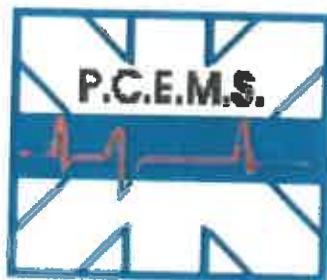


The Putnam County EMS Handbook



Effective April 6, 2017

OFFICE COPY – DO NOT REMOVE

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SUBJECT: Welcome

PURPOSE: To extend congratulations for and best wishes during employment as Putnam County Emergency Medical Services staff

Putnam County Emergency Medical Services began servicing the residents of Putnam County in 1974. Seven locations housed fourteen ambulances manned by an all volunteer system of EMTs. Today, the volunteers are the foundation that make Putnam County EMS the outstanding organization it is today.

We are happy to welcome you to Putnam County EMS. Our organization is devoted to helping others and we need caring and compassionate team members to further our mission of service. We want you to feel that your association with Putnam County EMS will be beneficial to both you and the organization.

You have joined an organization that has established an outstanding reputation for high quality patient care and medical transportation services. Maintaining this reputation is a responsibility of all of our personnel. We hope you will find satisfaction and take pride in the organization and your involvement here.

This Handbook provides answers to many of the questions you may have about your work here. This includes our responsibilities to you as an organization, as well as your responsibilities to Putnam County EMS as a staff member. If anything is unclear, please discuss the matter with your squad Chief or office staff personnel.

You are responsible for reading and understanding this Handbook, and any performance evaluations may reflect your adherence to our Policies, including those outlined in this Handbook. You will also be asked to sign an acknowledgment statement indicating your receipt of this Handbook. Please complete and return the acknowledgment to your supervisor as soon as possible. In addition to clarifying responsibilities, we hope this Personnel Handbook also gives you an indication of Putnam County EMS's interest in the welfare of all who work for or belong to this organization.

While Putnam County EMS follows these Policies, you should understand that this Handbook is not an express or implied "contract" or guarantee of continued employment or membership in the organization. Management 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.

Compensation and personal satisfaction gained from helping others and in doing a job well are only some of the reasons most people work or volunteer for Putnam County EMS. Most likely, many other factors count among your reasons for joining Putnam County EMS: pleasant relationships, good working conditions, the chance to help the community, career development, and promotion opportunities are just a few. Putnam County EMS is committed to doing its part to help assure you of a satisfying experience whether you are an employee or a volunteer.

We extend to you our best wishes for your success at Putnam County EMS

SUBJECT: Introduction to this Handbook

PURPOSE: To explain the purpose of the Putnam County Emergency Medical Services Handbook

As a new staff member, you will be going through a period of adjustment at Putnam County EMS. You may have questions about Putnam County EMS, such as your day-to-day duties, benefits, and what you can expect from us and what is expected of you. This Handbook has been prepared as a guide to answer many of your questions. Each of the Policies in this Handbook is important in providing the structure, rules, and guidance related to your involvement with Putnam County EMS. Please read it carefully and keep it handy to use as a reference tool. This Handbook frequently refers to your "supervisor", because of the structure on the Putnam County EMS, as a volunteer, your direct supervisor is the Squad Chief. The EMS Administrator is the direct supervisor for all levels of EMT, regarding patient care. All patient care questions and concerns should be directed to the EMS Administrator, who will consult with our medical director as appropriate. Paramedics in the Medic 300 program also are supervised by the EMS Administrator.

If you cannot find an answer in the Handbook, then your supervisor will be your major source of information. Supervisors expect questions and will do their best to give you a prompt response. Many of the policies included in this Personnel Handbook reference other policies within our organization. You are encouraged to review and be familiar with all company policies during your service here.

Putnam County EMS may, from time-to-time, make deletions, changes or additions to this Personnel Handbook. When this occurs, you will receive notification of updates. It is your responsibility to obtain written copies by visiting the organization website at www.pcops.org. Updates are located under the "Handbook" tab. Nothing contained in this Handbook is to be considered an employment contract, and any employment relationship is deemed to be at the will of either the organization or you as an employee.

In addition to your supervisor, you can direct any questions you may have regarding our policies to: Putnam County Office of Public Safety; P.O. Box 370; Ottawa, OH. 45875-0370; 419-538-7315

SUBJECT: Expectations

PURPOSE: To outline expectations regarding: professionalism, attitude and competency from the employee, as well as the employer

The successful operation of Putnam County EMS depends on the professionalism, courtesy, and competency of all personnel. It is our intent to rely on the best personnel to fulfill our mission of public service. In return for your contribution to the success of Putnam County EMS, we will make a concerted effort to provide you with a meaningful and rewarding experience here. You can further expect respect for your individual rights, honest and fair treatment by management, high quality equipment, a safe and pleasant work environment, and conditions that are consistent with state-of-the-art EMS organizations.

At all times, we expect high quality performance along with cooperation and respect for the patient, the public, fellow staff members, and management. Professional appearance and behavior are crucial to our success and all personnel are expected to be courteous, loyal, honest, and to respect and comply with Putnam County EMS rules, regulations, and policies. The strength of Putnam County EMS is its personnel, and we invite you to provide input and suggestions for continued enhancement of our activities.

We are a "people" business. That means we all must do our very best to effectively communicate with others, especially the patients who rely so much on our service. Most of the calls we respond to do not involve "life or death" situations. The most frequent attribute you will need to rely upon is your interpersonal communication skills and your compassion for others. Many of our patients will be elderly and may need the emotional and psychological support that comes from a caring attitude in all that you do. We expect that all patients will be treated with utmost dignity. Please remember our overriding philosophy - treat others in the same way that you would want to be treated. If you follow this simple philosophy in every encounter with a patient, family member, the public, or fellow staff members, you will feel good about yourself and the service you provide, and you will enhance our position and reputation in the community.

SUBJECT: Mission & Values Statements

PURPOSE: To describe the mission of Putnam County Emergency Medical Services and values it holds as integral components of the organization

The mission of Putnam County EMS is to provide outstanding emergency medical services and patient transportation services. We provide these services in a professional manner while maintaining the dignity of those we serve. Our staff continuously strives to learn, improve and grow in enhancing the delivery of emergency medical services to those we serve.

Putnam County EMS adheres to the following values:

Commitment to Service

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

Respect

We recognize the dignity of others and communicate with others in a respectful manner.

Integrity

We serve with honesty, loyalty and dedication.

Accountability

We are responsible for our actions, both positive and negative.

Teamwork

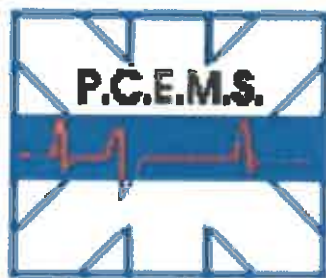
We practice teamwork through communication and cooperation to achieve common goals.

Fair Treatment

We do not discriminate against patients or personnel on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, disability, political belief, military service, or any other legally protected characteristic.

Section I

Organizational Information



SUBJECT: Definitions

PURPOSE: To define common terms and position titles used throughout this policy

"EMT"- Emergency Medical Technicians operating on a volunteer basis responsible for responding to emergency and non-emergency calls as dispatched by the Putnam County Sheriff's Office.

"Employee"- persons reporting to Station 300 to work. These persons include but are not limited to: office staff, Medic 300 and 301.

"Medic 300"- a full time, 24-hours a day/7 days a week position filled by part time paramedics. This position is responsible for responding to emergency calls county-wide; assisting on non-emergency calls as needed; and assisting on transfers from Putnam County Ambulatory Care Center when medic required and no volunteer medic is available. Medic 300 will supervise patient care once on scene.

"Office Staff"- those full time, 40 hours a week positions that maintain the day-to-day operations of the Putnam County Office of Public Safety. These positions include, but are not limited to:

- Putnam County Office of Public Safety Coordinator**
- Assistant Coordinator**
- EMS Administrator**
- Administrative and Support Assistant**
- EMS Support Specialist**
- EMT/Chart Data Specialist**

"Supervisor"- person responsible for making decisions regarding business operations, scheduling, filing worker's compensations claims and handling conflict resolution as needed,

for EMT: Squad Chief

for Medic 300 and Squad Chief: EMS Administrator

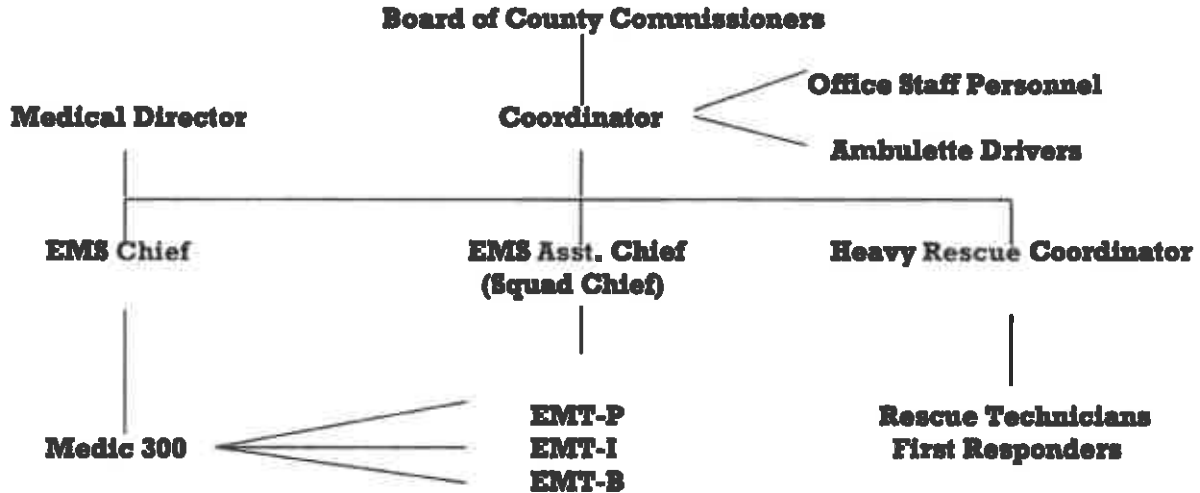
for office staff: Putnam County Office of Public Safety Coordinator

"Unit 301"- a full time, 40 hour a week position filled by any level emergency medical technician. This position is responsible for responding to emergency calls county-wide supplementing EMT response; assisting on non-emergency calls as needed; and assisting on transfers from Putnam County Ambulatory Care Center when no EMT is available. This position may be staffed 24-hours a day/7 days a week at a time when demand for personnel exceeds staffing availability of EMTs.

