check all station medical supply inventory cabinets for expiration dates and replace as necessary.
- Report supply needs to the Clinical Affairs Officer.
- Trash to the curbside by 7:30, Station 1 only.

### **Tuesday**

- Daily Duties

### **Wednesday**

- Clean bay floors
- Clean up around the exterior of the station, including picking up cigarette butts, trash, and debris, and areas in front of the doors and bays.

## **Thursday**

- Daily duties.
- Trash to the curbside for collection at all stations by 7:30.

## **Friday**

- Extensive cleaning of station and living quarters
- Clean behind and under all furniture
- Dust all surfaces
- Clean all windows and window sills
- Clean all appliances
- Disinfect all tables and counter tops
- Inspect front and rear of stations for trash and debris - Remove as necessary
- Clean out refrigerator

## **Saturday**

- Daily Duties

## **Sunday**

- Decontamination of EMS units, including:
- Removal of all items inside the patient compartment area, wiping down inside cabinets using disinfectant cleaner
- Wipe down all surfaces inside the patient compartment and cab of the unit using disinfectant cleaner.
- Removal of equipment from all exterior compartments and wipe down all equipment using disinfectant cleaner.

D. Between Calls: Personnel will remain within their assigned response district, unless engaged in a specific task authorized by Administration.

E. Meal Breaks: Meal breaks are not guaranteed and will be taken as time is available between calls.

F. Chute Time: It is the responsibility of all EMS employees to ensure that they keep a chute time of under 90 seconds. Chute time is defined as the time from dispatch to the unit being en route. Units are en route when both crew members are in the unit and the vehicle is ready to leave for the call. Any crew member(s) found to habitually exceed a chute time 90 seconds will be subject to disciplinary action.

- G. **Response Times:** It is the responsibility of all EMS employees to ensure that the requirement to respond to calls in under 20 minutes, 90% of the time is met. This is both a Departmental, County, and State requirement. Any call that results in a response time of greater than 20 minutes is required to be reported to the EMS Division Chief, along with an explanation as to the reasons for being greater than 20 minutes. This should be done via email for record keeping purposes. Any crew member(s) with a pattern of habitually responding in excess of 20 minutes, may be subject to disciplinary action.
- H. **NET Response Times:** It is the responsibility of all NET employees to ensure that response times are met for both scheduled and non-scheduled trips.
1. **For scheduled trips:** Crews are expected to arrive at the designated pick up time given to them by the Transport Coordinator. There should be no reason for a crew to be late without direct notification to the Transport Coordinator.
  2. **For non-scheduled trips:** Crews are expected to respond to non-scheduled trips and be on site for pick up within 15 minutes for requests originating from within Bertie County, unless otherwise approved by the Transport Coordinator. For calls originating outside of Bertie County, crews are expected to be en route to the pick-up location within 10 minutes of notification.
  3. Any crew member(s) found to habitually violate these rules may be subject to disciplinary action.
- I. **Driver's License:** All employees must have a valid North Carolina driver's license and good driving record. Bertie County Emergency Services reserves the right to investigate driving records at any time deemed necessary.
- J. **Ambulance Seating:** There shall be no more than two (2) persons riding in the front of any Bertie County Emergency Services unit. No person riding shall sit on any equipment of other structure not designated for seating.
- K. **Seat Belt:** Seat belts and shoulder harnesses will be worn at all times when in the front of any Bertie County Emergency Services unit.
- L. **Backing:** When a patient is not on board the unit or does not require constant attention, the attending technician shall assist the driver in backing at all times by placing himself/herself near the rear of the vehicle and directing the driver. If you cannot see or hear the spotter **DO NOT BACKUP!** The driver should perform a 360 degree walk around the vehicle prior to getting into the driver's seat and backing. In short, unless patient care is actively in progress, an ambulance should never be in reverse without a spotter to guide them.

- M. Cleaning and restocking unit: Following a call, the driver is responsible for cleaning and restocking the unit. Both technicians are responsible for the supplies and cleanliness throughout the shift.
- N. Fueling: When fueling up a unit, turn off the vehicle's engine. Enter the correct mileage and your PIN number when accessing the pumps. Units will be fueled prior to completion of shift.
- O. Food/Drink: The consumption of food and drink in the ambulance is prohibited. The transportation, in the cab only, of food and drink. From a restaurant or store back to assigned station, is allowed as long the product remains unopened. No food or drink should be left on any unit.
- P. Building Security: Stations shall be secured at all times.
- Q. ID Cards: ID cards will be issued to each employee. Employees must have their ID cards with them at all times and visible when on-duty. Employees will be responsible for the cost (\$10) to replace a damaged or lost ID card.
- R. Personal Protective Equipment: PPE is furnished by Bertie County Emergency Services for the protection of employees. Its use is not elective, but required. Failure to utilize the proper PPE based on the situation is grounds for disciplinary action.

## **OPERATIONS-EMERGENCY**

- A. Emergency Situation: An emergency is defined as any situation requiring the response of Bertie County Emergency Services to unforeseen events or circumstances that could result in injury or illness requiring immediate emergency medical care.
- B. Call Assignment: Crews will be notified by unit number from Bertie 911 that they have an emergency assignment.
- C. Driver: The driver shall write down all necessary directions and information, verifying them on a map when necessary.
  - a. Attending Technician: During response, the attending technician will handle all radio traffic, assist the driver with directions, and watch for approaching traffic.
  - b. Intersections: BCES units will come to a complete stop at all intersections

where stop signs or red lights are displayed in the unit's direction of travel. Units shall proceed only when it has been determined that all traffic has yielded the right of way.

- c. Railroad Tracks: BCES units will come to a complete stop at all railroad crossing, turn off siren, and look both ways for oncoming trains before proceeding with emergency response.
- d. Emergency lights & Siren Use: When responding to an emergency call, BCES units shall use all emergency lights and sirens as required by state law.
- e. Speed Limits: On emergency calls drive safely and defensively. Under no circumstance shall posted limits be exceeded by more than fifteen (15) MPH.
- f. Stopping in Roadway: When a unit arrives on the scene and must be stopped in the roadway, emergency lights will be left on at all times with the high idle engaged.

D. County Lines: Respond without delay. Lines will be disregarded on emergency calls. Emergency care will be rendered regardless of the location. At the earliest convenient time county involved will be notified of the call.

- a. Triage: When more than one person requires emergency care, the technicians will work as a team to triage the patients. If additional assistance is needed the senior technician will notify Bertie 911 of additional resources needed.

E. Additional Ambulances: When additional ambulances are needed the senior technician will assign and designate priority patients to the assisting units and establish Incident Command, until an EMS officer arrives and assumes command.

F. Patient care/equipment: On every call the crew will take inside the scene location, the jump bag, oxygen, monitor, and the stretcher should be taken to the door. Only in circumstances in which the patient is clearly visible before the crew exits the vehicle, is it acceptable for the crew to not bring all equipment to the patient's side.

G. Abandonment: The attending technician will not leave the patient for any reason and will remain with the patient until relieved by someone with equal or higher certification or nursing staff upon arrival at the Emergency Department.

H. Emergency lifting Assistance: On emergency calls where lifting assistance is needed, request the on duty Supervisor for additional manpower with first consideration given to the patients urgency.

I. Refusal of Care: When a patient who is in need of medical care refuses care, every effort shall be made to get the patient to accompany you to a medical facility. After a patient

repeatedly refuses transportation, under N.C. State Law, Emergency Medical Service EMTs cannot forcibly restrain a patient and force transportation against his wishes. Make a reasonable effort to obtain a release signature on the appropriate refusal form. Attempt to have a bystander, fire fighter, or law enforcement officer sign as witnessing the refusal.

- J. **Minor Patients Refusing Care:** In cases of patients under 18 years of age refusing transportation, only a parent or legal guardian can override the minor's decision. In cases of life threatening symptoms, the EMT can determine that the minor is unable to care for himself and may act in his best interest.
1. Reasonable effort should be made to contact a parent or legal guardian prior to leaving the minor patient, or treating the patient, if it is not immediately life threatening.
  2. **Efforts to contact parent or legal guardian should be made through the 911 center so that the call can be recorded.**
  3. All attempts at contacting the parent should be clearly documented, as well as instructions received from a parent. Failed attempts at contact should also be clearly documented, and if possible witnessed. Documentation of a reasonable effort is of the utmost importance under these circumstances.
- K. **Disaster Situations & Response:** Upon becoming aware of an EMS disaster/MCI alert issued by EMS Administration, **all vacation, educational leave, and/or other types of leave shall be cancelled** for the duration of the event. All BCES personnel shall be available for immediate call back via home or cell phone, radio, or pager and be prepared for a minimum 72 hour deployment once recalled for duty. Please refer to specific disaster plans for further information. Examples include but are not limited to: Hurricanes, mass casualty events involving large numbers of patients, and pandemic situations.
- L. **Patient Care Reports:** Patient care reports (PCRs) are to be completed as soon as possible upon completion of the call. All PCRs are required to be completed prior to the end of a crew member's shift. Only in rare, or extreme circumstances will an employee be permitted to not complete a PCR prior to the end of their shift, and only with direct approval from Administration.

