



Virginia Beach Department of Emergency Medical Services



OPERATIONS

**HIRE BACK AND RECALL OF CAREER PERSONNEL**

**PURPOSE:** To provide guidance for the activation of off-duty career personnel.

**APPLICABILITY:** This policy shall apply to all career personnel of the Department of Emergency Medical Services.

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Holdover:** Voluntary or mandatory assignment to remain on-duty for any period until proper relief can be arranged.

**Hire Back:** Voluntary or mandatory assignment of any off-duty member to report to supplement staffing for a designated period or assignment in order to supplement routine operations and special event coverage.

**Recall:** Mandatory mobilization of one or more off-duty members to support staffing prior to or during major emergencies or long-term emergency operations.

**ACTIVATION:** The authority to initiate hire back or recall shall be vested with the EMS Chief, Deputy Chiefs, Division Chiefs, and Brigade Chiefs.

**POLICY STATEMENT:** Hire back may involve one or more off-duty members for a designated period of not less than 2 hours.

A Recall may be a total departmental recall of career staff or a partial recall of certain personnel. A total recall requires all career personnel to report to duty. All leave is canceled and, unless otherwise directed personnel are to report to their normal assigned work location. A partial recall will involve selected personnel (by virtue of special skills or position) or specified number of personnel deemed necessary to handle the situation.

## **SCHEDULED OVERTIME**

Uniformed employees assigned to rotating shifts may be scheduled to work greater than 40 hours within a 7-day pay week. For purposes of this policy, these are considered mandatory working hours, but are classified separately from Hire Back hours outlined below. Scheduled overtime should not be considered a guaranteed benefit nor is the department committed to provide a set number of scheduled overtime hours to its members.

For shift planning purposes, leave slips must include all scheduled working hours, including those that place a member into an overtime status. Actual leave deductions and payroll hours will be adjusted such that the amount of leave deducted from the member is adjusted to apply only to the baseline 40 hour work week. Scheduled overtime hours not actually worked will be adjusted into non-working hours.

When staffing levels permit, a member may request to be relieved of duty during scheduled overtime hours without being charged leave. These requests will be considered on a case-by-case with considerations including, but not limited to, operational deployments, proficiency requirements and supervisory contact.

The Department of EMS retains the option of involuntarily relieving members of scheduled overtime hours. Reasons for executing this option include, but are not limited to, cost saving measures, work load relief or realignment for alternative assignments.

## **HOLDOVER**

Uniformed employees may be required to remain on-duty until an appropriate relief can be provided.

The Shift Captain will notify the member of the holdover as far in advance as practical. While voluntary holdovers are preferred, the supervisor can assign mandatory holdover time if required to meet minimum staffing levels.

There is no minimum period for holdovers. Compensation stops as soon as the member is relieved or otherwise released from duty.

## **HIRE BACK (Voluntary)**

Uniformed employees may sign-up for daily and special callbacks to fill staffing shortages. Prioritization of callbacks will be if there is need for an employee with specialty certification/critical skills.

Probationary employees are not eligible to sign-up for callback during their first 90 days of assignment. After 90 days, with approval from their Division Chief of Field Services, probationary employees may sign-up for callbacks.

Routine, holdover and hire back work periods shall not exceed maximum shift lengths defined in the Maximum Shift Length Policy. It is the provider's responsibility to schedule his/her extra shifts so that this policy is not violated and they are available and eligible to work their regularly assigned shift. It is also the provider's responsibility to advise his supervisor when a callback request will place him in an excessive shift length situation.

A running monthly calendar will be kept in the Shift Captain's office to maintain a callback list.

Hire back contacts to employees must be completed by 06:30 hours and 18:30 hours. If a member has not been contacted by such time their obligation is ended.

Employees may remove themselves from the list 72 hours prior to callback commitment (shift prior to potential callback)

Failure/refusal to accept a hire back assignment without removal from the list with the required time may result in that member being ineligible for hire back period of up to 30 days.

Under conditions where there are an insufficient number of personnel on the callback lists, Temporary Duty Assignments (TDAs) for that day may be canceled.

Management reserves the right to facilitate short-term vacancies in the most appropriate and expedient manner.

## **HIRE BACK (Mandatory)**

In the event that minimum staffing requirements cannot be met utilizing voluntary hire back procedures, the Department has the option to require a member to report for mandatory hire back.

The recalling officer will make reasonable efforts to accommodate individual employee needs. Efforts will also be made to spread the mandatory hire back burden across the workforce as evenly as possible.

The Division Chief of Field Services will be notified of any instance where mandatory hire back is activated.

Individuals failing/refusing to accept a mandatory hire back assignment will be subject to corrective action.

## **RECALL**

Recall is an official, structured activation of off-duty personnel as directed by the EMS Chief or his/her designee during emergency situations. Recalls should not be confused with hire backs, which are used to fill individual vacancies based routine operational requirements. Although hire back lists may be referenced for available personnel during a recall, the Chief Officer executing a recall is not required to adhere to said list.

