



Virginia Beach Department of Emergency Medical Services

UNIFORM and AWARDS HANDBOOK

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Chapter 1

Personal Appearance and Uniform Standards

Appearance is a mark of professionalism and represents multiple organizations including the City, the Department and the rescue squads in addition to the individual. This chapter outlines the Department's personal appearance guidelines and uniform standards and discusses the correct wear of departmental uniforms and insignia. It is understood that rescue squads have their own uniforms and those uniforms may not directly align with this handbook. Where practical and not in conflict with the by-laws or SOPs of the rescue squad to which the member is affiliated, the Department's uniform standards should be followed. Personal appearance guidelines shall apply to all uniformed career and volunteer personnel.

PERSONAL APPEARANCE

Grooming standards are set based on occupational health and safety standards for healthcare providers. These standards are designed to keep the provider and patient as safe as possible while maintaining a professional appearance. All personnel will report to duty neat, clean, well-groomed and dressed in appropriate uniform attire.

The following personal hygiene standards must be adhered to:

- Hair
 - Hair must be clean, neat and combed.
 - Hair should be a naturally occurring hair color (no glitter allowed.)
 - Hair length extending below the top of the logo on the back of the working uniform shirt must be pulled back into a ponytail, braid, or be otherwise neatly and inconspicuously fastened or pinned to the back of the head. Similar hair length management shall be adhered to when wearing dress or other uniform attire without logos.
 - Long hair shall not be exposed when turnout gear or other personal protective equipment designed to contain the hair is worn.
- Beards, Mustaches, Goatees and Sideburns
 - Any facial hair that interferes with the proper fit of any required respirator (i.e. N95, gas mask, etc.) is prohibited. The only exception will be for personnel who have signed and have on file the appropriate waivers with Occupational Health and Safety as allowed in the City of Virginia Beach Exposure Control Plan. Religious exemptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
 - All facial hair must always be neatly trimmed. An intermittently unshaven look is unacceptable unless medically necessary. (A

medical need must be substantiated by a note from the member's physician and be on file with Occupational Health and Safety.)

- Perfumes, Lotions and other Fragrances
 - To decrease the possibility of a patient or co-worker having an adverse reaction, no strong perfumes, strong lotions or other fragrances shall be worn while on duty.
- Fingernails
 - Fingernails shall be clean and neatly trimmed. Nails should be of a length appropriate for patient care and wearing protective gloves. Supervisors have the authority to direct personnel to trim their nails if in the supervisor's opinion, the nails present a safety hazard.
- Make-up
 - Make-up shall blend with the natural skin and not appear exaggerated or artificial.
- Tattoos
 - Visible tattoos are permitted but must not be of an offensive nature. Supervisors have the authority to direct the covering of tattoos if, in their opinion, the tattoo is offensive. A notification should be made to the Division Chief for Human Resources via the member's chain of command if a tattoo is covered based on supervisor direction for follow-on investigation and determination. Additionally, no tattoos should be visible above the top of the neckline (head and face).
- Jewelry
 - Only Department/station approved uniform insignias and pins shall be worn on the uniform.
 - A wristwatch, which displays time in seconds, shall be worn.
 - A Medic Alert bracelet or necklace may be worn.
 - One ring on each hand may be worn. (A wedding band and engagement ring set shall be considered one ring.) For the safety of the member, rings that sit high and could potentially be caught or entangled in equipment, should not be worn. No ring shall interfere with wearing protective gloves.
 - For the safety of the member, necklaces are not recommended. If worn, however, they shall always be kept inside the shirt.
 - A single bracelet is authorized. The bracelet shall be of a single color and no greater than ½ inch in width. For safety of the member, the bracelet shall be snug fitting with no dangling charms or similar components.
 - Earrings should be worn in good taste. For the safety of the member, no dangling earrings, chain connector ear jewelry or any earring that impacts the ability to correctly don proper personal

protective equipment, without removing the jewelry first, may be worn.

- Other visible body piercing jewelry (tongue, eyebrow, nose, lip, etc.) may be worn but must be in good taste and cannot impact the ability to correctly don proper personal protective equipment without first removing the jewelry. This includes permanently embedded jewelry.

GENERAL WEAR OF UNIFORMS

As previously indicated, proper wearing of the uniform represents to the community not only who you are, but also the organization you represent. Since the predominant workforce is volunteer, each of you are a recruiter for our organization at large and we want to keep up an appearance that is inviting to the community. As such, the following uniform standards are established unless indicated in other sections of this handbook.

- Uniforms must be clean, in good condition, and free of wrinkles. Only authorized uniform apparel may be worn while on duty.
- A current Department issued photo ID badge shall always be worn while on duty or engaged in official business in City or rescue squad facilities. The ID badge should be attached somewhere on your person to allow it to be viewed at or above the waistline. Alterations to the ID badge are prohibited and NO accoutrements (heart, stork or other pins, etc.) should be affixed to the ID badge.
- Only Department or station-approved shirts shall be worn on duty. Dress shirts shall have the station/team patch or insignia on the left sleeve and Department approved certification patch with appropriate rockers on the right sleeve. Shirt tails must be tucked in. (Exception: maternity blouse)
- Only Department or station-approved pants shall be worn. Pants must be clean, neat and properly fitted. Department or station authorized shorts are authorized for wear from May 1st to October 31st for non-officer billets.
- Only department or station-approved belts shall be worn. Belts and/or buckles with names, advertisements, or large metal buckles are not appropriate.
- Shoes must be clean, sturdy, in good condition and in accordance with policy. Black, steel-toed boots are preferred. Black boots may be worn with the Class C uniform. No open toed/or heeled shoes are permitted

(exception for lifeguards). Tennis shoes may be worn with Class C, D and E uniforms only.