## **OPERATION-NON EMERGENCY**

- A. Non-Emergency Situation: A non-emergency situation is any not meeting the criteria for an emergency.
- B. Traffic Regulations: All emergency traffic shall have priority over non-emergency traffic. Vehicles operating on non-emergency call will obey all traffic regulations.
- C. Routine Lifting Assistance: BCES crews needing additional manpower should request another EMS unit or their supervisor. First responders should be used only if other EMS help is not available.

## **COMMUNICATIONS/ RADIO USAGE**

- A. Listen: There are no private frequencies. You should listen prior to keying the transmit button to minimize interference or confusion.
- B. Remain Calm: Words or voice inflections that indicate irritation, disgust, or sarcasm, will not be used.
- C. Avoid Familiarity: Use unit or personnel number on the radio, NOT NAMES.
- D. 2400 Hour Time: Express all times in the 24-hour system.
- E. Plain Text: All radio traffic by BCES personnel shall be in plain English. The use of 10-codes, color codes, or signals can cause confusion and will not be used.
- F. Use of Patients Name: a patient's name will not be used over the radio at any time.

## **PATIENTS UNDER ARREST & MENTAL PATIENTS**

- A. Patient Under Arrest: Any patient under arrest is under the authority of the law enforcement agency. The law enforcement agency can dictate the patient's disposition in treatment and/or transportation. If the prisoner is transported, he/she must be accompanied by law enforcement officer at all times. Following in another vehicle is not sufficient.
- B. Voluntary Commitments: For mental patients being voluntarily committed to a medical facility, the technician or family member may act in their behalf in admitting them. Law enforcement is not required to accompany the patient.

Involuntary Commitments: Mental patients being involuntarily committed must be accompanied by a law enforcement officer. A patient will not be committed without a

law enforcement officer present to release custody. Transportation out of Bertie County is the responsibility of the Bertie County Sheriff's Office and EMS may be contacted to assist in transporting the patient to an appropriate medical facility. The on-duty medical control physician or the physician evaluating the patient must request an ambulance and indicate a medical necessity for transport by ambulance.

# **Section V**

## **Narcotics Policy**

## **Obtaining Narcotics**

All narcotic supplies will be purchased through approved vendors, utilizing the DEA Form -222 (Official Order Forms - Schedules I & II).

Order Forms must be completed and handled according to the instructions on the reverse of the form (DEA-222) being sure to record the amount and date received.

Supplies received shall be inspected for expiration dates and damage potential prior to acknowledgement of receipt.

A copy of the DEA-222 should be included in the notebook contained inside of the main narcotics safe.

### **E. Controlled Substance Procedures**

1. At the completion of a shift, both the on-coming and off-going Paramedic will report to the ambulance and visually inspect the controlled substances together. Inspection will include ensuring that the narcotics are sealed and recording the drug seal number on the appropriate check-off sheet, as well as ensuring the quantity of each controlled substance is correct and recorded on the check-off sheet as well.
2. Both Paramedics are to sign the controlled substance check-off sheet at the point in which the visual inspection is done at shift change. There should never be a circumstance in which pre-signing of the check-off sheet is performed.
3. The Paramedic is to maintain possession of the carabiner containing the lock box key at all times. At no time should the key be passed to a lower certified technician or not be in the Paramedic's direct possession. In the event a Paramedic needs to leave without coverage arriving, the EMS Division Chief should be contacted for instructions on how to properly secure the narcotics.
4. After administration of any controlled substance, the Paramedic should waste any remaining medication in the presence of a nurse or physician at the ED, not their partner on the EMS unit. If no medication is to be wasted, the empty medication container and delivery device should still be shown to either a nurse or physician at the ED. Once completed, the nurse or physician should sign as a witness on the appropriate section of the controlled substance log. Only in circumstances in which the staff at the ED is unwilling to sign as a witness should the Paramedic have their partner serve as the witness. This is to limit the risk of possible diversion.

5. All controlled substance administrations are to be recorded in the controlled substance log, to include the date, PCR number, medication administered, amount given, amount wasted, Paramedic signature, and witness signature.
6. Once the call is completed, if it is prior to 2200hrs, the Paramedic should contact the EMS Division Chief, or the Emergency Services Director in the Chief's absence, to resupply the medication administered.
7. If it is after 2200hrs, unless the amount on hand on the EMS unit is above 50% of daily quantities, notification can wait until the next morning. If the stock is below 50%, immediate notification should be made to the Chief or Director for resupply.
8. Random inspections of controlled substances will be performed monthly, to include a check of the count, as well as check-off sheet.
9. Any employee suspected of improperly using or handling controlled substances will be subject to the terms of the substance abuse testing policy.

### **Policy Enforcement**

Failure to properly comply with the aforementioned policy will result in the following personnel actions being taken.

- First offense will result in a **FINAL WRITTEN WARNING**.
- Second offense may result in **TERMINATION**

It is imperative that this policy be strictly adhered to.

# **Section VI**

## **Forms and Other Resource Materials**

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**Handbook Acknowledgment**

This Personnel Handbook describes important information about Bertie County Emergency Services, and I understand that I should consult with Bertie County Emergency Services management regarding any questions not answered in the Handbook. However, it is not all-inclusive of the policies or procedures of Bertie County Emergency Services.

The information, Policies and benefits described in this Handbook are subject to change. Whenever possible, all such changes will be communicated through official notices, and I understand that revised information may supersede, modify or eliminate existing policies at any time and without any prior notice.

As an employee, I have entered into my relationship with Bertie County Emergency Services voluntarily and acknowledge that there is no guarantee of employment. Accordingly, either Bertie County Emergency Services or I can terminate the relationship at any time. I understand that this Handbook is not a contract of employment.

I have received the Handbook and I understand that it is my responsibility to read and comply with the policies contained in this Handbook and any revisions made to it.

I also understand that I will be subject to any appropriate disciplinary action, in accordance with guidelines set forth in this Handbook, for violations of policies set forth herein. Again, it is my responsibility to read all of these policies, and ignorance of the policy will not be a valid excuse for any policy violation, because it is my responsibility to understand these policies and ask any questions to help clarify anything in which I have questions about.

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EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

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DATE

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EMPLOYEE NAME (TYPED OR PRINTED)

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ADMINISTRATIVE SIGNATURE

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DATE

**Windsor, North Carolina  
October 16, 2014  
Public Hearing  
Solid Waste and Recycling Convenience Centers**

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for their regularly scheduled meeting at 10:00AM in the Commissioners Room located at 106 Dundee Street Windsor, NC. The following members were present or absent:

Present: J. Wallace Perry, Chairman  
Charles L. Smith, Vice-Chairman  
Rick Harrell  
John Trent  
Ronald "Ron" Wesson

Absent: None

Staff Present: County Manager Scott Sauer  
Clerk to the Board Sarah S. Tinkham  
County Attorney Lloyd Smith  
Sheriff John Holley  
Planning Director Traci White

Media members present included Gene Motley of the Roanoke-Chowan News Herald, and Barry Ward of the Bertie Ledger-Advance.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Trent gave the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

**OPENING REMARKS**

Chairman Perry welcomed all of those present, and thanked everyone for their attendance at tonight's hearing.

Mr. Perry gave the following opening remarks:

Good evening, everyone. Last year on October 10<sup>th</sup>, the Board of Commissioners held a public hearing in this courtroom about the curbside trash and recycling proposal.

Many of you were here for that meeting, and we want to thank you for participating in tonight's meeting.

Last year the Board decided to defer any decision on the proposed curbside service, and the Board agreed to extend the current contract with Waste Industries until June 30, 2015.

The annual cost for the 5 convenience centers is \$491,000 and is paid from the General Fund, which is supported primarily by your tax dollars. This cost is to provide for the operation of the convenience centers and the transportation of our solid waste and recyclables to the landfill. Bertie County residents are not charged for disposal at the landfill which was negotiated almost twenty years ago when the landfill was located in our County.

During our budget meetings this spring, there was a brief discussion about extending the convenience center contract, but there was practically no one in the audience to hear our deliberations. So it was agreed that no action should be taken at that time.