### **General Elements of the Recall Process**

- A. Emergency situations that may prompt the recall of off-duty personnel are categorized as follows:
  - a. Anticipated Events - Those situations that can be anticipated prior to their occurrence (i.e., hurricanes, coastal floods, etc.).
  - b. Unanticipated Events - Those situations that cannot be anticipated prior to their occurrence (i.e., major accidents, structural collapse, etc.).
- B. The recall of off-duty personnel may be structured as follows:
  - a. Partial Recall – A partial recall shall be limited to a specific number of personnel to meet the needs of an emergency.
  - b. Total Recall – A total recall shall require all off-duty personnel to return to duty.
- C. All Division Chiefs and Brigade Chiefs shall have immediately available (on-duty and off-duty) a current listing of telephone numbers of all personnel under their command in the event a recall becomes necessary.

## **Recall Levels**

### **A. Level I Recall (Partial)**

- a. The EMS Chief or Deputy Chiefs may authorize the recall of specific personnel based on their experience, training, or expertise in handling specific emergencies.
- b. Recalled personnel shall retrieve their issued protective clothing and report to their assigned station or a specific location as directed.

### **B. Level II Recall (Partial)**

- a. The EMS Chief, Deputy Chiefs, may authorize the recall of an adequate number of personnel to staff vacant stations, or reserve apparatus.
- b. Recalled personnel shall retrieve their issued protective clothing and report to a station or specific location as directed.

### **C. Level III Recall (Partial)**

- a. The EMS Chief or Deputy Chiefs may authorize the recall of an entire shift. Holding the off-going shift or recalling the next on-coming shift may accomplish this.
- b. Recalled personnel shall retrieve their issued protective clothing and report to their assignment.

### **D. Level IV Recall (Total)**

- a. The EMS Chief or Deputy Chiefs may authorize the recall of all off-duty personnel.
- b. Recalled operations personnel shall retrieve their issued protective clothing and report to their assignment. If their assignments is inaccessible for any reason, they should report to any accessible station.
- c. Recalled staff personnel shall report to a location as directed.

## Personnel Notification of Recalls

- A. During periods of impending crisis (i.e., hurricanes, coastal floods, etc.) all personnel shall keep abreast of local conditions by monitoring radio and/or television broadcasts. This does not imply that personnel are on “stand-by” during this time period.
- B. Personnel notifications of a recall during anticipated and unanticipated events may be made by any or all of the following:
  1. Telephone – Personnel may be notified of a recall via telephone by an officer or member of the administrative staff. In the event of an unanticipated Level III or Level IV recall, the Shift Captains of the shift being recalled shall be notified by telephone and/or pager. The Shift Captains shall be responsible for notifying all off-duty personnel and personnel assigned to their shift.
  2. Pagers/Cellular Phones – Members of the senior staff may be notified of a recall through department issued pagers and/or cell phones. Attempts to contact specific personnel through personal pagers and cellular phones may expedite the notification process, if these personnel have voluntarily provided pager and cell phone numbers. This in no way implies that personnel below the senior staff level are required to wear pagers or remain on stand-by while off-duty.
  3. Commercial Radio and Television - During an authorized Level III or Level IV recall, the EMS Public Information Officer (PIO) will contact local radio and television stations requesting them to broadcast the specific recall as issued by the EMS Chief.

## Recall Documentation

At the end of the recall, supervisors shall be responsible for submitting a complete report on the recall effort. This report shall include the following information:

For members recalled:

- Employee names
- Time of recall
- Time of arrival to duty
- Total hours worked

For members recalled, but failed to report for duty:

- Employee names
- Time of contact
- Reason given for failure to report

For members supervisor was unable to contact:

- Employee names
- Phone number or pager number utilized
- Times that attempts were made to contact the employee

### **Failure to Respond to Recall**

A Chief Officer will be assigned to investigate all situations where employees could not be contacted or failed to report to duty. Corrective action shall be taken when appropriate.

### **OVERTIME DOCUMENTATION**

Shift Captains will record all Scheduled and Recall overtime hours on the member's weekly time sheet. No additional documentation is required on the part of the member.

The member will submit an overtime form for all Holdover and Callback overtime hours. The specific assignment shall be noted in the comments section of the form. If the Holdover was related to a late call, the member shall include the incident number on the form. Shift Captains will note Holdover and Callback hours on the member's weekly time sheet. The Department of EMS Payroll Clerk will compare overtime forms to the timesheets to ensure all hours are accounted for.

The Payroll Clerk will provide overtime-summary reports to the Chief of Field Services on a regular basis.

### **OVERTIME COMPENSATION**

All personnel considered "non-exempt" by the *Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)* will be compensated in accordance with the *City of Virginia Beach Compensation Plan*.

In accordance with City Policy, the EMS Chief or his designee, reserves the right to determine the final form of compensation for overtime hours.

Considerations include available funding, staffing and operational requirements.

Based on available funding, Scheduled overtime hours will automatically be compensated via pay in conjunction with the department's time sheet and payroll process. The Division Chief of Field Services may grant temporary variances to allow probationary employees to accrue leave during their initial employment.

For Holdover and Recall hours, the member may request compensatory time in lieu of pay via their overtime form. The Chief of Field Services will make final determination regarding compensation for Holdover and Recall hours.

EMT-Intermediates, Paramedics and Senior Paramedics are limited to a maximum compensatory leave balance of 60 hours. When that level is exceeded, overtime compensation must come as pay. The Deputy Chief of Operations may grant temporary variances to this maximum on a case-by-case basis. For example, a variance might be allowed to build a higher balance in advance of maternity/parental leave. The 60-hour limit may also be waived to alleviate budget constraints.

**ORDERED:**



**1/24/2017**

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EMS Chief

Date