- Plain black or navy-blue socks shall be worn with most uniforms. Socks shall be at least “quarter length”. White socks shall be worn with white shoes, and black socks shall be worn with black shoes.
- Only Department or station-approved headwear or religious headwear shall be worn while in uniform. No other head cover shall be worn unless authorized by the EMS Chief or his designee.
- Helmets shall only be marked with Department-approved rockers, shields, etc. An American Flag decal may be added centered at the back of a helmet at the wearer’s discretion. Otherwise, no personal modifications to helmets are permitted without approval of the Chief of EMS or his designee.
- The Department will provide specific ties for dress uniforms. A Department-approved simple silver or gold tie bar may be worn with the dress uniform.
- Jackets/Coats/Raincoats - Only Department or station-approved outerwear shall be worn with the uniform.
- Underclothing – Unless specifically outlined in other sections of this policy, underclothing shall be white and have no visible designs or logos. As a rule, long-sleeved undergarments are not authorized for wear with short-sleeved shirts. Visible logos for specialized custom undergarments (i.e. Under Armor wear) may be allowed on a case-by-case basis with the approval of the EMS Chief or his designee.













INSIGNIA AND OTHER UNIFORM MARKINGS

The Department’s organizational structure is a paramilitary style structure lending itself to a formal rank structure that is consistent with other public safety departments. The following section outlines the Department’s rank structure and identifies uniform accoutrements and accessories that may be worn with the uniform.





Honorary Rank Insignia

<u>Position</u>	<u>Collar Device</u>	<u>Cuff Bands</u>
Chief Emeritus	Gold Spread Eagle 	None

Department Rank Insignia

Position	Collar Device	Cuff Bands*
EMS Chief		<p style="text-align: center;">Five ½" gold bands</p> 
Deputy EMS Chief		<p style="text-align: center;">Four ½" gold bands</p> 
Division Chief		<p style="text-align: center;">Three ½" gold bands</p> 
Assistant Chief		<p style="text-align: center;">Two ½" & one ¼" gold bands</p> 
Brigade Chief		<p style="text-align: center;">Two ½" & one ¼" gold bands</p> 
EMS Captain		<p style="text-align: center;">Two ½" gold bands</p> 

* - Banding on the cuffs is applicable to the Department of EMS formal dress coat when issued.

<u>Position</u>	<u>Collar Device</u>	<u>Cuff Bands*</u>
Instruction Supervisor		One ½" gold band 
Senior Paramedic		None
Paramedic		None
Squad Commander	Rescue squad rank insignia	None
Asst. Squad CMDR	Rescue squad rank insignia	None

* - Banding on the cuffs is applicable to the Department of EMS formal dress coat when issued.

- Badges and Devices
 - Pinned rank insignia is used on the collar tabs of Class A and B shirts.
 - Embroidered insignia are authorized for Class B, C, D and E uniforms.
 - All uniformed staff members Instruction Supervisor and above shall wear a gold badge. All other members shall wear a silver badge.
 - Department issued silver badges shall have "EMS" engraved on the banner. Department issued gold badges shall have the rank engraved on the banner. Instruction Supervisor badges shall have "Instructor" engraved on the banner of the gold badge.
 - Hat badge color and lettering shall correspond to the shirt badge. Hat chinstrap color (silver or gold) will match the badge.
 - Dress uniform ornamental buttons, coat buttons, dress shirt buttons and dress belt buckles shall match the badge color (silver or gold).
 - The Class A uniform hat for Deputy Chief officers and above shall have decorated brims (scrambled eggs).

- Patches
 - Badge style patches may be sewn on winter coats and dress shirts in place of metal badges.
 - ALS providers shall wear the appropriate certification rockers below the Virginia EMT patch (Advanced EMT, Intermediate, Paramedic, etc.).
 - EMT Instructors may wear the “Instructor” rocker below the Virginia EMT patch.
 - Department of EMS members and members of rescue squads without a dedicated patch will wear the Department of EMS patch on their dress shirts.