SUBJECT: Organizational Structure and Authority

Revised July 30, 2013

PURPOSE: To illustrate the flow of command and communication within Putnam County Emergency Medical Service



The Medical Director is responsible for the county's EMS protocols. In some situations, the medical director will supercede the Coordinator

The Role of Your Chief

Your chief is a very vital part of our management team. Your chief will be your main "go to" person when you have questions or concerns. Your chief is directly responsible for overseeing daily operations, planning the work schedule, monitoring the quality of your work, and providing you with whatever assistance you may need. Your chief will introduce you to your fellow personnel, orient you to your squad(s), and advise you on where you can improve your performance.

An important part of your chief's responsibilities is to answer questions, listen to your concerns, help you explore alternatives for resolving those problems, and take action where appropriate. Your chief is there not only to supervise, but also to make your concerns known to upper management. Feel free to discuss any issues with him or her and give your chief your cooperation.

Our entire management 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.

SUBJECT: Communications

PURPOSE: To establish open lines of communication through a series of meetings

Open communication is essential to the overall success of the organization. We encourage open and positive communication between management and staff. Periodic management staff meetings (Coordinator and Chief; Office Personnel, Chief and Secretary/Trauma Sheet Coordinator), general staff meetings (Coordinator and Office Personnel, EMS Administrator and Medic 300s) and quarterly Communication Group meetings may be held in order to help maintain strong lines of communication throughout the organization.

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 immediate supervisor. We encourage the management 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 supervisor directly, you may discuss the matter with any member of the management team. If the problem is of a personal nature, feel free to voluntarily schedule an appointment with the EMS Coordinator or EMS Administrator. We will make every effort to keep these discussions confidential if they involve sensitive issues.

Putnam County EMS 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. If at any time you feel that we are not being fully compliant with the law or regulations, we encourage you to express your concerns to a member of the management team.

Communication Group Meetings

Putnam County EMS prides itself on its ability to provide high quality patient care and maintain an environment that is safe for all employees and members. To best achieve those goals, we have implemented a program of periodic and informal communication meetings between management and staff. The purpose of these meetings is to obtain the input of individual personnel, through discussions between small groups of personnel and members of management.

The meetings will occur periodically, and will involve randomly selected personnel for participation in each meeting. Several randomly selected personnel will have the opportunity to talk directly to a member of management at four of these meetings each year in order to voice concerns and make suggestions for improving the organization. Each year a new group of personnel will be selected to participate.

Personnel should not feel pressured to participate, but should remember that their individual input is important and will be greatly appreciated. Thoughts and ideas on patient care issues, work conditions, and other terms of employment or membership can greatly improve the quality of patient care and the work environment. Individual concerns will not be attributed to individual participants directly, and those that do participate will not face

any retribution or retaliation for any complaints or concerns that are raised in this constructive format.

All personnel are always welcome to approach any member of management with additional concerns at any time, and for any purpose. The use of an informal, social, low pressure setting that exists with the communication group is often a way for Putnam County EMS to obtain useful information to improve our operations and our relationship with our staff.

The Communication Group Meetings are also a great way for "front line" personnel and management to interact in a relaxed and informal setting. Mutual respect, equality, and individual attention to everyone's concerns are of utmost concern. Efforts will be made to answer any concerns, or resolve any problems as quickly as possible. A short written summary of the meeting identifying the key issues and the management response to those issues will be provided shortly after the meeting, and be distributed to all personnel and management. As discussed above, individual suggestions will not be attributed to the person making the comment. At times, we may even solicit anonymous comments, in order to better assure confidentiality when sensitive issues are raised. Personnel offering suggestions or complaints will face no retribution or retaliation for raising their good faith concerns or suggestions.

SUBJECT: Statement of Employment at Will

PURPOSE: To define terms of employment and termination of employment by the employee and employer

Employment with Putnam County EMS is "at will," meaning that both you and the organization remain free to terminate the relationship at any time, for any reason or no reason, with or without advance notice. Nothing in this Handbook shall be construed to alter the at-will nature of employment or membership status within the organization, and nothing in this handbook shall be construed to create a contractual relationship between Putnam County EMS and any employee or member where such a relationship does not otherwise exist.

The following non-exhaustive list of examples do not alter the at-will nature of employment or membership status within the organization:

1. Oral or written statements or representations, whether before or after your hiring, except an express written contract that is signed by you and an authorized representative of the County.
2. Practices or procedures of the County or its supervisory personnel.
3. Any written materials including, but not limited to: recruitment materials, employment applications, policies, rules, guidelines, descriptions of benefits, and this employment Handbook.
4. Completion of an "Introductory Period," "Orientation Program" or conferral of "regular" employee status for which benefits begin to accrue.

If you are a volunteer member of the organization, your membership is governed by County and squad bylaws. You should review the bylaws carefully if you have any questions about your membership.

SUBJECT: Personnel File & Updating Personal Information

PURPOSE: To establish confidentiality of personnel records, including medical records, and procedures for file examination

It is important that Putnam County EMS maintain complete and accurate personnel records for all employees and members. 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 County as soon as possible if there is any change to any of the following items:

- a. Legal name.
- b. Home address.
- c. Home telephone number.
- d. Person to contact in an emergency.
- e. Number of dependents.
- f. Marital status.
- g. Change of beneficiary.
- h. Driving record or status of driver's license.
- i. Military status.
- j. Exemptions on your W-4 tax form (*employees only*).
- k. Certifications, recognitions, expiration dates, identification numbers, etc.
- l. I-9 immigration forms.

Since we refer to your personnel file when making decisions in connection with education opportunities, 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 may have an impact on future assignments, opportunities, etc. The personnel file will also retain work and volunteer related information gathered about you during your involvement with our organization, including both positive and negative occurrences.

Putnam County EMS reserves the right to keep records related to investigations 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 or membership. This file is not considered "public record," therefore these records will be kept confidential. Pursuant to applicable law, all medical records shall be maintained in a separate file.

Each employee shall have the right, upon written request and reasonable notice (at least twenty-four [24] hours) to examine his/her personnel file. Such examination shall be made on non-work time or at some other mutually agreeable time. If an employee disputes the accuracy, timeliness, relevance or completeness of documents in his/her file, (s)he may submit a written request that the appointing authority investigate the current status of the information. The appointing authority will make a reasonable investigation to determine the accuracy, timeliness, relevance and completeness of the file, and will notify the employee of the results of the investigation and any plans the appointing authority has to take action with respect to the disputed information. The employee may submit a statement to be attached to any disputed documents. Employees are not permitted to alter, add or remove documents or other information contained in their personnel files absent express authorization from the

appropriate appointing authority. An employee who alters, adds or removes documents or information from her personnel file without prior approval may be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

personnel Medical Records

All medical records we receive about staff members are retained in a confidential manner to the fullest extent possible. Generally, only those persons within Putnam County EMS with a need to know the information will have access to such records. And, even then, such persons will only have access to as much information as is minimally necessary for the legitimate company-related use of the medical records. All staff member medical information will be kept in a locked office or a locked file cabinet, and will be maintained separate from personnel files. Medical information in electronic form will only be accessed by management personnel authorized and permitted under the law to access that information.

In accordance with laws concerning disability discrimination, all medical records of personnel will be kept in separate files, apart from the general personnel file. These records will be secured and be treated as confidential, except that, in accordance with the law, management must have limited access to learn about information regarding necessary restrictions on the work or duties of the employee and reasonable accommodations that may have to be made.

In accordance with the Privacy Rule of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountabilities Act (HIPAA), employment records are not considered to be protected health information (PHI), subject to HIPAA safeguards. This includes certain medical records that may be retained by Putnam County EMS as your employer. While HIPAA's privacy Rule is not applicable to employment records, general state and federal privacy laws remain applicable. In the interest of privacy and confidentiality, Putnam County EMS will treat your medical records with utmost respect, privacy, and security to the greatest extent possible.

SUBJECT: Non-Discrimination/Equal Employment Opportunity

PURPOSE: To detail Putnam County Emergency Medical Services' commitment to hiring personnel in a fair manner

Putnam County EMS 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 or membership for our staff. We will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class. It is at all times, the intent of Putnam County EMS to comply with State Human Relations Act provisions, as well as all federal discrimination and employment laws.

All personnel are encouraged to report to his or her supervisor or other 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, disability, political belief, military service, or any other protected class.

Additionally, in compliance with all hiring, membership, promotion, discipline and workplace accommodation decisions shall occur on a non-discriminatory basis, with reasonable accommodations being made where possible, to the extent that essential job functions can be properly performed.

Immigration Law Compliance

Putnam County EMS is committed to employing only United States citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the United States. We will not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin. In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility. Former employees who are rehired must also complete the form if they have not completed an I-9 form within the past three years, or if their previous I-9 form is no longer retained or valid.

SUBJECT: Compliance

PURPOSE: To express Putnam County Emergency Medical Services' commitment to compliance of local, state and federal laws

Putnam County EMS is committed to adhering to all local, state and federal laws that relate to the operation of our organization. As a staff member of Putnam County EMS, we expect you, too, to adhere to all these requirements. Such compliance will ensure proper patient care, and help make for a better work environment. Putnam County EMS 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.

HIPAA

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issued the Privacy Rule to implement the requirement of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). The Privacy Rule standards address the use and disclosure of individuals' health information—called "protected health information"—by organizations subject to the Privacy Rule — called "covered entities," as well as standards for individuals' privacy rights to understand and control how their health information is used.

A major goal of the Privacy Rule is to assure that individuals' health information is properly protected while allowing the flow of health information needed to provide and promote high quality health care and to protect the public's health and well being.

Putnam County EMS takes their obligation to meet the requirements of the Privacy Rule very seriously. In response, the organization has appointed a Privacy Officer who coordinates the exchange of patient information regarding treatment given on emergency calls. Concerns regarding personnel HIPAA violations will be addressed by the Putnam County EMS Coordinator.

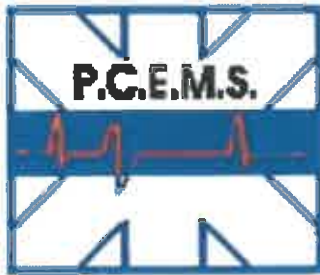
BUREAU OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Putnam County EMS is responsible for providing safe working conditions, tools, equipment and work methods for its employees. The coordinator is responsible for addressing unsafe conditions promptly and for ensuring that employees under his supervision utilize all safety rules and safe working methods. In the case of injury, Putnam County EMS will comply with all regulations placed upon it by Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation.

