

	Lower Providence Emergency Medical Service Standard Operating Guidelines	
	Subject: <i>Member Guidelines- Code of Conduct (Members)</i>	SOG #101-004
		Initiated: May 2023
Approved: Chief Christopher J. Reynolds	Revised: N/A	

Description: All members of the organization must effectively work as a team to protect their own safety and the safety of their peers, while providing effective emergency medical services to the public. Failure to adhere to a certain level of conduct undermines the public's confidence in individual members and the organization.

Purpose: The purpose of this guideline is to establish a Code of Conduct aimed at ensuring that members of LPEMS maintain the highest level of integrity and ethical conduct both on and off duty. The nature of emergency services work places all members in a position of public trust and subject to public scrutiny, and thus requires a level of conduct that is beyond reproach, regardless of work status or location. Thus, it is important that all members strive to achieve the highest level of ethical and professional conduct necessary to maintain the integrity of individual members and LPEMS.

Procedure:

1. LPEMS is committed to providing effective emergency services to the citizens and visitors of Lower Providence, Upper Providence & Worcester Townships, along with the citizens of any requested mutual aid location. The organization relies on the pride of its members as emergency services providers, their loyalty to the profession, the organization, and fellow members, and their dedication to providing outstanding professional services to the community. LPEMS can only succeed in its mission if its individual members maintain their personal integrity. The cornerstone of LPEMS is its relationship with the community it serves.
2. Each member is responsible for their actions and the effective interaction with other members to make an effective and cohesive team. Conduct that does not adhere to appropriate standards for the emergency services professions impugns the integrity of individual members, which, in turn, reflects on the organization, and impacts our ability to serve the public.
3. As members of LPEMS, all are expected to comply with established rules and regulations, including organizational SOG's, Montgomery County DOH Requirements, and the Pennsylvania Department of Health Procedures as applicable. In adopting a Code of Conduct, LPEMS intends to further clarify what constitutes both acceptable and unacceptable conduct, with the goal of promoting positive conduct and preventing conduct that undermines the integrity of the organization and its members.
4. This guideline applies to a member's conduct as a whole; this includes a member who is on-duty and may be applicable to a member who is off-duty if the member's conduct has a connection to the member's official duties. This procedure is applicable regardless of if the misconduct occurs in-person or through some other means, such as social media.

5. The performance of this organization depends on each member's character, motivation, loyalty to the emergency service profession, self-discipline, adherence to the chain of command, obedience to orders, appropriate action in the absence of a specific order, and orderly interaction with other members to accomplish a common objective. The management of LPEMS expects that every member will exercise a high level of self-discipline to enable us to meet this goal.
6. At times, members may violate applicable rules and regulations or engage in conduct that brings disrepute on individual members or LPEMS. A Code of Conduct is necessary not only to set minimum standards of conduct that we expect of our members, but also to alert members to the possibility of disciplinary action for failure to adhere to specified minimum standards of conduct and professionalism.

Expectations - LPEMS has certain fundamental expectations of its members. These fundamental expectations do not themselves constitute specific rules of conduct, and accordingly, are not the basis for disciplinary action. Instead, the intention is that every member will strive to demonstrate these characteristics that are consistent with the highest level of professionalism and personal integrity.

- a. **Selflessness and dedication** – the commitment of oneself to one's community is the foundation of the emergency services profession both compensated and volunteer. Selflessness exists in the dedication and actions of personnel to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of their fellow members and the community.
- b. **Loyalty** – LPEMS expects that every member will be loyal to the principles that underlie the emergency services professions, to their fellow members, the commitment of service to others, and the mission of the organization.
- c. **Duty** – All members are expected to use their training and experience to protect the public, their fellow members, and themselves and to carry out their assigned tasks faithfully and diligently, to adhere to the chain of command, and to meet the requirements of their respective positions and applicable certification standards. Anything less violates the trust placed in the organization by the community. All members are expected to perform assigned tasks throughout their full tours of duty.
- d. **Judgment** – Each member of LPEMS is responsible for the appropriate exercise of judgment commensurate with the member's rank, responsibility, and assigned job tasks, after carefully considering the guidance offered by applicable laws, guidelines and procedures, and professional standards.
- e. **Demeanor and Bearing** – The public's perception of and trust in LPEMS greatly depends on the actions, appearance, and attitudes of its individual members. All members are expected to present themselves in a professional manner designed to promote and maintain the integrity of the organization and its members, along with the public's confidence in the organization.

LPEMS Code of Conduct- LPEMS has established this specific code of conduct for its members that goes beyond our traditional expectations. This code is not intended to be an exclusive list and violations of this code may be used as the basis for disciplinary action.

1. Compliance with Procedures/Guidelines
 - a. Members shall not commit any act or fail to commit any act that would constitute a violation of State, County or LPEMS procedures or guidelines.