Later this summer, Waste Industries presented the County with a proposal to extend our current contract for the convenience centers through June of 2020—which is almost six years from now.

Bertie County approved a binding five year contract in 2001, and also in 2006. The proposed contract extension will be a binding contract for the convenience centers until June 30 2020.

At our first meeting in September the Board voted to hold a public hearing on the matter, and we are here this evening to listen to you.

Last year our topic was the proposed curbside service, and we heard comments for and against it. We also listened to comments about the current operations at our convenience centers.

Tonight our topic is the contract extension with Waste Industries and the continued operation of the County's convenience centers. And again, we welcome your comments.

At our last Board meeting on October 6<sup>th</sup>, we heard from Republic Services Inc., which is the company operating the regional landfill here in Bertie County. They too, have expressed an interest in providing convenience center services.

At the last meeting, the Board voted to accept competing proposals for the operation of convenience centers, as we consider the contract extension proposal from Waste Industries. Proposals are due on November 6<sup>th</sup>. This Board will make a decision after that date.

We are not here this evening to review the contract. It is posted on the County's website and available for everyone to read. There are also copies of the current contract available for you tonight.

We are here tonight to listen. We want your comments and we welcome your opinion as the Board considers the proposed extension for our convenience centers which have been in operation since 2001.

There are sign-up sheets for the speakers, and I will take each sheet individually so that I can recognize you in the order that you signed up. So, if you didn't have a chance to sign on the first sheet, there will be another one available.

Speakers will be limited to three (3) minutes and our county attorney, Lloyd Smith will be our time keeper.

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

Chairman Perry opened the floor to public comments using the designated sign in sheet.

Willie G. Bazemore of the Republican Community stated that he was against the proposed curbside solid waste and recycling program as it would be an additional cost to taxpayers while the convenience sites are currently free of charge for Bertie County residents.

Brenda Cowand of Merry Hill showed concern regarding the size of the potential curbside garbage trucks, and stated that she did not believe they belonged in a rural setting. She also commended Vice Chairman Smith for his honesty that was displayed in his editorial in a recent Bertie Ledger-Advance. She also stated that she “agreed 100%” with Mr. Smith.

Joe Hoggard of San Souci stated that the public was supposed to “speak,” and that the Commissioners were supposed to “listen.” Mr. Hoggard reiterated that he knew the Commissioners knew where he stood on this issue, and that he appreciated the current convenience sites as he is able to drop off trash at any time. He stated that a curbside program would be more inconvenient as trash and recycling would only be collected on one day.

Norman Cherry of Lewiston-Woodville stated that he was for the convenience sites, and that he was able to drop off trash at his convenience. He also commended Mr. Smith for his contribution to a recent edition of the Bertie Ledger-Advance.

Diane P. Kimbrough of Lewiston-Woodville stated that she was in favor of the current convenience sites.

Francis Byrum of Windsor thanked the Board for this opportunity for the public to speak on this matter. She stated that she appreciated Vice Chairman Smith’s words in the Bertie Ledger-Advance. Ms. Byrum also showed concern for the cleanliness of the County, and that the County is the cleanest it has ever been. She feared that if the convenience sites were to be discontinued that the beauty of the County would suffer due to excessive littering and dumping.

Norma Yanez, a representative of Waste Industries, thanked the Board as well as the citizens for allowing Waste Industries to provide the conveniences sites, and that Waste Industries does wish to continue the operation of the convenience sites.

Will Outlaw of Windsor recommended that the Board look to increase revenue in the County elsewhere by recruiting more big businesses such a Wal-Mart, or another grocery store, to assist with revenue as well as job creation.

Shelby Castelloe of the Bertie County Farm Bureau stated that he supported the current convenience sites, and that if a citizen was interested in curbside they could always hire a local company to provide them with that service.

Stewart White of Colerain thanked the Board for allowing this public hearing to take place, and complimented Vice Chairman Smith on the write up he provided to the Bertie Ledger-Advance. Mr. White continued by thanking Vice Chairman Smith and Chairman Perry for their many years of service. Mr. White concluded by stating that he highly encouraged the Board to continue to support the current convenience sites.

Wade Perry of Midway stated that adding anymore fees on top of current taxes was “too much,” and that he was impressed with the neatness of the current convenience sites. He stated that he was in agreement with the rest of the citizens present regarding the continuation of the convenience sites.

Lucille Phelps stated that she disagreed with Commissioner Wesson regarding the effectiveness of a curbside program, and that her main concern is “keeping our County clean.” She stated that she has stopped and picked up illegally dumped trash bags on the side of the road, and has delivered them to an appropriate convenience site. She stated that the convenience sites are the best solution to keeping the County clean. She also thanked Vice Chairman Smith for his words in the Bertie Ledger-Advance.

Larry Taylor thanked the Board for providing the public the opportunity to speak tonight, and stated his concern about the once a month frequency of trash trucks being able to pick up larger items such as washing machines, televisions, etc. He stated that after he recently replaced a washing machine that if there were a curbside pick up program in place, he would have to wait for the appropriate day to haul out the washing machine to the curb for pick up. He stated that he was glad he did not have to wait to discard of such items now at the convenience sites anytime during operational hours.

Garry Terry thanked everyone who had already spoken, and stated that curbside pick-up shouldn't be a mandated service.

Barbara Outlaw of Powellsville thanked Mr. Smith for his article in the Bertie Ledger-Advance, inquired about the current land fill and the possibility of it closing. She asked about what would happen in the event of its closing.

George Copeland stated that he did not feel the need to speak as his thoughts had already been expressed by others present.

John Davis of Merry Hill stated that according to his research, the matter of curbside trash pick-up was “dead,” and that the matter had died earlier this year. He stated that he understood what the Board was trying to do in looking to cut spending during the sequester, but that there was currently no motions for consideration on the table at this time to adopt a curbside trash and recycling pick-up program. He stated that the previous public hearing “worked,” and that “the Board heard you [the citizens].”

Kathy Myers of Merry Hill responded to Mr. Davis' comment stating that the curbside trash pick-up idea was “dead,” and stated that if that fact were known then some of the folks present would not feel the need to be here tonight. Ms. Myers stated that she was not in favor of a

curbside trash pick-up program as it would shift the cost from the County to the citizens. She stated that she was also skeptical of the methods used to explain the cost of the potential curbside program, and that she felt this matter should be put to a voter referendum.

Terry Pratt of Merry Hill stated that he had already made his opinions known, and that he is in favor of the current convenience sites, but that anyone who was in favor of curbside could hire a company to provide that elective service for them. He also thanked the Commissioners for continuing to open each of their meetings with a prayer as this process is being eliminated in other counties.

Milton Felton of Colerain stated that he would still need to go to the landfill if curbside trash pick-up were in place. Mr. Felton expressed concerns about the many citizens in the County that could not afford another bill, and that Vice Chairman Smith should have written his letter to the Bertie Ledger-Advance before the primary election.

Rev. Gary Cordon expressed his thanks to the Board for allowing this public forum to take place, and that he supported the decision of the Board to release requests for proposals (RFP) to other companies in the area so that the County can find the best possible deal for the operation of the convenience sites. He also recommended that the Board consider opening more convenience sites in the future. Lastly, he stated that he hoped the Board would continue to keep the lines of communication open between the Board and the citizens.

Monica Lassiter of Lewiston-Woodville stated that she was tired of hearing about curbside, and asked why citizens were still mentioning it. She stated that the Board was “misleading people,” even though the citizens had put their trust in the Board upon their elections.

A citizen interjected by asking about an excerpt in the October 15, 2014 issue of the Bertie Ledger-Advance stating that the entry in the Community section mentioned this public hearing being held in regards to a curbside solid waste and recycling pick-up program.

Chairman Perry asked County Manager Sauer to speak on this matter.

County Manager Sauer approached the podium, and read the paid advertisement that was sent to both the Bertie Ledger-Advance and the Roanoke-Chowan News Herald. The ad reads as follows:

***NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
BERTIE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS***

*The Bertie County Board of Commissioners will hold a Public Hearing to discuss and receive citizen comments regarding a proposed contract extension for the operation of the current solid waste and recycling convenience sites.*

*The Public Hearing will be held in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Courtroom of the Bertie County Courthouse located at 106 Dundee Street, Windsor, NC on **Thursday, October 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm.***

*If there are any questions, please feel free to contact Clerk to the Board, Sarah S. Tinkham, by phone at (252) 794-6110, or via email at [sarah.tinkham@bertie.nc.gov](mailto:sarah.tinkham@bertie.nc.gov).*

Mr. Sauer also responded to the confusion about the Community section in the Bertie Ledger-Advance. He stated that the County cannot control what the newspaper places into that section, but that the true purpose of tonight's public hearing was announced via paid advertisements in both publications on various dates.