- Placement of Insignia and Accoutrements
 - Eagle collar devices are worn with the head of the eagle facing front. EMS wreath rank insignia are worn so that the bottom of edge of the insignia is centered, and one inch from the tip point of the collar. They are worn so that the base of the caduceus staff aims/points at the cornered tip of the collar. Rank insignia pins are not to be worn on the dress jacket.
 - The metal badge shall be worn centered above the left pocket.
 - Nametags are worn centered on the right pocket flap. The clutch pinpoints pierce the top seam line of the pocket flap on the class A and class B dress shirts. On the ceremonial dress coats, nametags are worn centered on the right pocket flap with the top edge of the nametag aligned with the top seam line of the pocket flap.
 - Service ribbons shall be worn centered above the right pocket 1/4" above the nametag. The ribbon of highest precedence will be worn closest to the heart. If other rows are needed to accommodate the service ribbons, the ribbons of higher precedence will be worn in the top row. Only one of each type ribbon is to be worn.
 - Longevity stars shall be worn centered horizontally on the left pocket flap. The clutch pinpoints pierce the top seam line of the pocket flap.
 - American flag pins of a style approved by the EMS Chief shall be worn centered horizontally on the left pocket flap and centered vertically between the longevity stars and the pocket button. An alternative veteran’s flag set has been approved for all military veterans.
 - Chief Officer or other credentialing pins approved by the EMS Chief shall be worn on the right pocket, centered on the flap between the button and the top seam.
 - Special Operations pins approved by the EMS Chief (i.e. diver, coxswain, etc.) shall be worn centered 1/4" above the bar pins or

nametag, whichever is higher. Special Operations pins are only to be worn by active team members.

- The Commonwealth of Virginia EMT patch with rocker(s) shall be worn on the right sleeve and the agency patch on the left. Both patches are centered on the apex of the shoulder seam line and one inch down from the shoulder seam.
- Recognition pins (heart, stork, etc.) may be worn only on Class B uniforms on the left pocket flap and shall not exceed 3 in number.
- Coat and jacket badges shall be worn centered over the left chest.
- On Class A winter coats (Bomber Jacket), the Commonwealth of Virginia EMT patch with rocker(s) shall be worn on the right sleeve and the agency patch is worn on the left sleeve. Both patches are worn centered on the apex of the shoulder seam and one (1) inch down from the shoulder seam. Certification rockers shall be worn as outlined above.
- Uniform polo shirts, and outerwear for all members below the rank of Captain shall have the Department of EMS or a special operations team name/logo screen-printed on the back.
- Officer windbreakers, winter parkas, and raincoats shall have the Department of EMS name/logo on the back. Officer polo shirts and Job Shirts are not screen printed on the back.

UNIFORM CLASSES AND WEAR

The Department has several different classes of uniforms that can be worn for different occasions. Career uniformed staff will be issued the appropriate uniforms based on the position they hold. Not all uniformed staff will receive uniform items for all classes of uniforms (career paramedics do not receive a formal dress coat for ceremonial uniforms).

- *Ceremonial Uniform* - The Ceremonial Uniform shall be the formal and dress uniform for Officers of the Department. The ceremonial uniform shall be worn to all formal occasions (e.g. ceremonies, funerals) by departmental officers upon the direction of the Chief or his designee. It shall consist of the following:
 - Uniform long sleeve white shirt with navy-blue tie, metal insignia and accoutrements.
 - Uniform navy-blue pants (men/women) or skirt (women) with black belt with gold/silver buckle.
 - Uniform navy-blue socks and black high gloss shoes (skin tone-colored hose for women).
 - Uniform five button navy-blue departmental dress jacket with accoutrements.
 - Uniform hat, (worn at outdoor formal events as directed by the EMS Chief).

- *Class 'A' Uniform* - The Class 'A' uniform shall be the dress uniform of the Department and shall be worn to all formal occasions (e.g., ceremonies, funerals) by uniformed personnel not holding the rank of Captain (includes Instruction Supervisors) or above. It may also be worn to semi-formal occasions by all uniformed staff. The wearing of plain white crew neck short-sleeved undershirt is required when wearing this uniform. Class A uniforms must be worn by uniformed career EMS personnel when representing the Department of Emergency Medical Services in a court of law, when attending all formal meetings representing the Department or any meeting at the Municipal Center, promotion and graduation ceremonies, etc.). It shall consist of the following:
 - Uniform long sleeve white shirt with navy-blue tie, metal insignia and accoutrements
 - Uniform navy-blue pants (men/women) or skirt (women) with black belt with gold/silver buckle
 - Uniform navy-blue socks and black shoes (skin tone-colored hose for women)
 - Uniform winter coat (bomber jacket) with (gold/silver) buttons and (gold/silver) metal badge

- *Class 'B' Uniform* – The Class B shall be the normal working uniform of the department. The wearing of plain white crew neck short-sleeved undershirt is required when wearing the Class B uniform. The uniform shall consist of the following:
 - Uniform open collar short-sleeve white shirt (all seasons) or long sleeve white shirt (winter dress) with metal insignia and accoutrements. A uniform tie is to be worn with the long sleeve upon the direction of the Chief or his designee.
 - Uniform navy-blue pants and black belt with silver/gold buckle (men/women) or skirt (women).
 - Uniform navy-blue socks with pants or skin toned hose with skirts and black shoes.
 - Uniform jacket - Bomber jacket with (gold/silver) buttons and (gold/silver) metal badge, 5/11 jacket (officers) or HI-VIZ 3-in-1 jacket. The liner of this jacket may NOT be worn as an outer garment with this uniform.