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS

In order to provide a safe work environment for all personnel, patients and others by limiting employee exposure to infectious disease, Putnam County EMS has implemented a "Bloodborne Pathogens Compliance Manual." To appropriately deal with exposures, the manual is consistent with Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) exposure control standards.

Section II
General Policies – All Personnel



SUBJECT: 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.

Putnam County EMS is committed to providing employees with a safe, healthy, and productive environment by maintaining a drug-free and alcohol-free workplace. Putnam County EMS 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 Company vehicles, or while representing Putnam County EMS.

The following list of terms and definitions are specific to this organization:

- 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, Putnam County EMS.
- 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).
 4. A report of drug use by reliable and credible sources and which had been independently corroborated.
 5. Evidence that an individual has tampered with or attempted to mask a drug test during his/her employment with the current employer.
 6. Evidence that an employee is involved in the use, possession, sale, solicitation or transfer of alcohol and/or other drugs while working, or while on the employer's premises or operating the employer's vehicle, machinery or equipment.
 7. The occurrence of a significant incident involving an employee's on the job actions which has resulted in:
 - a. The personal injury of any person, including the employee, in which medical treatment has been sought away from the scene, or
 - b. Which property damage has occurred where a vehicle or equipment had been towed away from the scene or is rendered inoperable.

Putnam County EMS prohibits the use or possession of alcohol or illegal drugs on the premises, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while performing

Putnam County EMS duties or representing Putnam County EMS, except when the use is prescribed by a physician who has advised the employee the substance does not adversely affect the employee's ability to safely perform his/her job duties. 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 Company equipment. 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.

Pre-employment or pre-membership screening may be performed. All applicants provided a conditional offer of employment or membership 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 or membership. Applicants testing positive for drugs and /or alcohol will be provided an opportunity to appeal the positive result to the Putnam County EMS. The decision of an authorized Putnam County EMS testing agency shall be final. A new application may be submitted for employment or membership ninety (90) days from the date of the last conditional offer of employment or membership 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.

Routine testing of personnel may occur as well. Personnel may be required to submit to drug testing under the following circumstances:

- a. Where state or federal regulations require such testing.
- b. Where Putnam County EMS 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 Putnam County EMS with a copy of the treatment facility's prescribed after care program and proper verification of the staff member's compliance with the after care program or revisions thereto.
- d. Anytime following a motor vehicle accident, however minor, in which the staff member was the operator of the vehicle.

Additionally, all Putnam County EMS employees may be subject to drug and/or alcohol testing conducted under any of the following conditions:

- a. **Reasonable suspicion of drug and/or alcohol use:** Whenever the County or an employee's supervisor has reasonable suspicion to believe that the employee is under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance, the County or supervisor may require such employee to submit urine or other sample for alcohol and/or controlled substance testing. Reasonable suspicion must be based on specific, contemporaneous, articulable observations concerning the appearance, behavior, speech or body odors of the employee.
- b. **Post-accident testing:** As soon as practicable following an accident involving a County vehicle that results in personal injury or property damage estimated to be in excess of \$2,000, the County may test each County employee involved in the accident for alcohol and controlled substances. Any employee who is subject to post-accident testing shall make herself readily available for such testing or shall be deemed to have refused to submit to testing. If the

test is not administered within eight hours following the accident, the test shall not be administered and a written statement explaining why the test was not administered shall be submitted to the County.

- c. **Return to work testing:** The County shall ensure that, before an employee returns to work after engaging in prohibited alcohol and/or controlled substance conduct, the employee undergoes a return to work alcohol test with a result indicating an alcohol concentration of less than 0.02 and a verified negative result for controlled substance abuse.
- d. **Follow-up drug and alcohol testing:** Any employee who tests positive for the use of alcohol or controlled substances while on duty may be evaluated by a substance abuse professional. If, following an evaluation, the employee is directed to undergo substance abuse counseling, such employee may be subject to unannounced follow-up alcohol and/or controlled substance testing consisting of six tests in the twelve month period following the employee's return to work.

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 supervisor(s) 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. 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. The following is a list of some, but not all, of the actions an employee may take which will be considered a refusal to test:

- a. Refusal to sign the form-releasing test results to the County
- b. A non-medical delay in providing urine, breath, blood, saliva or any other specimen
- c. Failure to report directly to the testing facility upon notification
- d. The use of any product to invalidate the test results

Testing procedures shall conform to accepted practices, and the Putnam County EMS may utilize an outside or contracted person or organization for this purpose. Costs of all drug screening tests and confirmatory tests shall be borne by the organization except for any test initiated at the request of the employee shall be at the employee's expense.

Test results shall be communicated to Putnam County EMS as soon as possible upon receipt of the results from the testing facility. The results of the testing shall be delivered to the Office of Public Safety and the employee being tested.

If a drug screening test is positive, a confirmatory test shall be conducted in the manner prescribed in the laboratory's procedures. In the event the second test confirms the results of the first test, the County may proceed with appropriate discipline. An employee whose confirmatory test results are positive shall have the right to request a certified copy of the testing results in which the vendor shall affirm that the tests results were obtained using the approved protocol methods. In the event that the second test contradicts the result of the first test, the County may request a third test in accordance with the procedures

prescribed above. The results of the third test, if positive, shall allow the County to proceed with discipline as set forth in this policy. If the results of the third test are negative, discipline shall not be imposed.

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 or membership

All records and information obtained by Putnam County EMS regarding drug testing, requests for testing, the test results, and treatment of personnel for chemical dependency will be confidentially maintained by Putnam County EMS as fully as possible in the employee's Personnel Medical Record file, 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.

SUBJECT: 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.

Putnam County EMS 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 or volunteer. Each employee or volunteer must satisfactorily complete the background check process prior to performing any services.

Criminal History Record Background Checks

- c. Each applicant (for employment or membership) must submit to fingerprinting and a state criminal background check with the Putnam County Sheriff's Office.
 1. The fee for the criminal background check is the responsibility of the applicant.
 2. The applicant shall complete necessary paperwork to authorize the release of information to the Putnam County Office of Public Safety
- b. 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 or volunteer has been convicted (including a plea of "no contest") of any crime that is relevant when considering employment or membership, he or she may not be eligible for employment or membership. Additionally, any employee or volunteer who is later convicted of a crime may be subject to immediate termination of employment or expulsion from membership. (Convictions for offenses will not necessarily preclude employment/membership, but will be considered in making employment and membership 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 or be accepted as a member.
 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 or membership because of the results of the criminal background check.
- c. Any applicant (for employment or membership) who does not cooperate with the criminal history records check process will not be considered for employment/membership.

- d. Putnam County EMS may periodically request that additional criminal background checks occur throughout the term of employment or membership. Full cooperation with such periodic checks is expected, and failure to cooperate will result in discipline.
- e. All personnel have an ongoing obligation to disclose to Putnam County EMS any convictions during their employment/membership. Personnel who fail to make such a disclosure will be subject to appropriate discipline.

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 Company vehicles, and in some cases, may not be considered for employment/membership. Each applicant (for employment or membership) is required to submit necessary information to Putnam County EMS to enable Putnam County EMS to obtain a copy of the driving record from the applicable state agency (e.g., Department of Transportation).
- b. Any applicant (for employment or membership) who does not cooperate with the driver record check process will not be considered for employment/membership.
- c. At all times during employment/membership, personnel must meet the following criteria while operating Company vehicles:
 - 1. They must have a valid driver's license (where work requires operation of a Company vehicle).
 - 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.
- d. 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.

Review of OIG Exclusions

- b. The Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General (OIG) reports those individuals or organizations that have been excluded from participating in federal health care programs. Those on the excluded list are not permitted to provide services that will be billed to a federal health care program (such as treating Medicare/Medicaid patients) and are not permitted to be involved in billing or related functions.

- c. **As part of its application process, Putnam County EMS will research the OIG's database for possible applicant exclusion. Exclusion from any federal health care program constitutes grounds for disqualification of employment/membership.**
- d. **Putnam County EMS will conduct periodic re-checks of the OIG exclusion database. In the event that a current employee or member is found to appear on the exclusion list, termination of employment/membership may be required.**

References

- a. **Applicants shall provide a list of references, including past employers. References shall not include family members and social friends.**
 - d. **Putnam County EMS may contact each named reference to confirm the qualifications, abilities, or character of each applicant (for employment or membership).**
 - e. **Any applicant (for employment or membership) who does not supply references will not be considered for employment or membership.**

Medical Examination

- a. **All applicants are required to meet the required physical requirements for the applied for position, as established by Putnam County EMS. All candidates must have their prospective job description reviewed, and signed by their primary care physician. The physician's signature indicates the applicant can perform all tasks listed within in the job description.**
 - 1. **Any fees associated with the physician review of physical requirements is the responsibility of the applicant**
- b. **Additional physical examinations may be required periodically as a condition of continued employment to ensure continued ability to perform the physical requirements of the job.**

SUBJECT: Becoming a Member of Putnam County E.M.S.

Revised March 5, 2010

PURPOSE: To guide potential members through the P.C.E.M.S. employment process.

Individuals wishing to become a member of one of the Putnam County E.M.S. squads will follow various tracks in the pursuit of membership. The following is for those without current EMS certifications.

1. Contact local squad Chief.
 - a. Chief will:
 - i. Advise you on squad membership criteria.
 - ii. Enter you onto squad's waiting list.
 - iii. Setup squad interview.
 - iv. Sign and give applicant a "Squad Acceptance" form.
 - v. Inform Putnam County Office of Public Safety (PCOPS) by October 1st of those being recommended to be tested for course enrollment.
2. Attend PCEMS Informational Meeting.
 - a. At this meeting you will:
 - i. Be given information on the "Test of Adult Basic Education" (TABE) Examination and EMT course.
 - ii. Turn in your signed "Squad Acceptance" form.
 - iii. Sign and return the following forms:
 1. "Permission for Drug Screening".
 2. "Failure to Complete Course".
 3. "Vaccination Accepted/Declination" form.
 4. "Records Authorization" form.
 - a. Leave copy of driver's license.
 - iv. Be informed of requiring a criminal background check done at the Sheriffs Office.
 1. Ohio criminal background only.
 - a. At applicants expense.
 - v. Receive "Functional Job Analysis" form to be signed by your physician.
 1. Return to PCOPS before TABE Examination.
3. Take TABE Examination.
 - a. Will be given at the Putnam County Educational Services Center (ESC).
 - i. Date will be passed onto applicants at or before PCEMS informational meeting.
 - ii. All applicants must take TABE, and score at or above a predetermined cutoff score, in order for PCEMS to cover the cost of the course.
 1. Anyone not meeting the minimum score may:
 - a. Take the course at their own expense if there is room available after tested applicants are placed.
 - b. May apply with squad again and apply to retest at start of the next county provided course.
4. TABE Results, Criminal Background, Driving Records and Physicians Signed Functional Job Analysis Notification.
 - a. All applicants will be notified by mail of pass/fail results:
 - i. TABE Score
 - ii. Criminal Background Check
 - iii. Driving Record
 - iv. Functional Job Analysis – signed by Physician and without limitations.