Additionally, Chairman Perry requested that all of those present in favor of the continuation of the convenience sites to "raise their hands."

In response, the overall majority of citizens in the room were in favor of the continuation of the convenience sites.

After some additional discussion, Chairman Perry, Vice Chairman Smith, and Commissioner Harrell were all asked to stand, and be recognized for their many years of service to the County.

The outgoing Board members received a standing ovation.

Chairman Perry officially closed the public hearing.

**ADJOURN**

Chairman Perry adjourned the meeting at 8:22pm.

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J. Wallace Perry, Chairman

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Sarah S. Tinkham, Clerk to the Board

**Windsor, North Carolina  
October 20, 2014  
Minutes**

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners met for their regularly scheduled meeting at 7:00pm in the Commissioners Room located at 106 Dundee Street Windsor, NC. The following members were present or absent:

Present: J. Wallace Perry, Chairman  
Charles L. Smith, Vice-Chairman  
John Trent  
Ronald "Ron" Wesson  
Rick Harrell

Absent: None

Staff Present: County Manager Scott Sauer  
Clerk to the Board Sarah S. Tinkham  
Finance Director William Roberson  
EMS Division Chief Matt Leicester  
Emergency Services Director Mitch Cooper  
Network Administrator Joe Wilkes  
Assistant County Attorney Jonathan Huddleston  
NET Coordinator Kimberly Campbell  
Planning Director Traci White  
Economic Development Director Steve Biggs

Media members present included Gene Motley of the Roanoke-Chowan News Herald, as well as Thadd White of the Bertie Ledger-Advance.

Chairman Perry opened the meeting and thanked all of those present for their attendance.

**INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Trent gave the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Kathy Myers of Merry Hill approached the Board with additional concerns regarding the October 16, 2014 public hearing. She stated that she did not feel it was right for the Board to not publicly announce "the death of curbside trash pick-up." Ms. Myers also expressed concern with the Board placing blame on the citizens for not being informed, and that the Commissioners were elected and entrusted to act on behalf of the citizens.

Chairman Perry closed the floor to additional public comments.

Chairman Perry then recognized Commissioner Wesson.

Commissioner Wesson stated that he would like to respond to the public comments made at the latest public hearing.

Mr. Wesson announced that due to the amount of public feedback and support of the current solid waste and recycling convenience sites that he would like to make a **MOTION** to extend the use of the convenience sites, according to the best proposal response once chosen, and to completely “kill” the discussion on curbside solid waste and recycling pick-up. Commissioner Trent **SECONDED** the motion.

Upon the announcement of any needed further discussion by Chairman Perry, Commissioner Harrell asked for clarity on the current motion, and added that all bids are due to the County by November 6<sup>th</sup>.

With a motion being made and seconded, the **MOTION PASSED** unanimously to approve the motion as discussed.

Chairman Perry also informed all of those present that parliamentary procedure, and the word “tabled”, means that a matter can be brought up at a later date, but that the RFP from Waste Industries regarding curbside trash pick-up had expired six months after its submission.

Chairman Perry stated that the Board would not have been able to act on that RFP unless it were to be re-submitted.

### **APPOINTMENTS**

#### **Announcement of impending merger of court District-6A and District-6B by Hon. Brenda G. Branch and Hon. W. Rob Lewis**

Hon. Brenda G. Branch was present to announce the merger of court District-6A and District-6B.

She apologized for Hon. W. Rob Lewis’ absence, as he was on unable to attend at the last minute.

Judge Branch explained the upcoming changes that were to occur between the two districts, as well as the extensive process that was followed to receive feedback and suggestions from all of those who would be affected.

Judge Branch assured the Board that a press release, as well as the new court schedules, would be released in the coming days upon completion of their final reviews.

After a lengthy discussion, the Board thanked Judge Branch for the update.

### **Roanoke-Chowan Community College update by RCCC President, Dr. Michael Elam**

Dr. Michael Elam, President of RCCC, provided the Board with a booklet containing the RCCC President's Annual Report.

The report details recent student successes and achievements, details on the make-up of the student population, student awarded scholarships, as well information about the various projects that have taken place on campus this past year.

Dr. Elam assured the Board that he would continue to be visible and that he would be "listening to you [the Board] in order to provide additional services" to the Bertie County students currently attending RCCC.

Dr. Elam also reminded the Board of RCCC's partnership with the Bertie County Economic Development Department and its collaboration with the Kenan Institute.

Lastly, Dr. Elam thanked the Board for their reinvestment into the community college during the latest budget cycle, and assured them he would always be available to hear any of the Board's questions or concerns.

### **Planning Director, Traci White – presenting proposed revisions to the draft Manufactured Home Park Ordinance as recommended by the Planning Board subsequent to April 21, 2014 Public Hearing**

Planning Director, Traci White, and Assistant County Attorney, Jonathan Huddleston, provided the Board with a brief overview of the changes that have been made to the draft Manufactured Home Park Ordinance in response to the April 21, 2014 Public Hearing.

Mr. Huddleston and Mrs. White briefly walked the Board through a previously provided outline, and the Board discussed the changes as needed.

After some discussion, County Manager Sauer inquired about the Board's desired next steps regarding this ordinance.

Mr. Sauer suggested that the Board allow Mrs. White and Mr. Huddleston continue to polish the current draft as discussed, and have another draft ready for review and approval at another public hearing in the near future.

The Board agreed, and a public hearing date was set for Monday, November 17, 2014 at 7:00pm in tonight's meeting location. The public hearing will take place during the Board's regularly scheduled meeting.

## **BOARD APPOINTMENTS**

### **Latest Board Vacancy Advertisement – Bertie Ledger-Advance**

The Board received a copy of the latest Board vacancy advertisement. There was no action needed on this item.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

### **Approve minutes for Regular Session 10-6-14**

Vice Chairman Smith made a **MOTION** to approve minutes for Regular Session 10-6-14. Commissioner Trent **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

### **Approve minutes for Closed Session 10-6-14**

These minutes were deferred in order to receive feedback from the County Attorney.

### **Memorandum of Correction for Regular Session 9-8-14**

County Manager Sauer informed the Board that an error had been discovered in 9-8-14 regular session minutes.

The section of the minutes in question did not accurately reflect Board action, and upon further research, a vote was needed by the Board to amend the previously approved minutes.

County Manager Sauer explained that an error was made in the documentation of a motion within the September 8, 2014 official minutes of the Bertie County Board of Commissioners.

A motion was made by Commissioner Harrell to hold a public hearing to discuss a 6 year contract extension with Waste Industries for the current solid waste and recycling convenience sites. The motion was seconded by Vice Chairman Smith.

The minutes from September 8, 2014 mistakenly reflect a unanimous decision in favor of the public hearing, but it has recently come to County Manager Sauer's attention that there was opposition of this motion resulting in a 3-2 vote with Commissioner Trent and Commissioner Wesson in objection.

County Manager Sauer stated that after a thorough look back into staff notes and the meeting's audio recording that the official record should reflect that the consideration of the motion resulted in a 3-2 vote.

After some discussion, Commissioner Wesson made a **MOTION** to amend the 9-8-14 minutes as recommended by the County Manager. Vice Chairman Smith **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

## **DISCUSSION AGENDA**

### **EMS Update**

Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper, asked Matt Leicester to provide the EMS Update.

EMS Division Chief, Matt Leicester, provided the Board with a handout regarding the latest quarterly and yearly data available in regards to EMS calls.

In summary, from October 1, 2013-September 30, 2014, Bertie County EMS answered 3,373 calls with an average chute time of 79.62 seconds. The average response time for the calendar year was 10.25 minutes. Additionally, 94% of all calls were addressed by EMS personnel on scene in less than 20 minutes.

Additionally, Mr. Cooper asked NET Coordinator Kimberly Campbell to provide an update in regards to her department.

Ms. Campbell stated that the NET division had conducted a total of 89 calls so far with an average of 1.2 calls per day.

The Board inquired about the amount of calls needed per day to “break even” on the County’s investment.

County Manger Sauer stated that 5 calls were needed per day to break even.

Mr. Cooper stated that a large portion of the 89 calls conducted required longer distances to travel into different counties, and that those calls tend to make up the difference. For example, one round trip to Greensboro may generate revenue equivalent to three local transports.

Lastly, Mr. Cooper informed the Board that he was currently in contact with Colleton; the NET Department’s billing company, to come before the Board at their next meeting to provide an overview of the current revenue associated with the NET Department.