- *Class 'C' Uniform* – The Class 'C' uniform will serve as a casual, daily working uniform for personnel assigned to the EMS Headquarters building and the primary working uniform for field providers. If a T-shirt is worn

under the Class C shirt, it must be plain white or navy-blue crewneck style. It shall consist of the following:

- Uniform white polo shirt (short or long sleeve) with embroidered badge over the left chest (officer polo is different than paramedic polo)
 - Uniform navy-blue pants and department issued black belt
 - Uniform black or navy-blue socks
 - Department-issued job shirt (optional)
 - Department-issued ball cap (optional)
 - Black Boots or sturdy shoes
 - Uniform jacket - 5/11 jacket (officers) or HI-VIZ 3-in-1 jacket. The liner of this jacket may be worn as an outer garment as long as the department badge sewn/embroidered onto the liner
 - ANSI Hi Viz PPE, as required. (traffic vest, windbreaker, or winter parka are seasonally dictated options.)
- *Class 'D' Uniform* – The Class 'D' Uniform shall be an optional working uniform of the Department authorized for wear from May 1st through October 31st. This uniform may not be worn by any member functioning in an EMS Supervisory position or any career paramedic while functioning “on podium” with the Training Division. Authorized officer exceptions include the SWAT Medic, Marine Medic and Lifeguard Captains while functioning in the capacity of those duties. The uniform shall consist of the following:
 - Uniform white polo shirt with embroidered badge over the left chest (officer polo is different than paramedic polo)
 - Uniform navy-blue shorts (must have a 7" inseam), and matching belt.
 - ANSI safety vest, as required
 - Department-issued Ball Cap (optional)
 - For field personnel, white athletic shoes with plain white socks or black athletic shoes with plain black socks. Socks shall be a minimum of “quarter length” and high enough to cover the anklebone.
 - Rain jackets may be worn with this uniform. However, job shirts, turtlenecks, sweaters and long-sleeved shirts are not worn with shorts.

Note: Chief Field Officers may authorize the wear of Class D (summer) uniforms outside of the date range listed above in the event of unseasonably warm weather.
 - *Class 'E' Uniform* - Class 'E' Uniform is an alternate work uniform of the Department for specialty teams. The Department shall approve the uniforms and team captains of the specialty team will define the proper

wearing of the uniform, including appropriate PPE use. The following teams are authorized Class 'E' uniforms:

- Marine Rescue Team
 - SWAT Medic Team
 - Search and Rescue/Bike Team
 - Marine Medic Team
 - Other attire as approved by the EMS Chief or his designee (see below)
- *Class 'F' Uniform* – The Class 'F' Uniform is the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) (i.e. turnout gear, rain gear, etc.). The gear shall be worn for special purposes such as inclement weather or tactical situations, which may present potentially hazardous conditions (i.e. roadways, low-visibility situations, etc.). Protective apparel shall be worn as appropriate for the environment or work setting. Turnout or extrication ensemble pants are not to be worn as a substitute for uniform pants during routine responses. PPE shall include:
 - ANSI safety vest, as required
 - Extrication Gloves
 - ANSI eye protection
 - Helmet (white for Captain and above, blue for all others)
 - Lightweight extrication coat and pant ensemble.
 - Raincoat and rain pants
- Other apparel (Men and Women)
 - Other apparel such as ball caps, beanies, sweatshirts, t-shirts, etc. may be worn following the general pattern guidelines set forth herein or in accordance with rescue squad policies. Career uniforms shall follow the metal badge, embroidery, and screen-printing guidelines, as described. The EMS Chief or his designee shall approve all uniform items.
 - Personnel may wear a uniform polo shirt, white or blue mock turtleneck pullover, or a plain white, light grey or navy-blue crewneck T-shirt under their uniform job shirt. If the member chooses to wear the t-shirts or mock turtleneck shirts described herein under the uniform job shirt, the uniform job shirt is not to be removed while assigned to an incident or otherwise engaged in official business.
 - A departmental issued winter jacket and other apparel considered semi-formal or work garments, may be worn at the discretion of the

individual provided appropriate weather conditions exist and they are neat in appearance.

- Non-issued uniform items should not be worn with the uniform. The EMS Chief or his designee shall approve all deviations to this standard.
- Staff members will wear either uniform or professional business attire in the performance of their duties as directed by their supervisor. Other VBEMS-logo items may be purchased from the employee's annual clothing allowance to wear at conferences or other events.

Ceremonial Uniform Dress Jacket with Accoutrements



Ceremonial and Class 'A' Hats

Only the Chief and Deputy Chiefs have the gold leaves on the brim of the hat.



Class A Uniform Button-down Shirt



Coats/Jackets

BOMBER Jacket



3-in-1 Jacket and Liner



Chapter 3

Service Awards

The Virginia Beach Department of Emergency Medical Services publicly recognizes and rewards extraordinary, meritorious, or conspicuously outstanding acts of heroism and other acts, in service to the community, which are above and beyond those normally expected. All members of the Department of EMS are eligible to participate in the awards program. Each award has specific criteria defined to determine who is eligible for the award and what types of actions are required to receive the award. The VBEMS Awards Program recognizes members of the Virginia Beach Department of EMS including the ten volunteer rescue squads, Marine Response Team, lifeguard services, career staff, and occasionally, Emergency Response System partners from Virginia Beach Police Department, Virginia Beach Fire Department, Emergency Communications and Citizens Services, Virginia Beach Sheriff's Office and the Office of Emergency Management.