- b. All four (4) must be completed; meet State, County, and Department guidelines; and be on file at PCOPS before applicant will be allowed to attend EMT course at PCEMS expense.
 - 5. **Successfully Complete EMT Course**
 - a. **Class schedule will be determined by Vocational Education Center and course instructor.**
 - i. **Approximately three & half (3 ½) months duration.**
 - ii. **Two (2) nights per week.**
 - iii. **Generally held at PCOPS. (Unless scheduling conflict)**
 - b. **Make observing runs with sponsoring squad.**
 - i. **Before making observing runs, a student must:**
 - 1. **Be certified in CPR.**
 - 2. **Have been cleared to take blood pressure, pulse, and assess respiratory rate.**
 - 3. **Submit a "Pager Contract" to PCOPS.**
 - a. **A pager will be assigned by sponsoring squad for student to make observing runs.**
 - ii. **Students will be allowed to make observing runs for a maximum of two (2) months during class.**
 - 1. **Squad or PCOPS may stop any student from making observation runs if it is determined student is not functioning appropriately.**
 - 2. **Students will cease making observing runs once classroom work is completed.**
 - c. **Complete all requirements as determined by Vocational Education Center and course instructor.**
 - d. **Successfully complete National Registry Testing Requirements.**
 - i. **Completed observation hours (hospital & squad).**
 - ii. **Successful testing at skills station.**
 - iii. **Successfully complete National Registry Test**
 - 1. **Sit for initial test within two (2) weeks of completing Vocational Education Center course requirements or first date available after student's 18th birthday.**
 - a. **Additional testing for achieving certification must be taken within one (1) week of the required waiting period.**
 - i. **All testing beyond initial will be at the expense of the student.**
 - e. **Present proof of certification to PCOPS within thirty (30) days of posting on the State EMS website, to begin employment process.**
6. **Complete Additional Required Training Within Six (6) Months of Certification:**
 - a. **Incident Command Systems (ICS): 100, 200, & 700 (available on-line).**
 - b. **Hazardous Materials Awareness**
 - c. **Health Information Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA)**
 - d. **Bloodborne Pathogens**
 - e. **PCEMS Computer/EMSCcharts**
 - f. **Radio Operations.**
 - g. **PCEMS Protocol & Policy**
7. **301 Ride-a-Long**
 - a. **Complete ten (10) patient runs where student is in back aiding with patient care, assisting another EMT.**
 - b. **Have 301 or squad member sign off on each run.**
8. **Complete County Payroll Information at Auditors Office.**

- a. PERS "Personal History Record".
 - b. W-4
 - c. "Employee's Withholding Exemption Certificate".
 - d. School District Tax form.
 - e. "Direct Deposit Authorization".
 - i. To include a "Voided" check.
 - f. Non Social Security Covered Employment form.
 - g. Form I-9 "Employment Eligibility Verification" form.
 - h. "Declaration Regarding Material Assistance/Nonassistance to A Terrorist Organization".
9. Begin making calls with sponsoring squad:
- a. Must be scheduled or available for runs as other squad members are required.
 - b. Fulfill all requirements of an EMT making patient runs with PCEMS:
 - i. Attend squad meetings.
 - ii. Attend county Continuing Education classes.
 - iii. Give appropriate patient care.
 - iv. Share time equally between driving and patient care.
 - v. Complete electronic run sheets completely and appropriately.
 - vi. Make similar number of runs as the "average" similarly trained EMT on your squad each year.

SUBJECT: Becoming a Member of Putnam County E.M.S. (Already Certified)
PURPOSE: To guide Currently Certified members through the P.C.E.M.S. employment process.

Revised March 5, 2010

The following is for those with current EMS certifications.

1. Contact local squad Chief.
 - c. Chief will:
 - i. Advise you on squad membership criteria.
 - ii. Enter you onto squad's waiting list.
 - iii. Setup squad interview.
 - iv. Sign and give applicant a "Squad Acceptance" form.
2. Contact Putnam County Office of Public Safety (PCOPS) regarding employment.
 - a. At time you will:
 - i. Turn in your signed "Squad Acceptance" form.
 - ii. Present proof of EMT certification to PCOPS
 - iii. Sign and return the following forms:
 1. "Permission for Drug Screening".
 2. "Vaccination Acceptance/Declination" form.
 3. "Records Authorization" form.
 - a. Leave copy of driver's license.
 - iv. Be informed of requiring a criminal background check done at the Sheriffs Office.
 1. Ohio criminal background only.
 - a. At applicants expense.
 - v. Receive "Functional Job Analysis" form to be signed by physician, without limitations.
 - vi. Be directed to complete County Payroll Information at Auditors Office.
 1. PERS "Personal History Record".
 2. W-4
 3. "Employee's Withholding Exemption Certificate".
 4. School District Tax form.
 5. "Direct Deposit Authorization".
 - a. To include a "Voided" check.
 6. Non Social Security Covered Employment form.
 7. Form I-9 "Employment Eligibility Verification" form.
 8. "Declaration Regarding Material Assistance/Non-assistance to A Terrorist Organization".
3. Complete PCEMS Required Training Within Six (6) Months of Certification or Show Proof of Previous Completion:
 - a. Incident Command Systems (ICS): 100, 200, & 700 (available on-line).
 - b. Hazardous Materials Awareness
 - c. Health Information Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA)
 - d. Bloodborne Pathogens
 - e. PCEMS Computer/EMSCcharts
 - f. Radio Operations.
 - g. PCEMS Protocol & Policy
4. Sign pager contract and receive pager.
 - a. A pager will be assigned by sponsoring squad to make observing runs.
5. 301 Ride-A-long (For those with limited or no previous run experience).
 - a. Complete ten (10) patient runs where student is in back aiding with patient care, assisting another EMT.

- b. Have 301 or squad member sign off on each run.**
- 6. Make observing runs with sponsoring squad.**
- 7. Begin making calls with sponsoring squad:**
 - a. Must be scheduled or available for runs as other squad members are required.**
 - b. Fulfill all requirements of an EMT making patient runs with PCEMS:**
 - i. Attend squad meetings.**
 - ii. Attend county Continuing Education classes.**
 - iii. Give appropriate patient care.**
 - iv. Share time equally between driving and patient care.**
 - v. Complete electronic run sheets completely and appropriately.**
 - vi. Make similar number of runs as the "average" similarly trained EMT on your squad each year.**

SUBJECT: Cellular Phone Use

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

Cellular phone use and use of personal digital assistants (PDAs) while on duty shall be limited to necessary work related calls made on work-issued phones.

Personal use of cell phones is only permitted during limited times when work responsibilities are not being performed.

- a. Personal cellular telephones are permitted to be carried while on duty, but must be placed on vibrate mode, and allow voice mail to answer the call. Messages may be checked on "down time" when not actively involved in a call or performing work duties.
 - b. Cellular phones may be used for personal purposes, but conversations shall be limited to five (5) minutes, and never be cause for delay in responding to a patient or beginning an assignment.
 - c. While attending to a patient or while operating a Company vehicle, personnel shall not, under any circumstances, respond to (or make) a personal cellular telephone call, send text messages, or check electronic mail on PDAs.
 - d. In the interest of protecting employee documents, patient confidentiality, and to prevent the capture of inappropriate data, under no circumstances shall any personnel be permitted photograph these items with their cellular telephone that serves as a camera.
8. Personnel are prohibited from using personal cellular telephones or PDAs between the dispatch of a call and the time that the call is cleared. This is to prevent any distractions while engaged in patient care, and to avoid any possible interference with equipment that may occur based upon the cellular activity.

Company-issued cellular phones or PDAs shall be used for Company business only, including, but not limited to, making contact with dispatch, medical command, or a receiving hospital.

- a. Personnel will not utilize a cellular telephone or PDA while driving. If cellular communication is necessary, the passenger should handle the telephone
- b. Personnel working aboard one-person vehicles will minimize the use of Company-issued cell phones while operating department vehicles.

SUBJECT: 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.

Putnam County EMS 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. To ensure that Internet access is used in furtherance of appropriate objectives and to provide a measure of control and structure as to its use, Putnam County EMS applies strict guidelines to Internet access.

Putnam County EMS has the ability to monitor Internet access (all messages sent, sites accessed, and information downloaded). All such information is the property of Putnam County EMS. Putnam County EMS 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.

Permitted Uses of the Internet

Internet access is a resource involving the use of Putnam County EMS assets (modems, telecommunications networks, computers and software) and should be used for business purposes only. For office staff, non-business use (such as net surfing for personal enjoyment or entertainment, or other non-business purposes) is prohibited while on working time.

Personnel serving in full time positions (Medic 300, Unit 301) are permitted to bring in their own computer and use Putnam County EMS modems, Internet, or E-mail connections to access the Internet, or E-mail systems.

Prohibited Uses of the Internet

The following uses of the Internet are prohibited:

- a. 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.
- b. Use of the Internet for unlawful purposes such as:
 1. Downloading or copying information (e.g., sounds, images, documents, etc.) or programs in violation of copyright and software licensing laws.
 2. Using the Internet for unauthorized access to other computer systems.
 3. Using the Internet to distribute or receive destructive programs (i.e., viruses and/or self-replicating code), etc.
- c. Use of the Internet for personal commercial or profit-generating activities or for personal advertisements, solicitations, promotions, political material, or any other similar purposes.

d. **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.**

9. **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."**
- **Participating in the viewing or exchange of pornography or obscene materials.**
- **Sending offensive or sexually explicit messages, or viewing websites with sexually explicit, pornographic, or offensive materials.**
- **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 Putnam County EMS 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 Putnam County EMS's image or reputation.**
- **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 Putnam County EMS purposes or activities.**
- **Using the Internet for political causes or activities, religious activities, or any sort of gambling.**
- **Jeopardizing the security of the Putnam County EMS's electronic communications system.**
- **Sending or posting messages that disparage another organization's products or services, including other ambulance companies.**
- **Passing off personal views as representing those of the organization.**
- **Sending anonymous e-mail messages (except to the extent that Putnam County EMS has created an anonymous compliance or complaint e-mail reporting system).**

- **Engaging in any other illegal activities or assisting others to engage in such activity via the computer equipment, electronic mail or the Internet.**

E-Mail Use

E-mail is not a private communication system that may be used freely. Personnel shall not use e-mail to send personal information or discuss private matters about anyone, including themselves. E-Mail use is reserved for business purposes only.