### **Review EMS Personnel Handbook and 2014 Standard Operating Guidelines**

Emergency Services Director, Mitch Cooper, provided the Board with copies of the latest draft of the EMS Personnel Handbook and 2014 Standard Operating Guidelines, and requested feedback from the Board on where the Department should move from here.

The Board acknowledged that more time was necessary to review the entire manual, and that they would like additional time to review it before approving it for use for new employees.

The Board also requested that Mr. Cooper submit the current draft to the County Attorney for their review.

The consensus was to defer this matter until another meeting.

In response to current events, Mr. Cooper addressed the Board regarding concerns of Ebola, and the plan of action if EMS staff were to come in contact with an Ebola stricken patient.

Mr. Cooper explained that Tyvex suits, masks, and other needed safety materials had been ordered to equip ambulance vehicles with the proper protection.

In addition, Mr. Cooper reported the he was in close contact with Vidant Bertie Hospital, and that a mock scenario would be conducted between the hospital, and Bertie EMS staff. The scenario would accurately depict the process and safety precautions needed for all parties to care for an Ebola stricken patient effectively while remaining safe from infection.

Mr. Cooper asked the Board for their patience as an Ebola case would take one of his ambulance vehicles out of service for at least four days in order to conduct the appropriate decontamination processes effectively.

In closing, Mr. Cooper stated that EMS is looking to be proactive in this matter, and prepared to address it at any time if there were to be a case of Ebola in the County.

### **Road Name Change Requests**

The Board received two Road Name Change requests in their electronic agenda packets.

Mr. Sauer reiterated to the Board that the County was still waiting to receive a more finely tuned Road Name Change Policy from the County Attorney, and that these items, for now, were purely informational.

County Manager Sauer stated that these will be the first two Road Name Change applications that will be reviewed under the new policy upon its completion.

### **Legislative request for support – local franchise new car and truck dealers**

County Manager Sauer presented this item as an informational piece, and stated that if the Board would like to support the measure, then they could visit the website address provided.

### **COMMISSIONERS REPORTS**

Commissioner Wesson informed the Board the he had been invited to attend the Coastal Resources meeting in Wilmington, NC. Mr. Wesson stated that the event will allow local County officials to work closely with Governor Pat McCrory on issues plaguing each of their counties.

The Commissioners had no remarks at this time.

### **COUNTY MANAGER'S REPORTS**

County Manager Sauer invited Finance Director, William Roberson, to provide a brief financial report to the Board.

The Board received a copy of the financial report, and Mr. Roberson briefly explained the findings in the report.

Additionally, County Manager Sauer reminded the Board of the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Local Elected Officials meeting at the Cashie Convention Center on Thursday, October 23, 2014 at 6:00pm.

County Manger Sauer also requested a brief Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(3) and N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(6).

### **COUNTY ATTORNEY'S REPORTS**

The Assistant County Attorney had no remarks at this time.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS CONTINUED**

There were no Public Comments in this section.

### **CLOSED SESSION**

By request of County Manager Sauer, Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to go into Closed Session pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with the County Attorney in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege that exists between the attorney and this public body and N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11(a)(6) to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of employment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or to hear or investigate a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual public officer or employee. Vice Chairman Smith **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

The Board shifts into Closed Session.

Commissioner Trent made a **MOTION** to return to Open Session. Vice Chairman Smith **SECONDED** the motion. The **MOTION PASSED** unanimously.

### **RECESS**

Chairman Perry recessed the meeting until 12:00pm (noon) on Tuesday, October 21, 2014 at The Town House Restaurant.

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J. Wallace Perry, Chairman

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Sarah S. Tinkham, Clerk to the Board

**Windsor, North Carolina  
October 27, 2014  
Roanoke Cashie River Center**

The Bertie County Board of Commissioners reconvened their October, 20, 2014 regular meeting as scheduled at the Roanoke Cashie River Center located at 112 W. Water Street., Windsor, NC 27983. The following members were present or absent:

Present: J. Wallace Perry, Chairman  
Charles L. Smith, Vice-Chairman  
John Trent  
Ronald "Ron" Wesson

Absent: Rick Harrell

Staff Present: County Manager Scott Sauer  
Clerk to the Board Sarah S. Tinkham  
Economic Development Director Steve Biggs  
Cooperative Extension Director Richard Rhodes  
Finance Director William Roberson

NC State Representatives: Dr. Robert Bardon, PhD  
Dennis Hazel, PhD  
James Jeuck  
Helene Cser  
Jessica Knight

EDC Board Members: Mike Neal, Chairman  
Vivian Saunders  
Lewis Hoggard

Other Attendees: Alton Perry  
Forest Ranger Mike Hoggard

No media or members of the public were present.

Chairman Perry reconvened the Bertie County Board of Commissioners from Monday, October 20, 2014.

**INVOCATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Commissioner Wesson gave the Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance.

**NCSU RESOURCE SUPPLY ASSESSMENT FOR BERTIE COUNTY, NC -  
PRESENTATION**

All of those present heard a presentation from the representatives of NC State University. Discussion ensued, and lunch was served. The Board was also given the opportunity to ask questions.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

The Board discussed some brief updates from the EDC Board.

In addition, County Manager Sauer informed the Board of correspondence he had received from a neighboring property owner of the former property of Dr. Jordan's office. The building has since been demolished, but Mr. Sauer stated that an offer to purchase the lot had been received.

The Board agreed to consult with the County real estate agent in order to negotiate a price for the lot.

**ADJOURN**

Chairman Perry adjourned the meeting at 2:19pm.

## BERTIE COUNTY RESOLUTION: AQUATIC WEED CONTROL

WHEREAS, the *Bertie County Board of Commissioners* desires assistance from the North Carolina Division of Water Resources to address alligator weed control measures to restore recreational boating on the Cashie River.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- 1) The *Bertie County Board of Commissioners* request that the North Carolina Aquatic Weed Control Program conduct the Cashie River Alligator Weed assessment for Bertie County.
- 2) The *Bertie County Board of Commissioners* assumes full obligation for payment of *fifty* percent of costs associated with the Bertie County Alligator Weed Project.
- 3) The *Bertie County Board of Commissioners* will assist the North Carolina Department of Environment & Natural Resources (NCDENR) in quantifying this aquatic weed control project.
- 4) The *Bertie County Board of Commissioners* will assure that the public will have access to the waters that are included in this aquatic weed control project.
- 5) The *Bertie County Board of Commissioners* will hold the State harmless from any damages that may result from the implementation of said project.
- 6) The *Bertie County Board of Commissioners* will be responsible for notifying all landowners whose property is adjacent to the body of water in which the project is located and for sponsoring any public information meetings that may be needed.
- 7) The *Bertie County Board of Commissioners* will notify the public of any temporary restrictions on use of the body of water as required by the specific method of treatment used.

Adopted by the *Bertie County Board of Commissioners*

this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk to the Board

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, *Bertie County*  
*Board of Commissioners*

## Cashie River - Alligator Weed Spray Program Cost Estimates

Refer to Individual Segments for Details

### Cost Per River Segment

Width	Miles	Acres	One App	Two Apps	Area
10	3.8	9.2	\$ 3,224.24	\$ 6,448.48	Mi 0 to 3.7
5	3.7	4.5	\$ 1,569.70	\$ 3,139.39	Mi 3.7 to 7.5
3	8.3	6.0	\$ 2,112.73	\$ 4,225.45	Mi 7.5 to 15.8
20	1.5	7.3	\$ 2,545.45	\$ 5,090.91	Wading Crk
20	2	9.7	\$ 3,393.94	\$ 6,787.88	Roquist Crk
<b>Totals</b>					
	<b>19.3</b>	<b>36.7</b>	<b>\$12,846.06</b>	<b>\$25,692.12</b>	

## Cashie River – Estimates for Spraying Alligator Weed



Estimate to reduce area of infestation by 50% first year. Several years spraying required to reduce to tolerable levels.

This is proposed cost for year one of treatment.  
 The Division of Water Resources has advised to apply for  
 Funding annually.



**North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Medical Assistance**

Pat McCrory  
Governor

Aldona Z. Wos, M.D.  
Ambassador (Ret.)  
Secretary DHHS

Robin Gary Cummings, M.D.  
Deputy Secretary for Health Services  
Director, Division of Medical Assistance

October 21, 2014

Dear County Department of Social Services Director:

Counties have worked very hard over an extended period of time to meet case processing challenges in Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) and Medicaid. As reflected in the Accelerated Medicaid Processing Plans (AMPP) all 100 counties relied on compensatory time and/or overtime to help meet these unprecedented challenges. The purpose of this letter is to detail the challenges that lie ahead and to emphasize the need for all counties to reinvest county savings that will accrue from the retro and ongoing 75 percent Medicaid administrative reimbursement.