The Department has an annual awards ceremony in May for the previous calendar year that typically aligns with national Emergency Medical Services week. Special awards ceremonies may be designated by the EMS Chief and held at any other time.

AWARD NOMINATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Any member of the Department can nominate another member for an award identified in this handbook. The criteria for each award are described further in this chapter. To nominate someone for an award, complete the VBEMS Awards Nomination Form located on the VBEMS webpage (<https://www.vbems.com/service-award-nomination/#nomination-form>) and submit it to the department's Retention Officer. The Retention Officer will verify all award submissions looking for duplicate submissions. Rescue squads are highly encouraged to submit their members for award, including members awarded at annual banquets, for awards at the Department level, especially Members of the Year awards.

The Department provides nominees for certain external organization awards such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion and the Rotary Club. If you would like to nominate a member for one of these awards, contact the Retention Officer for information.

- **Award Nomination**

In order to ensure the criteria as described in this handbook are present, the person nominating someone should have knowledge of the event by personal observation or as a result of an investigation of the event.

Nominations should include as much of the following information as possible:

- Time and location of the incident or event.
- A statement narrative describing why the nominee(s) is being recommended for the award. The submitter should include as much information as possible.
- If the award is being recommended for a specific incident, please include, if known, and additional persons on the incident.
- If submitting an EMS Green Heart nomination, any injury to the person being nominated should be described in detail along with a list of all other Department of EMS members on the scene.

Timely submission of nominations is essential to a successful awards program. A nomination may be submitted at any time. It is recommended that awards be submitted to the Retention Officer as soon as possible following the act upon which it is based. This will provide ample time to gather any information needed for the awards committee while the information is fresh.

Nominations for awards should not normally be disclosed to the individual(s) or their family. Premature public disclosure of such information is a potential source of embarrassment to those nominated.

Regarding citizen nominations - In addition to submitting a nomination to be considered, it is recommended that as soon after the event as possible, letters of appreciation be sent to citizens who have distinguished themselves by assisting members of our Department. The details for these letters should be provided to your chain of command up to the EMS Deputy Chief by the member, officer or squad that was assisted by the citizen. The EMS Deputy Chief will generate the appreciation letter on behalf of the Department. The letter should in no way allude to the future award nomination.

- **Selection Process**

The EMS Chief will establish an awards committee. Tenure on the committee will be for at least one year but may be extended. This committee will consist of five members. The Chairman of the Awards Committee will be a Division Chief. The Vice-Chairman will be an Assistant Chief. Additional members will include one uniformed career and two volunteer members (one must be a uniformed volunteer member). The Department's Retention Officer will serve as a recorder for the committee meetings in addition to the five members and is a non-voting member of the committee. The committee will meet, as needed, based on established deadlines.

Committee members will review nominations and vote on each recommendation. A majority vote determines if an award recommendation

will be forwarded. The Awards Committee Chairperson will meet with the deputy chiefs and present the recommended award slate for concurrence prior to forwarding to the EMS Chief or his designee for final approval.

There is no minimum number of awards per category except for ALS Provider of the Year, BLS Provider of the Year and Outstanding Support Member of the Year. These awards will only be awarded to one person per category per year. Exceptions may be made by the EMS Chief at the recommendation of a unanimous committee vote and concurrence of both EMS deputy chiefs.

The committee, at its discretion, can recommend the presentation of a different award it deems is more appropriate based on the nomination submitted. Committee members cannot vote on any recommendation which involves a relative.

- **Region and State Awards**

The Department of EMS participates in the Governor's EMS Awards Program through the Tidewater EMS (TEMS) Regional Council. The Department will forward to TEMS, for regional selection, those department recipients that align most closely with the Governor's EMS awards criteria.

- **Wearing Awards**

All decorations awarded by the Department include a service ribbon that is to be worn on the member's Class A or Class B uniform per Chapter 1 of this handbook. The service ribbon is to be worn 1/4" directly above the stitching of the right pocket flap and centered on the nameplate. The ribbon of highest precedence will be worn closest to the heart. If other rows are needed to accommodate the service ribbons, the ribbons of higher precedence will be worn in the top row. Service ribbon holders are available to hold multiple ribbons and is the preferred method of display. If a service ribbon becomes damaged or worn, it can be replaced by the department.

- **Appurtenances Worn on Ribbons**

Gold 5/16-inch stars will be awarded for subsequent awards received. All stars will be worn centered on the ribbon with two points (rays) pointing down. For, gold stars are used for subsequent awards received (2nd - 5th) for a total of four stars. No additional stars shall be worn after the fifth award.

- **Award Descriptions and Criteria**

The following Department of EMS awards are established in order of precedent:

Medal of Valor
Medal of Honor
Medal of Merit
EMS Commendation Medal
EMS Green Heart Medal
Provider of the Year
Rescue Squad Member of the Year
Significant Incident Ribbon
Unit Commendation Award
Act of Service Award
Lifesaving Award
EMS Service Ribbon
Community Service Award

Medal of Valor

Awarded to any member of the Department who distinguishes themselves conspicuously by gallantry and at the risk of their life beyond all doubt. All the following criteria MUST BE MET in order to be considered for this award:

- Uniformed member of the Department of EMS (other city departments not eligible for this award)
- Bravery at risk of one's life, beyond a doubt
- The act was performed voluntarily (not ordered to attempt the act)
- Clearly above the call of duty
- If not done, would not reflect negatively on the provider or the Department

The Medal of Valor is a Maltese cross medallion. The Virginia Beach City Seal is affixed to the center, is underscored with "Valor" and is crowned with laurel branches and one star. The medal is suspended from a clasp by a blue draped ribbon.