- Except as may be specifically permitted under our organization's privacy policies, patient information should not be discussed over e-mail.**
- Any defamatory, insulting, derogatory or sexually offensive remark about any person or group of persons utilizing electronic or other communication is prohibited.**
- Any member or employee who violates this requirement may be subject to disciplinary action, including termination.**
- Improper use of e-mail may also expose personnel to criminal charges separate and apart from disciplinary action.**

Access and Security

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.

- 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.**
- 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.**

Accessing Internet sites may identify to third parties both the user's name and the Putnam County EMS name. Appropriate caution must be exercised in accessing sites.

- Disclosing privileged and/or confidential information and offering opinions or advice over the Internet must not occur.**
- 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 Putnam County EMS name.**
- The intentional access and use of Internet sites in a manner that could compromise Putnam County EMS in any manner is prohibited.**

SUBJECT: 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.

Putnam County EMS will handle and resolve misunderstandings, conflicts, and complaints that may arise in a systematic and non-discriminatory manner to ensure appropriate resolution.

Personnel are encouraged to present good faith concerns of any nature to their supervisor, or other manager. 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.

If an employee believes he has been treated arbitrarily, capriciously, or unreasonably; or believes that his supervisor, department head, or appointing authority has violated any provision of this handbook, he shall process the complaint following section XXI Complaint Procedure, item 1 (one), of the Putnam County Employee Handbook and Personnel Policies.

Resolution

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 a supervisor as soon as possible.

In cases where the problem relates to compliance, HIPAA, or raises a question off federal or state law, appropriate persons shall be notified and involved (including but not limited to, the Privacy Officer, the Compliance Officer, and/or legal counsel).

When a complaint or conflict is apparent, personnel should first discuss the situation with a supervisor, preferably immediately following the event or incident, or within five (5) calendar days.

Personnel offering complaints, conflicts and problems in good faith will not face retribution or retaliation.

Investigation Procedure

The supervisor will conduct an investigation of the problem in the following manner:

1. **Management engaged in an investigation of any complaint will gather and document all appropriate information, and interview all persons involved, or believed to be involved.**
2. **Personnel interviewed by management regarding a concern, complaint, suggestion, or conflict are expected to fully cooperate and offer information in a truthful manner.**
3. **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.**

SUBJECT: Educational Expense & Reimbursement

Revised November 9, 2012

PURPOSE: To identify those eligible for PCEMS Educational Grants & Reimbursements, and procedures to follow to receive them.

PCEMS each year set aside funds for educational purposes that may include new EMT, Advanced, and Paramedic courses, as well as continuing education provided within and around Putnam County. PCEMS reserves the right to determine how educational funding may best serve the needs of the Putnam County. Because these funds are limited, the following guidelines have been established to ensure that appropriate and economical training is provided for PCEMS personnel. **PCEMS RESERVES THE RIGHT TO LIMIT THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS IT APPROVES FOR ALL TRAINING.**

1. PCEMS sponsored EMT course.

- a. PCEMS will hold one (1) course each year if enough eligible students are available.
- b. Squad Sponsored applicants that meet all the criteria of the "Becoming a Member of Putnam County E.M.S." policy will have their course paid for in full via an education loan from PCEMS

Education Loan: With the rising cost of education Putnam County Emergency Medical Services (PCEMS) have developed a method of cost sharing to enable interested personnel the opportunity to join PCEMS squads at a reduced cost. This method also enables PCEMS to recruit members while also protecting tax dollars spent on training.

Procedure:

I. Standards.

- a. Cost of the course includes:
 - 1. EMT Class
 - 2. Hep B Vac, optional
 - 3. TABE Test
 - 4. Background/Driving Record Check
 - 5. National Registry Testing
- b. Student Obligation:
 - 1. Functional Job Analysis Signed by Physician
 - 2. Payment of one-third (1/3) total cost of course to PCEMS.
 - i. Monthly payments equal to 3% of total cost beginning the first month of class.
 - ii. Full payments due by 15th of each month until student's one-third (1/3) is zero (0).
 - 3. Successful completion of EMT course.
- c. PCEMS Obligation:
 - 1. Pay for three-quarters (3/4) of cost of course.
 - i. Will finance up to one-third (1/3) the cost of course as in item b.2 above.
 - ii. Offer enough C.E. over three years for student to be recertified by the State of Ohio.
 - iii. Provide hourly payment while making runs, in accordance with PCEMS policy.
 - iv. Provide monthly invoices for outstanding balance of course

II. Agreement Violations:

- a. Quitting of EMT class or being dropped from class due to academic or attendance issues.
- b. Failure to successfully complete any of the requirements of "Becoming a Member of Putnam County EMS."

III. Consequences of Violations:

- a. Violation of any of the above requirements by student, will cause the student to be immediately liable for the entire cost of the EMT course, less any payments made by the student to PCEMS.
 - i. Any unforeseen circumstances will be handled on a case by case basis.
- b. Any unpaid amounts may be turned over to county prosecutor for small claims court.
- c. Any other applicants may fill out the class, if room exists, at their own expense.

2. EMT courses outside Putnam County.

- a. PCEMS will not pay for individuals to take an EMT course not sponsored by PCEMS.
 - i. Day-time course applicants can petition Coordinator for an exception.
- b. Individuals that take a non-PCEMS sponsored course may apply for reimbursement after successful completion of course.
 - i. Must apply within two (2) weeks of certification being posted on State website.
 - ii. EMT must follow all applicable portions of the "Becoming a Member of Putnam County E.M.S." policy.

3. Previously certified EMTs.

- a. Those EMTs certified at any level, that did not attend a PCEMS sponsored course and/or, are coming from another EMS department/agency, are not eligible for reimbursement of their training.

4. Advanced EMT course.

Tuition and other class related expenses are the responsibility of the student. PCEMS offers financial assistance through a reimbursement program. See item 8 below.

- a. Those interested in becoming an Advanced EMT via PCEMS reimbursement program must:
 - i. Apply no less than six (6) months prior to start of class.
 - 1. Submit a fully completed "Request to Attend" form to PCOPS.
 - 2. Submit two (2) letters of recommendation from "non-related" squad members.
 - ii. Have one (1) year active service with PCEMS.
 - iii. Made a similar number of runs as the "average" similarly trained EMT on your squad, each year.
 - iv. Be current on skill checks.
 - v. Frequent participant in PCEMS continuing education.
 - vi. Be in good standing with local squad and PCOPS.
 - vii. Interview with Coordinator and/or Chief Paramedic.
 - viii. Present proof of new certification to PCOPS within thirty (30) days of posting on the State EMS website.
 - ix. Begin making calls with sponsoring squad:

1. Must be scheduled or available for runs as other squad members are required.

8. Paramedic course.

Tuition and other class related expenses are the responsibility of the student. PCEMS offers financial assistance through a reimbursement program. See item 8 below.

- a. Those interested in becoming a Paramedic via PCEMS reimbursement program must:
 - i. Apply no less than six (6) months prior to start of class.
 1. Submit a fully completed "Request to Attend" form to PCOPS.
 2. Submit two (2) letters of recommendation from "non-related" squad members.
 - ii. Have one (1) year active service with PCEMS.
 - iii. Made a similar number of runs as the "average" similarly trained EMT on your squad, each year.
 - iv. Be current on skill checks.
 - v. Frequent participant in PCEMS continuing education.
 - vi. Be in good standing with local squad and PCOPS.
 - vii. Interview with Coordinator and/or Chief Paramedic.
 - viii. Present proof of new certification to PCOPS within thirty (30) days of posting on the State EMS website.
 - ix. Begin making calls with sponsoring squad:
 1. Must be scheduled or available for runs as other squad members are required.

6. Continuing Education

PCEMS will strive to provide enough C.E. over a three year period to satisfy the recertification needs for all levels of EMS.

- a. PCEMS sponsored C.E. event.
 - i. No cost to PCEMS personnel.
- b. Non-PCEMS sponsored C.E. events.
 - i. Approved Events (i.e. BVH, LMH, SRMC, Partners for Life)
 1. Eligibility:
 - a. Has attended seventy (70%) percent of PCEMS sponsored CE over last twelve (12) months.
 - b. Current on skill checks.
 - c. Made a similar number of runs as the "average" similarly trained EMT on your squad over last twelve (12) months.
 - d. Submitted a completed "Request to Attend" form no less than two (2) weeks prior to event.
 - e. No other funding or reimbursement is received from another source.
 2. Reimbursement
 - a. PCEMS will determine amount or percentage of reimbursement per attendee after all "Request to Attend" forms have been received.
 - b. After submission of "Request To Attend" form, prospective students will receive written approval or denial of request.
 - c. All approved CE events will be reimbursed after attendees provide:

- i. **Proof of event payment.**
- ii. **Successful completion/attendance certificate.**

7. Recertification courses.

- a. **EMT recertification courses, including EMT, Advanced, and Paramedic recertification courses will not be reimbursed by PCEMS.**
- b. **Recertification of specialty courses fees, including PALS, and PHTLS/TTLS, will be reimbursed or paid for by PCEMS for those individuals that:**
 - i. **Has attended seventy (70%) percent of PCEMS sponsored CE over last twelve (12) months.**
 - ii. **Current on skill checks.**
 - iii. **Made a similar number of runs as the "average" similarly trained EMT on your squad over last twelve (12) months.**
 - iv. **Are required by PCEMS to carry such certification.**
 - v. **Submitted a completed "Request to Attend" form no less than two (2) weeks prior to event.**

8. Reimbursement Program

After submission of Training Grant Application, prospective students will receive written approval or denial of request.

- a. **Approved personnel will receive reimbursement as described below:**
 - i. **PCEMS will reimburse the individual in three (3) equal payments, beginning on the one (1) year anniversary date of the successful completion of course and certifications.**
 - ii. **Only tuition and course related lab fees are eligible.**
 - iii. **Personnel are responsible to request each reimbursement payment, to include:**
 1. **Personal Invoice for requested payment amount to PCEMS.**
 2. **Copy of original Educational Programs Total Invoices.**
 3. **Proof of payment (only needed for first submission).**
 4. **Submit "Singular Payment Source" Agreement (only needed for first submission).**

SUBJECT: Exposure Control & Education

PURPOSE: To provide a safe work environment for all personnel, patients, and others by limiting our exposure to infectious disease and to appropriately deal with exposures that do occur.