- i. This may include but is not limited to: LPEMS Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG's), Special Orders, Memoranda, Directives, LPEMS Member Handbook, as applicable.

2. Compliance with Laws

- a. Members shall obey all local, State, and federal laws and the laws of any foreign country they visit.
 - i. Any member who is arrested or charged with a criminal violation or a serious traffic violation or learns that they are the subject of a criminal investigation must notify the Chief and/or Executive Director immediately.
 - ii. A felony conviction, guilty plea, or finding of guilt shall be assumed to be an admission of a violation of this section.
 - iii. From an employment perspective, LPEMS Management may take appropriate disciplinary action against its member(s) regardless of pending criminal actions, charges, or citations.

3. Performance

- a. While on duty, members shall not engage in activities that cause them to neglect or be inattentive to their assigned duties.
- b. While on duty, members shall always remain available and in a sufficient and appropriate stage of readiness to quickly respond to any situation requiring performance of their assigned duties and responsibilities of their positions.
- c. Members may not leave their duty posts without the approval of their supervisor.
- d. Members shall maintain competency sufficient to perform their assigned duties and responsibilities associated with their positions.
 - i. Inability or unwillingness to meet performance standards may include, but are not limited to:
 1. Repeated or consistent lack of knowledge of applicable laws or policies,
 2. Unwillingness or inability to perform assigned tasks.
 3. Failure to meet standards associated with the member's rank, grade, or position.
 4. Repeated unsatisfactory performance evaluations and/or the inability or unwillingness to improve performance with appropriate remedial training or education.
 5. Failure to maintain or renew required certifications associated with the member's rank, grade, or position.

4. Insubordination

- a. Members may not intentionally engage in conduct, through actions or words, which are disrespectful to, or that otherwise undermines the authority of, the chain of command.
- b. Members shall comply with the chain of command and shall obey any lawful order of a superior or a person authorized to be in command.
 - i. If a member is given an order that conflicts with an existing order, the member shall notify the superior giving the latter order. If that order is repeated, it will stand.
 - ii. No member shall obey any order which they reasonably believe to be immoral, unsafe, or illegal.
 1. Such a condition is not considered insubordination.

5. Conduct Unbecoming
 - a. A member shall not engage in conduct that is unbecoming to the member, the organization, or the profession.
 - b. Conduct unbecoming includes any conduct that would bring LPEMS, or any member into disrepute or dishonor; would disgrace the integrity of the profession; undermine public trust; or would be detrimental to the operation and efficiency of LPEMS.
6. Honesty
 - a. Members shall not intentionally or willfully make any false statement, either verbal or written, or withhold material information associated with the members' position, official duties, or LPEMS' s official business.
 - b. Members shall not lie, steal, cheat, or make intentionally deceptive statements associated with the members' position, official duties, or the organization's official business.
 - c. Members shall not knowingly enter or cause to be entered any inaccurate or false information into an official record.
7. Member Relationships
 - a. Personal relationships between members shall not interfere with the performance of a member's duties.
 - b. Supervisors may not have romantic or sexual relationships with members in their direct chain of command.
 - c. For purposes of performance evaluations, LPEMS will not assign a member to a direct supervisor who is a blood relative, spouse, or romantic partner.
 - i. Incidental or temporary assignments are not considered a violation of this guideline.
 - ii. Members may not engage in sexual acts or conduct while on duty.
8. Abuse of Position
 - a. Members shall not use their positions as members of LPEMS for personal gain for themselves or others or to obtain for themselves or others some benefit not available to the public.
 - i. This includes but is not limited to the use of LPEMS identification card, badges, uniforms, insignia, or equipment.
 - ii. Members shall not lend their identification cards or badges to anyone, nor allow them to be reproduced without written approval.
 - b. Members may not use their position with LPEMS, including identification cards, badges, uniforms, insignia, or equipment, in connection with an endorsement, advertisement, or testimonial.
 - i. No part of the LPEMS uniform, badge, logo, identification card, insignia, or equipment shall be used in a way that brings disrepute on a member or the organization.
9. Confidentiality of Information
 - a. Members shall not disclose or disseminate any information, including pictures and/or video, obtained or retained by LPEMS or pursuant to the members' official duties that is confidential and not generally available to the public, except as authorized by the Organization.
 - b. Members shall not use their authority to obtain information that would not be obtainable by the public, unless necessary to carry out the official business of LPEMS and/or the job duties of members.

10. Public Statements and Appearances

- a. Members shall not hold themselves out as speaking on behalf of the Organization unless authorized to do so.

11. Courtesy

- a. Members of LPEMS shall treat members of the public, local care facilities, receiving facilities, and other emergency service organization members with the respect and courtesy expected in a professional environment.
- b. No member, in the performance of their duties, shall address another individual in a way that can reasonably be interpreted as violent, derogatory, or discriminatory.