The Medal of Valor commendation ribbon is solid blue. A 5/16-inch gold star will be added for each additional Medal of Valor awarded.

Award recipients will receive the medal itself, a commendation ribbon commensurate with the award and a framed certificate embossed with the recipient's name and rank, if applicable, as well as the date the award was presented.



Medal of Valor (RC-5)

Medal of Honor

Awarded to any member of the Department who distinguishes themselves by extraordinary bravery not justifying the Medal of Valor award. All the following criteria MUST BE MET in order to be considered for this award:

- Uniformed member of the Department of EMS (other city departments not eligible for this award)
- Extraordinary bravery not justifying the award of the Medal of Valor
- Performed in the presence of great danger or personal risk and performed in an exemplary manner
- If not done, would not reflect negatively on the provider or the Department

The Medal of Honor is a Maltese cross medallion. The Virginia Beach City Seal is affixed to the center, is underscored with "Honor" and is crowned with laurel branches and one star. The medal is suspended from a clasp by a red draped ribbon.

The Medal of Honor commendation ribbon is solid red. A 5/16-inch gold star will be added for each additional Medal of Honor awarded.

Award recipients will receive the medal itself, a commendation ribbon commensurate with the award and a certificate embossed with the recipient's name and rank, if applicable, as well as the date the award was presented.



Medal of Honor (RC-1)

Medal of Merit

Awarded to any member of the Department who distinguishes themselves by performing outstanding meritorious achievement or service in their duties. Most of the following criteria MUST BE MET in order to be considered for this award:

- Any member of the Department of EMS (other city departments not eligible for this award)
- Heroism not justifying awarding of the Medal of Honor.
- Performance substantially above normal requirements.
- Important contributions to the achievement of Department's mission.
- Demonstrates a high degree of personal initiative.
- Exemplary performance by a department member in some community project of significant importance.
- Exemplary performance, which is either sustained or for a single act.

The Medal of Merit is a Maltese cross medallion. The Virginia Beach City Seal is affixed to the center, is underscored with "Merit" and is crowned with laurel branches and one star. The medal is suspended from a clasp by a green draped ribbon.

The Medal of Merit commendation ribbon is solid green. A 5/16-inch gold star will be added for each additional Medal of Merit Medal awarded.

Award recipients will receive the medal itself, a commendation ribbon commensurate with the award and a certificate embossed with the recipient's name and rank, if applicable, as well as the date the award was presented.



Medal of Merit (RC-13)

EMS Achievement Medal

Awarded to any member of the Department who distinguishes themselves by performing exceptional, meritorious achievement or service in their duties. This may include field operations, or exceptional contribution to the service or community. Most of the following criteria MUST BE MET in order to be considered for this award:

- Any member of the Department of EMS (other city departments not eligible for this award)
- Performance not justifying awarding of the Medal of Merit and substantially above normal requirements.
- Important contributions to the achievement of Department's mission.
- Demonstrates a high degree of personal initiative.
- Exceptional performance by a department member in some community project of significant importance.
- Exceptional performance, which is either sustained or for a single act.

The EMS Achievement Medal is a Maltese cross medallion. The Virginia Beach City Seal is affixed to the center, is underscored with "Achievement" and is crowned with laurel branches and one star. The medal is suspended from a clasp by a blue and white draped ribbon.

The EMS Achievement ribbon is blue with a center 1/2-inch white stripe. A 5/16-inch gold star will be added for each additional EMS Achievement Medal awarded.

Award recipients will receive the medal itself, a service commendation bar commensurate with the award and a certificate embossed with the recipient's name and rank, if applicable, as well as the date the award was presented.



EMS Achievement (RC-8)

EMS Green Heart Medal

Awarded to an operational member of the Department who has been killed, or significantly wounded or injured in the performance of their duties. The Green Heart is comparable to the U.S. military's Purple Heart Medal. All the following criteria MUST BE MET in order to be considered for this award:

- Any member of the Department of EMS (other city departments not eligible for this award)
- Serious or significant Injury/wound/death occurred as a direct or indirect action during the performance of one's duties (I.e. providing patient care)
- Hospital treatment by a physician is required at the time of the injury.
- In those cases, in which the death, wound or injury was not inflicted by a deadly or dangerous weapon, the final recommendation will be made to the EMS Chief by the Awards Committee.

The EMS Green Heart is a gold heart medallion. The Virginia Beach City Seal is affixed to the center and is underscored with "Green Heart". The medal is suspended from a clasp by a red and green draped ribbon.

The EMS Green Heart ribbon is half red and half green. A 5/16-inch gold star will be added for each additional EMS Green Heart Medal awarded.

Award recipients will receive the medal itself, a service commendation bar commensurate with the award and a framed certificate embossed with the recipient's name and rank, if applicable, as well as the date the award was presented.