All counties must plan for needed resources to achieve and maintain both timeliness and accuracy in administering major public assistance programs. County Directors, County Managers and governing bodies need to consider the following factors in planning and budgeting for needed staff and other resources.

- **FNS case processing requirements for applications and recertifications**  
USDA requires that timely FNS recertifications be processed by the **last working day of the month**. At the present time a significant growing number of recertifications are not being processed in accordance with USDA requirements. While this does not mean that households are not receiving their benefits by the issuance date, USDA holds North Carolina accountable for meeting these standards as a condition of receiving administrative reimbursement. Failure to achieve and maintain timeliness standards could result in suspension of Federal administrative reimbursement to counties.
- **Medicaid Applications**  
We must continue to focus on eliminating untimely Medicaid applications. While counties have done a great job of pulling resources together and significantly reducing the over 104,000 overdue Medicaid applications since May 2014, approximately 12,000 untimely applications remain to be processed.
- **Healthcare.gov Open Enrollment**  
It is important to note that the Annual Open Enrollment Period for Healthcare.gov begins **November 15, 2014** and runs through **February 15, 2015**. We must anticipate a next wave of Medicaid applications being transferred to North Carolina. More than 90,000 applications were received from the Federally Facilitated Marketplace (FFM) during the last enrollment period. Adequate resources are essential to assure timely processing of these additional applications.

It is also important to remember that Open Enrollment for ACA will continue to occur on an annual basis, creating a spike in the Medicaid workload for several months each year.

www.ncdhhs.gov  
Tel 919-855-4100 • Fax 919-733-6608  
Location: 1985 Umstead Drive • Kirby Building • Raleigh, NC 27603  
Mailing Address: 2501 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, NC 27699-2501  
An Equal Opportunity / Affirmative Action Employer



- **Medicaid Recertifications**

We must continue to eliminate untimely Medicaid recertifications. The approval from CMS for 75% reimbursement in NC FAST and EIS is based upon counties investing savings in needed staff to “successfully conquer the challenges of ACA MAGI application backlogs, MAGI recertifications and the rollout of NC FAST.” The CMS waiver for MAGI recertifications in EIS **ends on December 31, 2014**, at which time untimely Medicaid recertifications are to be completed. Counties are averaging completing approximately 82,000 reviews each month. There are currently approximately 380,000 recertifications that are due to be completed by the December deadline.

- **NC FAST Hard Launch**

By early November, all counties will have completed the next phase of hard launch as scheduled in NC FAST. Counties are finding that the time needed for full conversion of cases from the EIS legacy system to NC FAST prior to processing recertifications takes up to 2 ½ hours. As cases come up for review over the next year, this additional workload will extend as the full conversion from EIS to NC FAST is completed. This is a one-time effort but does require a significant investment of staff time to complete the conversion process. We continue to encourage counties that have not Hard Launched to enter all new applications in NC FAST and to work down all pending applications and recertifications in EIS.

- **Sustainability Planning**

It is necessary that each county develop a sustainability plan for timely and accurate processing of applications and recertifications for all income support programs, assuring quality customer service, and implementation of effective work support strategies on an ongoing basis.

The attached chart documents the increase in eligible recipients for both FNS and Medicaid over the past several years. As noted previously, many counties have seen dramatic increases in the caseloads of both programs. As we continue to work through the backlog of cases in FNS and Medicaid, every county has relied on compensatory time and/or paid overtime to reduce the number of overdue applications. We have heard from many of you that the stress on staff has increased over the past several months. Comparing growth in program eligibles vs. staffing since August 2008, is a critical and necessary step in evaluating resources needed.

County directors should work with their Boards and County management leadership to assess their ongoing staffing. Continuing to rely on compensatory or paid overtime alone does not constitute a sustainable plan for managing the present and future workload.

Counties should take into consideration the nearly 90,000 Medicaid applications that came in from Healthcare.gov. Processing the applications added significantly to the county workload. In addition, the impact of many incomplete applications coming in from Healthcare.gov and ePASS, and the staff time needed to contact clients and gather necessary information, should also be considered in planning for needed resources.

- **Customer Service**

We continue to receive complaints from customers who are unable to speak with DSS staff. We encourage you and your staff to make a renewed commitment to providing excellent customer service. Several counties have added call centers or dedicated staff to answer customer phone calls.

DHHS is continuing to focus on areas of support for county departments of social services, including, strengthening the NC FAST Help Desk, working to reduce the number of system defects and enhancing user experience with the software. DHHS has a fully staffed Operational Support Team (OST). The OST is available to assist counties with policy and business process support. The priority for the OST for the next couple of months will be assisting the NC FAST Help Desk with policy, supporting counties in answering policy questions and conducting training and webinars on Medicaid and MAGI. Local Support Managers and Local Business Liaisons are also available to assist counties. In addition, NC FAST has added a report entitled, "Total Pending FNS and Medicaid Work by County" which provides the status of pending applications and recertifications by county for each program. Staff from the Division of Medical Assistance and the Division of Social Services is available to provide guidance and support in assisting Directors in determining agency needs.

If you have any questions concerning these instructions or need assistance in determining your agency's needs, you may contact either the Local Support Managers, Christy Nash at 252-375-0553 or Darrell Renfroe at 828-230-1912; or DMA Assistant Director Sheila Platts at 919-855-4023 or DSS Director Wayne Black at 919-527-6336.

Thank you for your continued commitment to the provision of timely and efficient services to the residents of North Carolina.

Sincerely,



Robin Gary Cummings, M.D.  
Deputy Secretary for Health Services  
Director, Division of Medical Assistance



Wayne E. Black  
Director, Division of Social Services

Attachment

cc: Rebecca Troutman  
County Managers  
County Finance Officers  
County Human Services Directors or Asst. County Managers for Human Services

**COMPARISON OF ELIGIBLES FOR THE SERVICE MONTH OF AUGUST**

COUNTY	Medicaid - Includes TANF, HC and SA Recipients Eligibles In August of Indicated Year						
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage change from 2008 to 2013
ALAMANCE	22,791	24,890	26,322	26,801	28,591	29,171	0.280
ALEXANDER	5,709	6,270	6,670	6,771	6,910	6,887	0.206
ALLEGHANY	2,157	2,281	2,324	2,396	2,382	2,413	0.119
ANSON	6,261	6,505	6,479	6,666	6,858	6,818	0.089
ASHE	4,941	5,250	5,362	5,370	5,405	5,402	0.093
AVERY	3,026	3,206	3,202	3,254	3,318	3,306	0.093
BEAUFORT	10,133	10,518	10,838	10,950	11,193	11,444	0.129
BERTIE	5,746	5,848	5,950	5,860	5,857	5,760	0.002
BLADEN	8,929	9,178	9,307	9,433	9,493	9,254	0.036
BRUNSWICK	15,539	17,033	17,488	18,204	19,038	19,262	0.240
BUNCOMBE	37,256	39,226	40,743	41,965	43,768	43,527	0.168
BURKE	15,823	17,076	17,600	17,926	18,353	18,566	0.173
CABARRUS	22,774	25,217	27,109	28,218	30,210	30,394	0.335
CALDWELL	15,067	16,342	16,997	17,478	18,043	17,571	0.166
CAMDEN	1,040	1,143	1,177	1,206	1,231	1,252	0.204
CARTERET	8,687	9,566	9,831	9,672	9,930	10,214	0.176
CASWELL	4,898	5,158	5,290	5,230	5,217	5,179	0.057
CATAWBA	24,793	26,513	27,382	28,162	29,618	29,876	0.205
CHATHAM	7,279	7,774	8,074	8,100	8,329	8,508	0.169
CHEROKEE	5,282	5,675	5,806	5,769	5,834	5,810	0.100
CHOWAN	3,188	3,316	3,496	3,492	3,496	3,340	0.048
CLAY	1,877	2,024	2,067	2,131	2,151	2,164	0.153
CLEVELAND	21,476	22,889	23,702	23,825	24,544	24,631	0.147
COLUMBUS	16,068	16,567	16,818	16,760	17,066	16,864	0.050
CRAVEN	14,940	15,847	16,416	16,449	16,958	16,883	0.130
CUMBERLAND	53,850	57,613	60,448	63,205	65,449	65,808	0.222
CURRITUCK	2,456	2,721	2,803	2,782	2,850	2,772	0.129