Putnam County EMS expects all personnel to follow the "Exposure Control Plan" that has been developed, as well as all other safety reporting and training standards to minimize or eliminate instances of exposure to bloodborne pathogens and other contaminants or diseases and to otherwise prevent injury in the workplace.

Exposure Control Plan

Putnam County EMS has implemented a "Bloodborne Pathogens Compliance Manual" ("Manual") that is consistent with Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA) exposure control standards. This Manual also includes relevant safety Policies, as required under the Manual. Relevant exposure and safety areas addressed in the Manual include, but are not limited to:

- Universal precautions.
- Sharps disposal (engineering controls).
- Personal protective equipment.
- Disposal of regulated waste.
- Disposal of contaminated linens.
- Proper use of labels.
- Exposure reporting requirements.

All personnel shall follow exposure requirements and reporting obligations as outlined in full in the "Bloodborne Pathogens Compliance Manual."

Vaccinations

Putnam County EMS will make the Hepatitis B vaccination available to personnel at no cost to personnel at risk of bloodborne pathogen exposure. Vaccination is encouraged unless:

- a. Documentation exists that the employee or member has previously received the vaccination,
- b. Antibody testing reveals that the employee or member is immune, or
- c. Medical evaluation shows that vaccination is contraindicated.

Personnel may choose to decline the vaccination. If personnel choose to decline the vaccination, he or she must sign a refusal form acknowledging the refusal to receive the vaccination. This refusal form can be found at Attachment A.

Education and Training

Education and training is critical for the safety of all personnel and patients that Putnam County EMS treats. It is critical that all personnel be involved in the training related to exposure control and proper use and disposal of instruments and gear, to prevent

contamination, hazards, or otherwise compromise the health and safety of personnel or patients. Failure to attend mandatory training sessions can lead to discipline.

Putnam County EMS shall conduct, on a regular basis, various training and educational sessions regarding:

- **bloodborne pathogens**
- **contractions of illness**
- **safety and universal precautions procedures**
- **other such trainings on topics required or recommended by federal and state safety and regulatory agencies.**

Putnam County EMS shall provide important safety and health information (e.g. OSHA updates and Ohio Department of Health findings and publications regarding illness, bloodborne pathogens, and infectious disease control) on designated bulletin boards, through personnel publications, and by other means.

SUBJECT: Firearms, Weapons & Explosives

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

Personnel are prohibited from carrying firearms, weapons, explosives or other dangerous devices while on duty, or bringing such items to the workplace. All weapons are prohibited from being on Putnam County EMS property, including lockers, personal backpacks or other carrying cases while on company property, and in company vehicles.

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.

This Policy does not apply to:

- a. law enforcement officers who are serving in an authorized law enforcement capacity.
- b. legitimate Putnam County EMS equipment and supplies that may have dangerous potential (e.g. rescue knives, needles), or may have explosive tendencies (e.g. compressed gasses).

If you have any question or concern about what may constitute a prohibited weapon under this Policy, you should immediately consult your supervisor.

SUBJECT: General Compliance Policy (Standards of Care, Legal Compliance, Fraud & Abuse, Conflicts of Interest, Business Compliance, Personal Conduct)
PURPOSE: To remain in compliance with all federal, state, and local rules, laws, and ordinances that relate to the provision of ambulance services.

Putnam County EMS 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.

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, Putnam County EMS reserves the right to dismiss any employee or member without warning, progressive discipline, or notice, if we determine that continued employment or membership is not in the best interests of the Putnam County EMS, other employees, members or the people we serve. In other words, at all times, employment and membership is "at will."**
- c. **Putnam County EMS reserves the right to suspend an employee or member (with or without pay) as it deems appropriate, as part of its investigation of a staff member's conduct. Putnam County EMS reserves the right to take any action, which differs from the progressive disciplinary steps, outlined in this Handbook, including suspension and termination from employment or membership as a first step.**

Legal Compliance

- a. **Putnam County EMS 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 Putnam County Prosecutor when confronted with business decisions involving a risk of violation of the antitrust laws.**
 - c. **Personnel are expected to utilize resources appropriately and efficiently, to recycle where possible, and otherwise dispose of all waste in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, and to work cooperatively with the appropriate authorities to remedy any environmental contamination for which Putnam County EMS may be responsible.**
 - d. **All personnel shall treat all other personnel, patients, family members, vendors, and business partners fairly and equitably. In accordance with the non-discrimination commitment, Putnam County EMS 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.**
 - e. **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.**
 - f. **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.**

Fraud

- a. **All personnel shall accurately and honestly represent Putnam County EMS and will not engage in any activity or scheme intended to defraud anyone of money, property, or honest services.**

1. **Putnam County EMS requires candor and honesty from individuals in the performance of their responsibilities and in communication with our attorneys and auditors.**
 2. **Personnel shall not make false or misleading statements to any patient, person, or entity doing business with Putnam County EMS about other patients, persons, or entities doing business or competing with Putnam County EMS, or about the products or services of Putnam County EMS or its competitors.**
- b. Personnel shall not misappropriate confidential or proprietary information belonging to another person or entity, or utilize any publication, document, computer program, information, or product in violation of a third party's interest in such product.**
1. **All personnel are responsible to ensure they do not improperly copy for their own use documents or computer programs in violation of applicable copyright laws or licensing agreements.**
 2. **Personnel shall not utilize confidential business information obtained from competitors (including patient and customer lists, price lists, contracts, or other information in violation of a covenant not to compete or a prior employment agreement) in a manner likely to provide an unfair competitive advantage to Putnam County EMS.**

Conflicts of Interest

- a. **Directors, officers, committee members, employees and members owe a duty of undivided and unqualified loyalty to Putnam County EMS. Persons holding such positions may not use their positions to profit personally or to assist others in profiting in any way at the expense of the organization.**
- b. **All personnel are expected to regulate their activities to avoid actual impropriety and/or the appearance of impropriety which might arise from the influence of those activities on business decisions or from disclosure or private use of business affairs or plans of Putnam County EMS.**
- c. **While not all inclusive, the following will serve as a guide to the types of activities by personnel, or an individual in the immediate family (spouse, child, or parent), which might cause conflicts of interest:**
 1. **Ownership in or employment by any outside entity that does business with Putnam County EMS.**
 2. **Ownership in, membership in, employment by, or membership in any outside entity that competes with Putnam County EMS.**
 3. **Conduct of any business, not on behalf of Putnam County EMS, with any vendor, supplier, contractor, or agency, or any of their officers or members.**

4. **Representation of Putnam County EMS by a member in any transaction in which he or she, or an immediate family member, has a substantial personal interest.**
 5. **Disclosure or use of confidential, special, or inside information of or about Putnam County EMS, particularly for personal profit or advantage, of a particular staff member, or an individual in that person's immediate family.**
 6. **Competition with Putnam County EMS by personnel or an individual in that person's immediate family, directly or indirectly, in the purchase, sale or ownership of property or property rights or interests, or business investment opportunities.**
- d. **Personnel shall not perform work or render services for any competitor of Putnam County EMS or for any organization with which it does business or which seeks to do business outside of the normal course of his or her employment or association with Putnam County EMS without the approval of the person's supervisor or the Board of County Commissioners. No member or employee may be a director, officer, or consultant of such an organization, and he or she shall not permit his or her name to be used in any fashion that would tend to indicate a business connection with such organization.**
- e. **All personnel are requested to consult with management prior to serving as a member of the Board of Directors of any organization whose interests may conflict with those of Putnam County EMS. However:**
1. **Any personnel who is asked, or seeks to serve on the Board of Directors of any organization whose interest would not negatively impact Putnam County EMS (for example, civic, charitable, fraternal) will not be required to obtain such approval.**
 2. **Putnam County EMS may prohibit continued employment or membership to anyone who serves as a member on any Board of Directors where such membership might conflict with the best interest of Putnam County EMS.**
- f. **Personnel must disclose actual, apparent, or possible conflicts that may arise.**
1. **Such disclosures shall be made in writing and be delivered to a supervisor or member of management of Putnam County EMS.**
 2. **Copies of such disclosures will be forwarded to appropriate compliance or ad hoc conflict committees for prompt resolution.**
 3. **All potential conflicts will be initially decided upon by such a committee. Ultimate resolution of such conflicts, and the determination as to whether such a conflict is harmless or must be resolved, shall be decided by a vote of all active personnel. The person involved in the possible conflict shall be excused from participation in any such vote.**

Business Compliance

- a. **Business transactions with vendors, contractors, and other third parties shall be free from offers or solicitation of gifts and favors or other improper inducements in exchange for influence or assistance in a transaction.**
- b. **The standards set forth below are intended to guide personnel in determining the appropriateness of the listed activities or behaviors within the context of business relationships, including relationships with vendors, providers, contractors, third party payers, and government entities. It is the intent that this Policy be construed broadly to avoid even the appearance of improper activity. If there is any doubt or concern about whether specific conduct or activities are ethical or otherwise appropriate, personnel should contact a supervisor.**
 1. **Personnel are prohibited from soliciting or accepting tips, personal gratuities, monetary tips, or gifts from patients or family members of patients. If a patient or another individual wishes to present a monetary gift, he or she should be referred to a supervisor.**
 2. **Personnel are prohibited from soliciting or accepting gifts, favors, services, entertainment or other things of value from outside entities to the extent that decision-making or actions affecting Putnam County EMS might be influenced. Outside entities include equipment vendors, hospitals, physicians, nursing facilities, dialysis facilities, or other individuals or organizations with which Putnam County EMS maintains, or could maintain a business relationship, or where either Putnam County EMS or the outside entity is in a capacity to make referrals to one another. Similarly, the offer or giving of money, services, gifts, or other things of value by Putnam County EMS personnel with the expectation of influencing the judgment or decision making process of any purchaser, supplier, customer, government official or other person is prohibited.**
 3. **Notwithstanding #2 above, personnel may receive and offer token gifts or promotional items to and from vendors that have a nominal value. If any member or employee has any concern whether an item should be accepted, the member or employee should consult with his or her supervisor. To the extent possible, these items should be shared with Putnam County EMS's other members and employees. Personnel shall not accept excessive gifts, meals, expensive entertainment or other offers of goods or services that have more than a nominal value nor may they solicit gifts from vendors, suppliers, contractors or other persons.**
 - A. **For purposes of this Policy, nominal shall mean less than \$25.**
 - B. **Such nominal gifts include coffee mugs, T-shirts, pens, flashlights, and other similar "promotional" items.**
 4. **Attendance at local, vendor-sponsored workshops, seminars, and training sessions is permitted, but such attendance should not be**

offered free of cost when the vendor imposes a charge on other persons or organizations.