EMS Green Heart (RC-25)

Providers of the Year Award

Awarded annually to three people in three separate categories, ALS Provider of the Year, BLS Provider of the Year and outstanding Support Member of the Year. Other city departments not eligible for this award All the following criteria MUST BE MET in order to be considered for this award:

ALS Provider of the Year:

- Uniformed member of the Department of EMS
- EMT-Intermediate or Paramedic released to general supervision
- Distinguishes themselves through outstanding dedication to the community at large
- Adheres to the Department's mission by providing exemplary advanced life support pre-hospital patient care with EMS
- Consistently displays a positive attitude and work ethic reflects the Department's Core Values

BLS Provider of the Year:

- Uniformed member of the Department of EMS
- EMT-Advanced or EMT released to general supervision
- Distinguishes themselves through outstanding dedication to the community at large
- Adheres to the Department's mission by providing exemplary advanced life support pre-hospital patient care with EMS
- Consistently displays a positive attitude and work ethic reflects the Department's Core Values

Support Member of the Year:

- Administrative or Support Services member of the Department of EMS
- Distinguishes themselves through outstanding dedication to the community at large
- Consistently displays a positive attitude and work ethic reflects the Department's Core Values

The Provider of the Year ribbon is a multi-colored ribbon (red, green, white, yellow and blue). A 5/16-inch gold star will be added for each additional award.

The certificate will include the recipient's name and rank, if applicable, as well as the date the award was presented.



EMS Provider of the Year (RC-15)

Rescue Squad Member of the Year Award

Awarded annually to the individual selected at the rescue squad level as their Rescue Squad Member of the Year. Each Rescue Squad is authorized one award ribbon per calendar year. Squad Commanders should contact the Department's Retention Officer to acquire the ribbon prior to delivering the award to the recipient.

The Rescue Squad Member of the Year ribbon is blue with four, equally spaced, red 1/8-inch stripes on the ribbon. A 5/16-inch gold star will be added for each additional Rescue Squad Member of the Year ribbon awarded.

Award recipients will receive a letter indicating awarding of the ribbon commiserate with being selected as the Rescue Squad Member of the Year.



Rescue Squad Member of the Year Ribbon (RC-43)

Significant Incident Award

Awarded to any member of the Department who distinguishes themselves by deploying/responding to and actively taking part in an event so significant that it involves full or a significant deployment of departmental personnel to save human lives, secures property, and/or significantly affects the normal lives of the citizens of Virginia Beach. All the following criteria MUST BE MET in order to be considered for this award:

- Uniformed or ancillary member of the Department of EMS (other city departments not eligible for this award)
- Actively involved in a significant incident or event (as declared by the EMS Chief) during the occurrence of the event or in its immediate aftermath (timeframe specified by the EMS Chief)
- The incident or event must have involved a complete or significant deployment of departmental personnel to save human lives, secure property, and/or significantly affects the normal lives of the citizens of Virginia Beach and last for days or weeks
- The significant event must be prompted by some type of man-made or natural disaster (Examples are but not limited to: riots, terrorist act, plane crash, hurricanes, tornadoes, etc.)

At the discretion of the EMS Chief, the Department reserves the right to create special significant incident ribbon awards for independent events based on the nature or magnitude of the event.

The Significant Incident Ribbon is green with three white stripes equally spaced on the ribbon. A 5/16" gold star will be added for each additional Significant Incident ribbon awarded.

A certificate identifying the significant incident will include the recipient's name and rank (if applicable), as well as the date the award was presented.



EMS Significant Incident Ribbon (RC-34)

Individual Significant Incident Awards

Building 2 Shooting Significant Incident Ribbon – Awarded to all personnel that were on scene in the municipal center complex for the Building 2 mass shooting on May 31, 2019. This is a one-time award.



BLDG 2 Shooting Ribbon (RC-7)

Unit Commendation Award

Awarded to any group, unit or team that has performed in an outstanding manner to forward the mission of the Department in preserving life, improving health and promoting the safety of citizens and visitors or have distinguished themselves with outstanding community service. This award may also be awarded as a campaign award (i.e. hurricanes, snowstorms, or other events deemed eligible by the EMS Chief). The same group will typically not be eligible for the award in the same or the following year for the same reason. Most of the following criteria MUST BE MET in order to be considered for this award:

- Uniformed or ancillary member of the Department of EMS (other city departments not eligible for this award)
- Served as part of a unit or squad that performed in an outstanding manner to forward the mission of the Department in making communities safer and increasing the quality of life or recovering from natural or manmade disasters
- Distinguished themselves with outstanding community service and/or outreach
- Used innovative techniques demonstrated to have solved health or medical related community issues

The Unit Commendation ribbon is a green ribbon with a white 1/2-inch stripe in the center of the ribbon. A 5/16-inch gold star will be added for each additional Unit Commendation ribbon awarded.

Award recipients will receive a commendation bar and an embossed certificate with the member's name and rank, if applicable, as well as the date the award was presented.