COUNTY	Food & Nutritional Services Eligibles In August of Indicated Year							
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percentage change from 2008 to 2014
ALAMANCE	13,736	18,547	22,087	24,488	25,010	25,710	24,800	0.805
ALEXANDER	3,777	4,783	5,723	6,339	6,328	5,895	5,701	0.509
ALLEGHANY	1,155	1,463	1,592	1,868	1,909	2,016	1,876	0.624
ANSON	4,989	5,702	6,314	6,941	7,180	6,938	6,975	0.398
ASHE	2,727	3,530	3,904	4,591	4,754	4,986	4,724	0.732
AVERY	1,513	1,932	2,270	2,553	2,570	2,521	2,469	0.632
BEAUFORT	6,334	7,468	8,731	9,540	10,217	10,034	10,259	0.620
BERTIE	4,282	4,802	5,324	5,987	6,164	6,176	6,038	0.410
BLADEN	5,758	6,545	7,973	8,764	8,951	8,747	8,892	0.544
BRUNSWICK	8,627	11,577	13,853	16,328	16,862	17,233	17,181	0.992
BUNCOMBE	21,455	27,612	34,133	39,156	40,000	38,772	38,481	0.794
BURKE	9,722	12,528	14,561	16,130	16,750	14,662	15,713	0.616
CABARRUS	15,202	19,425	23,513	26,494	26,833	18,571	24,705	0.625
CALDWELL	10,832	13,744	15,510	17,451	17,288	11,683	15,277	0.410
CAMDEN	632	774	935	1,038	1,136	1,076	1,008	0.595
CARTERET	5,127	6,932	7,817	8,589	1,909	8,958	9,154	0.785
CASWELL	3,743	4,188	4,712	5,185	5,167	5,172	5,167	0.380
CATAWBA	17,505	22,431	25,937	29,008	4,108	29,128	28,225	0.612
CHATHAM	3,507	4,460	5,335	6,238	6,388	7,414	6,662	0.900
CHEROKEE	2,868	3,722	4,364	5,007	5,075	4,959	5,026	0.752
CHOWAN	2,486	2,900	3,254	3,556	3,598	3,445	3,379	0.359
CLAY	1,372	1,802	2,064	2,203	2,183	2,097	1,946	0.418
CLEVELAND	15,643	19,589	22,480	24,426	24,921	24,383	24,804	0.586
COLUMBUS	9,937	11,378	13,178	14,536	14,745	13,142	13,687	0.377
CRAVEN	10,056	12,331	14,144	15,961	16,380	15,170	16,733	0.664
CUMBERLAND	43,513	51,338	59,973	66,807	67,957	64,888	71,501	0.643
CURRITUCK	1,496	1,863	2,230	2,404	2,426	2,465	2,444	0.634

COUNTY	Medicaid - Includes TANF, HC and SA Recipients Eligibles In August of Indicated Year						
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage change from 2008 to 2013
DARE	3,297	3,753	4,012	4,216	4,527	4,595	0.394
DAVIDSON	27,339	29,232	30,227	30,981	31,831	31,709	0.160
DAVIE	5,026	5,741	6,183	6,280	6,435	6,387	0.271
DUPLIN	11,473	12,086	12,659	12,839	13,529	13,862	0.208
DURHAM	36,804	41,353	43,573	45,330	49,191	49,712	0.351
EDGECOMBE	16,567	17,424	17,977	18,217	18,456	18,568	0.121
FORSYTH	52,620	56,832	59,124	61,855	64,905	66,703	0.268
FRANKLIN	10,235	10,849	11,473	11,653	12,072	12,169	0.189
GASTON	37,294	40,206	42,367	43,924	45,212	45,088	0.209
GATES	1,848	1,885	1,958	1,945	2,019	1,968	0.065
GRAHAM	2,065	2,142	2,234	2,284	2,298	2,315	0.121
GRANVILLE	8,471	9,084	9,453	9,588	10,004	10,002	0.181
GREENE	4,408	4,666	4,782	4,847	4,901	4,841	0.098
GUILFORD	71,212	75,477	77,953	80,012	86,971	89,317	0.254
HALIFAX	15,981	16,562	16,636	16,825	16,795	16,535	0.035
HARNETT	18,604	20,089	20,800	20,893	22,565	22,635	0.217
HAYWOOD	10,194	10,887	11,412	11,479	11,906	11,748	0.152
HENDERSON	13,949	15,088	15,941	16,557	17,272	17,562	0.259
HERTFORD	6,394	6,522	6,484	6,508	6,654	6,601	0.032
HOKE	8,405	8,946	9,236	9,814	10,423	10,658	0.268
HYDE	1,242	1,220	1,207	1,178	1,208	1,231	(0.009)
IREDELL	20,582	22,980	23,540	24,218	25,029	25,035	0.216
JACKSON	5,283	5,672	6,026	6,279	6,716	6,574	0.244
JOHNSTON	27,699	30,449	32,056	33,456	34,827	35,791	0.292
JONES	2,042	2,116	2,148	2,155	2,269	2,256	0.105
LEE	10,466	11,538	11,797	12,459	13,049	13,398	0.280
LENOIR	14,256	15,173	15,476	15,522	15,806	15,746	0.105
LINCOLN	11,037	12,232	12,627	12,612	12,942	12,979	0.176
MACON	5,727	6,057	6,451	6,633	6,686	6,675	0.166

COUNTY	Food & Nutritional Services Eligibles In August of Indicated Year							
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percentage change from 2008 to 2014
DARE	1,322	2,166	2,701	3,170	3,470	3,828	3,448	1.608
DAVIDSON	19,167	23,762	27,532	31,344	31,804	31,204	30,282	0.580
DAVIE	3,207	4,232	5,099	5,809	5,946	5,601	5,229	0.630
DUPLIN	6,036	7,020	8,685	9,989	10,501	11,413	11,201	0.856
DURHAM	24,586	30,370	36,601	43,074	45,551	44,615	43,673	0.776
EDGECOMBE	12,887	14,421	16,309	17,584	18,652	18,330	18,267	0.417
FORSYTH	31,902	40,642	47,389	53,675	56,223	53,768	57,397	0.799
FRANKLIN	6,628	8,024	9,521	10,962	11,514	11,869	11,480	0.732
GASTON	26,506	34,719	40,663	44,794	45,002	42,794	43,659	0.647
GATES	1,286	1,549	1,709	1,908	1,945	1,959	1,937	0.506
GRAHAM	1,064	1,304	1,524	1,688	1,634	1,667	1,772	0.665
GRANVILLE	4,861	5,975	7,322	8,568	8,875	8,924	8,705	0.791
GREENE	3,487	3,872	4,350	4,540	4,415	4,567	4,592	0.317
GUILFORD	52,912	65,853	75,700	88,035	24,633	90,126	97,002	0.833
HALIFAX	13,324	14,614	16,043	17,284	17,438	17,143	17,196	0.291
HARNETT	12,727	16,199	19,053	21,394	22,357	21,875	21,717	0.706
HAYWOOD	6,513	8,206	9,487	10,360	10,547	9,894	10,689	0.641
HENDERSON	6,554	8,871	11,420	13,280	13,833	13,521	12,990	0.982
HERTFORD	4,790	5,366	5,965	6,489	6,677	6,413	6,568	0.371
HOKE	6,360	7,550	9,019	10,621	10,688	10,997	11,145	0.752
HYDE	825	849	905	963	1,020	983	961	0.165
IREDELL	10,780	14,468	16,135	19,150	18,967	14,678	16,425	0.524
JACKSON	3,063	3,841	4,845	5,755	6,038	5,532	5,730	0.871
JOHNSTON	16,349	20,672	25,437	29,235	7,335	31,689	31,023	0.898
JONES	1,373	1,697	2,135	2,321	2,407	2,419	2,339	0.704
LEE	6,112	8,368	9,223	10,917	11,797	12,895	12,133	0.985
LENOIR	10,348	12,291	13,624	14,777	14,722	14,455	15,036	0.453
LINCOLN	7,186	9,719	10,848	12,196	12,397	10,313	11,639	0.620
MACON	3,323	4,388	5,754	6,571	6,768	6,725	6,041	0.818