- c. Personnel may not utilize "insider" information for any business activity conducted by or on behalf of Putnam County EMS. All business relations with contractors must be conducted at arm's length both in fact and in appearance, and in compliance with standard business practices. Personnel must disclose personal relationships and business activities with contractor personnel that may be construed by an impartial observer as influencing the members or employees' performance or duties.

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 members, employees, or outside persons (as defined in the "Sexual and other Harassment" Policy) while on Putnam County EMS premises or while engaged in Putnam County EMS 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 unprofessional 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:
- Calling someone a derogatory name.
 - Use of profanity.
 - Display of sexually explicit literature, photographs, movies, videotapes or computer images.
 - Use of pornographic material (such as magazines) or use of pornographic devices or paraphernalia on Putnam County EMS premises or its vehicles.
 - Internet access and viewing of sexually explicit web sites.
 - Sending sexually explicit or offensive e-mail messages, notes or letters.
 - Watching sexually explicit or offensive television programs or videotapes while on Putnam County EMS premises.
 - Unwelcome physical contact with another person, or purposely detaining or restricting another person's movement.

- **Exhibiting inappropriate outward personal affection of a sexual nature toward another employee, volunteer, member or outside person.**
- **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.**
- **Posting sexually explicit or otherwise offensive material on bulletin boards or walls.**
- **Violation of the non-discrimination commitment and the "Sexual and Other Harassment" Policy.**
- **Wearing inappropriate clothing that is sexually provocative or distracting to others so as to interfere with their ability to function.**
- **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).**
- **Falsifying patient records.**
- **Removing or discarding records, material, or other property from the premises without permission.**
- **Any other type of theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property.**
- **Having intimate personal relations with other employees, members, volunteers or any outside person while on Putnam County EMS premises, in its vehicles, or while engaged in its activities.**
- **Fighting with or threatening others.**
- **Defacing another person's personal affects.**
- **Gambling on Putnam County EMS property, in its vehicles or at its functions.**
- **Possession of weapons on Putnam County EMS property or in its vehicles (except for approved work knives, or other exception as outlined in the "Firearms, Weapons and Explosives" Policy).**
- **Abuse, unprofessional behavior, insubordination, or disrespect to patients, family members, or other employees, supervisors, officers, volunteers, or members.**
- **Accepting tips or gratuities (gifts or money) from patients, family members of patients, or vendors.**
- **Solicitation or distribution in violation of the no solicitation and distribution rules.**
- **Unauthorized or careless use or, malicious destruction or damage of property, tools or vehicles.**
- **Unlawful or unauthorized release of confidential patient or proprietary information.**
- **Unlawful or unauthorized manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, sale, transfer or use, of any controlled substance or alcohol on Putnam County EMS property or while performing Putnam County EMS duties.**
- **Reporting to work or working under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or a legal drug that adversely affects safety or job performance.**
- **Poor or unsatisfactory work performance or conduct.**
- **Disorderly conduct or boisterous or disruptive activity such as but not limited to horseplay in the workplace.**
- **Violation of established safety rules (including smoking rules).**
- **Unreported or excessive absenteeism or tardiness.**

- Gossip about fellow employees or management.
 - Failure to report a workplace accident or damage to Putnam County EMS property.
 - Refusal to accept a job assignment.
 - Creating unsafe or unsanitary conditions.
 - Extending breaks or lunch periods beyond time limits.
 - Use of computer equipment for personal use without permission.
 - Any other unauthorized use of telephones, mail system, or other Putnam County EMS-owned equipment.
 - 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.

Sarbanes-Oxley Compliance

- a. **General Financial Auditing and Accounting Compliance.**
- i. As a government entity, Putnam County EMS is not subject to the federal Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 ("SOX"), which applies specifically to publicly traded corporations. Nonetheless, Putnam County EMS adopts the principles of SOX and strives to remain in compliance with portions of SOX, to ensure that management (including the Board of County Commissioners) is fully aware and informed as to the operation of the organization. Likewise, for purposes of assuring accurate and honest accounting standards are applied, Putnam County EMS has adopted several provisions of SOX to ensure honesty and accuracy in accounting of financial records and accounts. Voluntary SOX compliance also makes good business sense, and functions to improve working conditions, overall compliance, and quality of care rendered to patients. In particular:
- A. The Board of County Commissioners shall safeguard assets, and restrict unsafe, high risk, or other questionable investments, transactions and activities.
 - B. All personnel shall avoid inappropriate relationships, including, but not limited to conflicts in interest, or receipt of discounts or gifts.
 - C. Putnam County EMS, through appropriate personnel, shall provide financial information to auditors or other independent agencies for oversight and review.

- D. **Putnam County EMS shall not provide excessive compensation cover nominal out of pocket costs.**
2. **Putnam County EMS is dedicated to keeping abreast of changes in the law, ensuring that all levels of management are aware of the day to day activities of the agency and its financial status, as well as the compliance efforts of Putnam County EMS.**
 3. **Putnam County EMS shall not extend personal loans to any personnel, including the Board of County Commissioners, employees, and volunteers.**
- b. Compliance Standards.**
1. **In accordance with the Corporate and Criminal Fraud Accountability portion of SOX, Putnam County EMS and its personnel shall:**
 - A. **Not alter, falsify, destroy, or conceal documents that are the subject of a government investigation.**
 - B. **Not destroy or alter audit documents.**
 - C. **Cooperate fully with all government investigations and information requests.**
 - D. **Not tamper with, interfere with, or adversely affect any government investigation by providing inaccurate, misleading, or false information.**
 - E. **Report to a member of management if any violations of sections A through D occur.**
 - F. **Not retaliate, harass, intimidate, or otherwise cause financial or personal harm to any person that reports under section E.**
 - G. **Not participate in criminal and fraudulent conspiracies, including, but not limited to, schemes to defraud the government of reimbursement money (i.e. through filing fraudulent claims), or otherwise fraudulently billing private persons of commercial insurers excessive amounts, or services that were not rendered.**
 2. **Any personnel that violate the requirements of this portion of the Policy shall be subject to immediate discipline, up to and including suspension pending an investigation, and potentially termination or employment or expulsion from membership.**
- c. Handling Complaints.**
1. **While not all personnel have access to, or are aware of, accounting efforts, audits, and financial activity, any staff member who has reason to believe that suspicious activity is occurring is asked to report such**

discrepancies or unusual activity to his or her supervisor, or through Putnam County EMS compliance reporting procedures.

2. All complaints of suspected financial and/or accounting problems shall be investigated promptly through the Putnam County Auditor's Office, at the discretion of Putnam County EMS or the Board of County Commissioners.
3. Legal Counsel and staff and Board of County Commissioners may be advised of the complaint and the results of the investigation. Remedial steps (where necessary) will be taken immediately. Personnel found responsible for altering, tampering with, or otherwise affecting corporate financial documents in violation of this Policy, as discovered through an investigation, will face discipline.
4. Any person who complains of suspected unusual activity or financial discrepancy shall not be subject to retaliatory action or retribution, whether the complaint is determined to be legitimate, or results in the finding of no improper activity.

Monitoring Compliance

- a. Putnam County EMS 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.

SUBJECT: Illness in the Workplace

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

Putnam County EMS 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.

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. Putnam County EMS 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.

As in the case with any disabilities, Putnam County EMS will make reasonable accommodations in accordance with all legal requirements, to allow qualified personnel with life-threatening illnesses to continue to perform their jobs.

Putnam County EMS 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.

Inapplicability

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 infections disease that could easily spread to other personnel or patients should refrain from working until their condition improves.

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.

SUBJECT: Inclement Weather

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

All personnel are expected to report to work regardless of the weather conditions, as Putnam County EMS will attempt to operate under our normal work schedules in all weather conditions.

Individual employees are not authorized to determine if a weather emergency exists that dictates their absence or early departure from work. In order to be paid, employees who are unable to come to work or choose to leave early must use:

1. Vacation time

2. Compensatory time

The supervisor has the discretion to require employees who missed work due to a weather emergency to work additional hours to ensure that services to the citizens it serves is not unduly hampered.

In times of serious weather conditions, at the discretion of the supervisor, these requirements may be relaxed, and on-duty employees may be required to remain on duty until replacements can safely arrive at work.

SUBJECT: Issuance and Use of Company Equipment

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

Putnam County EMS will not tolerate misuse or misappropriation of Company equipment, as respect for Company equipment is expected at all times.

Putnam County EMS Property

Any Putnam County EMS property issued to personnel, such as keys, pagers, radios, gas cards, or uniforms, must be returned prior to receipt of any final paycheck.

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."

No item purchased or supplied by Putnam County EMS should be removed from the premises without express written authorization of a supervisor. Further:

- a. All personnel may be subject to random searches as they leave Putnam County EMS premises, in accordance with the "Workplace Search" Policy.
- b. Personnel found possessing any Putnam County EMS property without express written authorization may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

It is the responsibility of all personnel to understand the equipment needed to perform his or her duties. All personnel must remember that:

- a. Good care of any equipment used during the course of employment/membership, as well as the conservative use of supplies, will benefit Putnam County EMS.
- b. 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.
- c. Any knowledge of misuse or damage to Putnam County EMS property shall be promptly reported to a supervisor.

Personnel of Putnam County EMS 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.

Controlled Substances and Pharmaceuticals

Putnam County EMS 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.

Under no circumstances shall personnel take from Putnam County EMS, misappropriate, or otherwise distribute, steal, sell, or inappropriately administer (to self or others) these controlled substances.

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 licensure certification and money penalties.
Putnam County EMS Equipment

Personnel must treat all equipment including vehicles, tools, devices, and other items in ambulances and in the station with respect and care.

- a. Equipment shall only be used for its intended purpose.**
- b. "Clowning around" or horseplay with equipment will not be tolerated, as much of the equipment is both expensive and/or dangerous.**
- c. Misuse and wasting of equipment and supplies will not be tolerated.**

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 at the conclusion of each call.

SUBJECT: 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.