Unit Commendation (RC-23)

Act of Service Ribbon

Awarded to any member of the Department who distinguishes themselves by forwarding the mission of the Department in preserving life, improving health and promoting the safety of citizens and visitors or have distinguished themselves with outstanding community service through special events or programming (I.e. Every 15 Minutes). The member will not be eligible for the award in the same or the following year for the same reason. Most of the following criteria MUST BE MET in order to be considered for this award:

- Uniformed or ancillary member of the Department of EMS (other city departments not eligible for this award)
- Displays initiative in the fostering of an innovative, valuable or successful program in the area of community affairs including special events or EMS-related community classes
- Performing an act of valuable EMS service, demonstrating special faithfulness or perseverance

The Act of Service ribbon is white with four, equally spaced, blue 1/8" stripes on the ribbon. A 5/16-inch gold star will be added for each additional Act of Service ribbon awarded.

Award recipients will receive an Act of Service award ribbon and an embossed certificate with the member's name and rank, if applicable, and the date the award was presented.



Act of Service Ribbon (RC-33)

Lifesaving Award

Awarded to any member of the Department who functions as a member of the combined crew of a cardiac arrest that successfully resuscitates a patient in the field that is discharged neurologically intact from the hospital. This award will be presented annually based on reports received from the Office of Continuous Quality Management. No outside nominations will be received for this award. The following criteria MUST BE MET in order to be considered for this award:

- Uniformed or ancillary member of the Department of EMS (other city departments not eligible for this award)
- Functions as a member of the crew that successfully resuscitated an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest that is discharged neurologically intact from the hospital

The Lifesaving ribbon is a red ribbon with a white 1/2-inch stripe in the center of the ribbon. A 5/16-inch gold star will be added for each additional Lifesaving ribbon awarded.

Award recipients will receive a Lifesaving ribbon and an embossed certificate with the member's name and rank, if applicable, and the date the award was presented.



Lifesaving Ribbon (RC-42)

EMS Service Ribbon

Awarded to any member of the Department who is an active member, operational and administrative, during the effective dates as outlined by the EMS Chief. No outside nominations will be received for this award. The following criteria MUST BE MET in order to be considered for this award:

- Active uniformed or ancillary member of the Department of EMS (other city departments not eligible for this award)

For volunteer members, 'active' is defined as meeting their duty requirements and does not include members that are on any type of leave greater than 90 days (i.e. medical or military leave).

For career members, 'active' is defined as being employed by the department but not on leave without pay (LWOP).

Any member meeting the above criteria are authorized to wear the EMS Service ribbon for services during the following dates:

COVID Response – 3/16/ 2020 – UFN

The EMS Service ribbon has white ends with a 1/4-inch, red stripe in the center of the ribbon and two 1/4-inch, green stripes on each side of the red strip. A 5/16-inch gold star will be added for each additional EMS Service ribbon awarded.

Award recipients will receive an EMS Service ribbon and an embossed certificate with the member's name and rank, if applicable, and the date the award was presented.



EMS Service Ribbon (RC-24)

Community Service Award

This ribbon will be awarded to the individuals selected as recipients of annual awards from the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Rotary Club, the American Legion, the Neptune Festival Hometown Hero or other community service organization as designated by the EMS Chief to signify receipt of those awards.

The Community Service Ribbon is light blue with a red 1/4-inch stripe in the center and two white 1/4-inch stripes on both sides of the red stripe. A 5/16-inch gold star will be added for each additional Community Service award received.

Award recipients will receive a letter indicating awarding of the ribbon commiserate with the community award they are receiving.



Community Service Award Ribbon (RC-32)

EMS Exceptional Service Medal

Awarded to an emergency response system member (VBPD, VBFD, ECCS, Emergency Management) or city employee who distinguishes themselves by forwarding the mission of the Department and the emergency response system in preserving life, improving health and promoting the safety of citizens and visitors or have distinguished themselves with outstanding service to the community. Recommendations for issuance of this award will be submitted directly an EMS Deputy Chief for consideration by the EMS Chief.

The EMS Exceptional Service Medal is an eight-pointed star medallion. The Virginia Beach City Seal is affixed to the center, is underscored with “Exceptional Service.” The medal is suspended from a clasp by a red, white and blue draped ribbon.

The EMS Exceptional Service Medal commendation ribbon is red, white and blue.

Award recipients will receive the medal itself, a service commendation ribbon commiserate with the award and a certificate embossed with the recipient’s name and rank, if applicable, as well as the date the award was presented.



EMS Exceptional Service Medal (RC-3)

EMS Commendation Certificate

Awarded to any emergency response system member city employee or citizen who distinguishes themselves by performing a heroic act or significant achievement, which may involve personal danger and must be above and beyond actions normally expected in their job or the community. Said actions or achievements should be consistent with forwarding the mission of the Department and the emergency response system in preserving life, improving health and promoting the safety of citizens and visitors or have distinguished themselves with outstanding service to the community.

Recommendations for issuance of this award will be submitted directly to the Department’s Retention Officer. The Retention Officer will process the award request and route to both EMS deputy chiefs for concurrence for consideration by the EMS Chief.

Ribbon collage by seniority



The ribbons will go onto the ribbon bar holder with the most junior ribbon you have on the bottom left as you are looking at the ribbon bar and work to the left in order of seniority.

Gold Stars



RECORD OF CHANGES PAGE

Change	Date
Created Document	4/23/2020
Added EMS Service Ribbon and established wear for COVID Pandemic; removed Class 'A' uniform jacket shoulder board and metal rank insignia.	5/27/2020