COUNTY	Medicaid - Includes TANF, HC and SA Recipients Eligibles In August of Indicated Year						
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Percentage change from 2008 to 2013
MADISON	4,163	4,412	4,390	4,461	4,616	4,657	0.119
MARTIN	6,047	6,220	6,489	6,315	6,487	6,264	0.036
MCDOWELL	8,661	9,573	9,852	10,246	10,555	10,737	0.240
MECKLENBURG	115,809	129,353	141,163	149,114	160,907	162,817	0.406
MITCHELL	3,152	3,383	3,453	3,352	3,421	3,390	0.076
MONTGOMERY	6,640	6,864	7,001	7,109	7,328	7,246	0.091
MOORE	11,713	12,431	13,099	13,368	13,891	13,962	0.192
NASH	17,582	18,947	19,885	20,570	21,883	21,881	0.245
NEW HANOVER	24,953	26,675	28,041	29,364	30,688	30,679	0.229
NORTHAMPTON	5,974	6,135	6,135	6,209	6,229	5,955	(0.003)
ONSLow	18,392	19,427	19,969	20,358	22,141	23,290	0.266
ORANGE	10,726	11,573	12,140	12,650	13,400	13,575	0.266
PAMLICO	2,262	2,304	2,406	2,379	2,326	2,342	0.035
PASQUOTANK	7,534	7,774	7,878	7,860	8,218	8,055	0.069
PENDER	8,117	8,737	9,282	9,578	10,427	10,528	0.297
PERQUIMANS	2,535	2,662	2,601	2,558	2,682	2,715	0.071
PERSON	7,019	7,293	7,606	7,603	7,965	7,958	0.134
PITT	25,860	27,649	28,429	29,826	31,071	31,065	0.201
POLK	2,529	2,831	2,967	3,028	3,144	3,051	0.206
RANDOLPH	25,112	27,381	28,019	28,401	28,939	29,215	0.163
RICHMOND	12,621	13,172	13,498	13,665	14,217	14,191	0.124
ROBESON	39,961	41,978	43,895	44,673	45,966	45,945	0.150
ROCKINGHAM	18,365	19,516	19,701	20,049	20,502	20,675	0.126
ROWAN	23,872	26,339	27,296	28,226	29,532	29,388	0.231
RUTHERFORD	13,281	14,583	14,996	15,035	15,488	15,772	0.188
SAMPSON	15,511	16,609	16,978	17,238	17,936	17,803	0.148
SCOTLAND	11,109	11,176	11,125	11,220	11,625	11,669	0.050
STANLY	9,915	10,729	11,290	11,459	11,786	11,743	0.184
STOKES	6,842	7,093	7,335	7,572	7,859	7,868	0.150

COUNTY	Food & Nutritional Services Eligibles In August of Indicated Year							
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percentage change from 2008 to 2014
MADISON	2,450	3,137	3,764	4,238	4,320	4,009	3,842	0.568
MARTIN	4,155	4,655	5,324	5,755	6,029	5,539	6,066	0.460
MCDOWELL	5,006	6,671	7,720	9,092	9,791	10,038	9,609	0.919
MECKLENBURG	89,710	117,822	137,066	155,316	157,499	150,125	163,087	0.818
MITCHELL	1,755	1,949	2,213	2,526	2,584	2,721	2,583	0.472
MONTGOMERY	4,040	4,626	5,273	5,898	6,002	5,951	5,513	0.365
MOORE	7,105	8,293	9,504	10,713	10,912	11,192	11,094	0.561
NASH	11,664	13,984	16,531	18,400	18,931	16,109	18,265	0.566
NEW HANOVER	15,939	19,222	23,830	27,935	29,543	29,606	30,304	0.901
NORTHAMPTON	4,742	5,349	5,933	6,443	6,447	6,024	6,019	0.269
ONSLow	12,547	14,164	16,013	18,260	19,730	18,265	22,214	0.770
ORANGE	6,847	8,499	9,915	11,509	12,170	12,793	12,113	0.769
PAMLICO	1,455	1,652	1,950	2,124	2,051	1,791	1,991	0.368
PASQUOTANK	5,120	5,953	6,881	7,974	8,336	8,185	8,253	0.612
PENDER	5,239	6,459	8,087	8,991	9,416	9,545	9,425	0.799
PERQUIMANS	1,924	2,290	2,442	2,757	2,776	2,711	2,745	0.427
PERSON	5,017	5,860	6,991	7,665	7,831	7,630	7,693	0.533
PITT	20,972	24,582	27,880	32,451	34,262	29,050	33,053	0.576
POLK	1,611	2,099	2,519	2,861	2,863	2,805	2,725	0.691
RANDOLPH	16,175	20,068	22,890	26,337	26,914	26,068	25,662	0.587
RICHMOND	8,798	10,294	11,815	13,280	13,959	12,960	14,009	0.592
ROBESON	28,744	33,999	40,147	45,970	46,429	44,807	45,026	0.566
ROCKINGHAM	10,785	13,478	15,645	17,837	18,384	17,543	18,556	0.721
ROWAN	14,386	18,949	22,753	26,211	26,997	25,419	25,792	0.793
RUTHERFORD	8,894	11,270	13,684	15,179	15,651	15,341	15,400	0.732
SAMPSON	9,201	11,207	13,030	14,622	14,722	15,768	14,420	0.567
SCOTLAND	8,780	9,527	10,631	11,493	11,731	10,740	11,555	0.316
STANLY	6,429	7,949	9,325	10,630	10,720	8,964	10,589	0.647
STOKES	3,987	4,848	5,728	6,846	7,068	6,607	6,872	0.724

COUNTY	Medicaid - Includes TANF, HC and SA Recipients Eligibles In August of Indicated Year							Percentage change from 2008 to 2013
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013		
SURRY	14,660	15,477	15,980	16,319	16,583	16,442	0.122	
SWAIN	3,282	3,585	3,749	3,804	3,855	3,926	0.196	
TRANSYLVANIA	4,797	5,051	5,140	5,222	5,431	5,455	0.137	
TYRRELL	940	949	970	969	903	883	(0.061)	
UNION	19,930	22,694	24,054	24,789	26,020	26,664	0.338	
VANCE	13,991	14,250	14,468	14,760	15,064	15,032	0.074	
WAKE	80,002	87,977	94,570	99,037	105,657	108,116	0.351	
WARREN	5,124	5,441	5,599	5,680	5,769	5,650	0.103	
WASHINGTON	3,837	3,880	3,855	3,780	3,802	3,671	(0.043)	
WATAUGA	3,899	4,116	4,303	4,233	4,432	4,423	0.134	
WAYNE	24,499	25,411	26,492	27,294	28,641	28,896	0.179	
WILKES	13,506	14,190	14,613	14,764	14,999	14,931	0.106	
WILSON	17,206	17,980	18,629	19,039	19,738	19,698	0.145	
YADKIN	5,919	6,500	6,851	7,004	7,320	7,330	0.238	
YANCEY	3,566	3,807	3,824	3,817	3,941	3,925	0.101	
	1,483,921	1,596,034	1,665,529	1,712,631	1,791,974	1,805,214		

**Statewide increase from 8/2008 to 8/2013: 21.65 percent**

2014 Medicaid Eligible data is not provided due to NC Fast Transition.

SOURCE:

Food Stamp Data obtained Statistical Reports Section on DSS Website.

Medicaid Data obtained from Data Warehouse Queries.

COUNTY	Food & Nutritional Services Eligibles In August of Indicated Year							Percentage change from 2008 to 2014
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
SURRY	9,307	11,246	12,786	14,454	14,960	15,175	14,187	0.524
SWAIN	2,046	2,354	2,992	3,193	3,121	2,791	2,703	0.321
TRANSYLVANIA	3,040	4,041	4,685	5,518	5,768	5,531	5,514	0.814
TYRRELL	718	822	941	950	852	855	819	0.141
UNION	11,883	16,945	21,183	24,810	25,554	26,475	24,914	1.097
VANCE	11,151	12,588	14,024	15,298	15,670	15,174	15,388	0.380
WAKE	48,253	60,746	71,862	81,724	86,678	70,759	83,041	0.721
WARREN	3,603	4,149	4,814	5,382	5,521	5,468	5,369	0.490
WASHINGTON	2,664	2,911	3,184	3,530	3,632	3,599	3,492	0.311
WATAUGA	2,003	2,709	3,430	4,090	4,076	4,130	3,733	0.864
WAYNE	15,657	18,344	22,532	25,223	26,134	24,860	26,798	0.712
WILKES	8,762	11,007	13,307	14,687	15,290	14,440	14,854	0.695
WILSON	11,008	13,104	15,760	17,617	17,650	18,512	18,257	0.659
YADKIN	3,328	4,510	5,261	6,078	6,286	6,075	5,658	0.700
YANCEY	2,709	3,163	3,496	3,756	3,788	3,685	3,369	0.244
	993,081	1,231,868	1,442,650	1,633,664	1,519,013	1,602,273	1,665,674	

**Statewide increase from 8/2008 to 8/2014: 68 percent**

For August, 2012, counties highlighted in green are undercounted due to transition to NC FAST from FSIS May-August 2012.

Buncombe County is 100% NCFast.