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

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. **Putnam County EMS recognizes that it cannot specifically dictate how its employees may act outside of the workplace. However, PCEMS discourages personal romantic relationships among employees to the extent that such activity has an affect on the workplace.**
- c. **In the interest of maintaining a professional atmosphere in the workplace, Putnam County EMS discourages romantic relations among personnel. However, in the event that a romantic relationship exists, the following activities are prohibited:**
 - 1. **Dating activities on Company time or Company property.**
 - 2. **Use of Company property to arrange dating activities.**
 - 3. **Hand holding, kissing, hugging, sexual comments and other behavior generally associated with a dating or romantic relationship on County time or 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, or change in scope of job duties.**
- e. **In general, Putnam County EMS will not permit two staff members involved in a romantic relationship to work together directly, or for one person to supervise the other person.**
 - 1. **Exceptions may be made in particular situations where it can be shown that there is no interference in the workplace.**
 - a. **Two (2) EMTs working together**
 - b. **One (1) full time position and one (1) EMT working together**

SUBJECT: On Call

PURPOSE: In order to maintain adequate staffing 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, Putnam County EMS may need to keep personnel available to report to work on an immediate basis.

To keep certain personnel on call and to ensure staff availability, staff members may be scheduled to be "on call" to support existing on-duty staff and must follow specific rules while on call.

Expectations of On Call Personnel

EMTs

- a. "On call" means that when notified by pager or other means, personnel must respond to the station or other assigned destination immediately after being notified.
- b. "On call" will be determined by each squad, either voluntary response or posted scheduled.
- c. Consumption of alcohol while on call is prohibited.
- d. An EMT is not required to remain at the station or at his or her residence while on call, but if a volunteer elects to stay at the station while on call, a decision which is totally voluntary, the on call time spent at the station will not be considered hours worked.

Employees

- a. The on call schedule will be posted in accordance with the Scheduling Policy, and desired changes to the on call schedule shall be made in accordance with the Scheduling Policy.
- b. While on call, personnel are permitted to move about the community to conduct personal business but must remain in a position to respond to the station or assigned destination immediately after being paged or otherwise notified by the communications center or a supervisor.

Compensation While On Call

Volunteers

- a. A volunteer shall receive no compensation while on call.

EMTs

- a. An EMT shall receive no compensation while on call.
- b. Once paged for a call, the employee will be paid at his or her usual rate, for the hours actually worked. Compensable time begins when the call is acknowledged, and ends when all call related activities are completed (i.e. computer reporting is completed, the vehicle is replenished, etc.)

Rules of Conduct While On Call

Personnel shall:

- a. **Keep their pagers on at all times during the on call shift.**
- b. **Respond to the station or assigned destination immediately after being paged.**
- c. **Respond in appropriate uniform.**
- d. **Obey all traffic laws when responding to a page.**
- e. **Contact a supervisor if the above guidelines cannot be followed, or if a pager is not working properly.**
- f. **Accurately document both on call hours as well actual hours worked (responding to a call) while on call.**

Personnel shall not:

- a. **Consume alcoholic beverages while on call.**
- b. **Engage in activities that would create problems with being paged for duty (for example, going into a movie theater that is known to have spotty pager coverage).**
- c. **Stray from a location that would limit radio contact, prevent response to the station within four (4) minutes of being paged, or assigned destination within two (2) minutes of ambulance arrival on scene.**

SUBJECT: Patient Relations

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

All personnel shall be good ambassadors for the goodwill of Putnam County EMS and treat others with respect and dignity at all times.

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 Putnam County EMS, 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 Putnam County EMS, is important for all persons with whom we deal.

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.

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 Putnam County EMS will be judged.
- b. Patient requests for information should be handled in accordance with HIPAA release of information policies through the Putnam County Office of Public Safety. When possible, office staff should be contacted, who should field the request. To the extent that a supervisor is not available, the office should record the information from the caller, and make sure that the appropriate

personnel is notified (e.g. HIPAA Compliance Officer or supervisor on duty, Putnam County Office of Public Safety Coordinator and the Board of County Commissioners).

- c. Patient requests (or refusals) during care and/or transport shall be made in accordance with relevant patient care policies and applicable protocols.
- d. For patient complaints regarding HIPAA violations, when possible, office staff should be contacted, who should field the request. To the extent that a supervisor is not available, the office should record the information from the caller, and make sure that the appropriate personnel is notified (e.g. HIPAA Compliance Officer or supervisor on duty, Putnam County Office of Public Safety Coordinator and the Board of County Commissioners).
- 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.

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, litters, and portable equipment.**
- 10. To receive professional, cheerful and attentive service throughout the course of the transport.**

SUBJECT: 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.

All personnel shall maintain the confidentiality of patient and other confidential information in accordance with applicable legal and ethical standards and all Putnam County EMS Patient Privacy Policies.

Putnam County EMS 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 Putnam County EMS 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.

- a. All personnel have an obligation to conduct themselves in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and Putnam County EMS Policies that have been enacted to address patient confidentiality. Personnel are advised to consult appropriate HIPAA Policies or the Privacy Officer for additional information.
- b. 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.

Privacy

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 Putnam County EMS policies regarding the privacy of patient information.

Security

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.

HIPAA Compliance Officer

Putnam County EMS has appointed a HIPAA Compliance Officer 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 HIPAA Compliance Officer.

SUBJECT: Reimbursement

Purpose: To assist personnel, by covering the cost of certain work related expenses, and educational classes.

Putnam County EMS may reimburse personnel for certain organization or work-related expenses, and training expenses, in accordance with this policy.

Work Related Items- Squads

Generally, Putnam County EMS will reimburse squads for reasonable, work-related expenses as pre-approved by management. All requests for advance approval and for reimbursement shall be submitted to the Putnam County Office of Public Safety per the yearly Policy on Monthly Purchasing by Squads (Attachment B).

1. Where possible, requests (Attachment C) for reimbursement shall be submitted prior to any purchase, in which case a Purchase Order will be completed for purchases over \$50.00
2. Where the item(s) have already been purchased, a request for reimbursement must be accompanied by a receipt clearly indicating the item(s) purchased, the price, the name of the vendor, and a copy of the check.

a. Reimbursement may not be granted on prior purchases

Education Expenses- EMT, Medic 300, Unit 301

Employees may be entitled to reasonable reimbursement for expenses incurred for educational purposes.

1. EMS related training courses and seminars Putnam County EMS requires personnel to take.
2. Courses to maintain certification of personnel (e.g. EMT, Paramedic, etc.).
3. A single class or a course of study (e.g. to obtain a degree) taken to advance and increase knowledge, such as college-level degree programs or adult education courses, provided all of the following are met:

Reimbursement is at the discretion of the Putnam County Office of Public Safety Coordinator and/or the EMS Administrator. Reimbursement is expected if any of the following

obligations are not met:

1. You remain employed with Putnam County EMS for two (2) years following the course or course of study. Any person who leaves within two years of completing (upon the receipt of a grade) a course or course of study shall be responsible for repayment of the cost of the course(s) previously reimbursed by Putnam County EMS, as outlined in the Failure to Complete Reimbursement Form (Attachment D).
2. You achieved a passing score on the authorized state examination.

3. You are in good standing with Putnam County EMS, and the taking of the course or course of study does not adversely affect your ability to perform your duties.

Travel for County Business- Office Staff

Employees may be entitled to reasonable reimbursement for expenses incurred while traveling on official county business. In order to seek reimbursement, all expenses must be approved in advance via the Request to Attend Meeting at County Expense form (Attachment E).

1. No reimbursement will be made:
 - a. for personal credit card receipts
 - b. absent an appropriate receipt
 - c. claims in excess of actual expenses

Travel expenses include:

1. Mileage, with pre-approval by the Putnam County Office of Public Safety Coordinator, may be reimbursed at a rate set by the Board of County Commissioners for approved use of privately owned vehicles on county business.
2. Lodging may be reimbursed, in the absence of an emergency, for pre-approved overnight accommodations.
3. Meals may be reimbursed at rates determined by the Board of County Commissioners.
4. Out of State Travel must be pre-approved by the Putnam County Office of Public Safety Coordinator and the Board of County Commissioners. Personal expenses incurred while traveling are the sole responsibility of the employee. Personal expenses include, but are not limited to:
 1. Personal telephone calls
 2. Tips
 3. Laundry
 4. Entertainment
 5. Alcoholic beverages

Denial of Reimbursement

1. Where the reimbursement request is denied, you will be provided with the reason for the denial.
2. Reasons for denial of reimbursement include, but are not limited to:
 - A. You have already met the maximum amount of reimbursement allowed.
 - B. You seek reimbursement of items that are not covered or approved in advance by management.

SUBJECT: Release of Information to Media

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

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 Public Information Officer (PIO) or Coordinator.

Personnel may from time to time, receive media inquiries from various news/media agencies, including:

- Newspapers
- Television stations
- Magazines or periodicals

When contacted by the media you must notify the PIO and/or Coordinator with general information about the nature of the request and contact information for the reporter/writer.

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.
3. Personnel are encouraged to respond to requests for media interviews to discuss your job, your role as an EMT, and your experiences at Putnam County EMS. As long as patient information is not discussed, the name of Putnam County EMS is not placed in a negative light, and confidential business information is not released, such interviews will generally be approved and permitted.
4. 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.

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.

Specific Standards for Dealing with Media Requests for Patient Information

General information about a response may be released once approved, 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 the Privacy Officer. 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, refer the reporter/writer to the PIO or Coordinator.

SUBJECT: Scheduling

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.

Putnam County EMS requires you to arrive on time for your scheduled shift, or to provide for appropriate coverage when you may be unavailable to serve the assigned shift.

1. Local squads are responsible for their own schedule
2. Putnam County EMS reserves the right to schedule personnel at any time, or change the schedule in accordance with operational needs and demands.
 - A. Putnam County EMS will develop a staffing schedule on a monthly basis. Schedules will be posted by the 20th of each month. Personnel must submit their requested shifts by the 15th of each month.
 - B. Work schedules may be changed from time to time at the discretion of Putnam County EMS to meet operational demands, schedule changes, and personal conflicts that may arise among assigned staff. Attempts will be made to notify all personnel of any changes made to a posted schedule. To the greatest extent possible, Putnam County EMS will attempt to maintain a flexible and fair schedule, and accommodate requests of personnel.
3. Schedules will be posted at www.pcop.org, www.emsCharts.com and forwarded to the Putnam County Sheriff's Office
 - A. Upon the receipt of schedules from the local squads, their schedule will also be posted as outlined above.

Scheduled Shifts

It is your responsibility to arrive for and complete in full your scheduled shift.

EMTs

1. EMTs are responsible to find their own coverage

Employees

1. A pre-approved request for time off has occurred:
 - A. All requests for time off shall be made as soon as reasonably possible, preferably prior to the development of the schedule.
 - B. When a conflict in the schedule is noticed, and a scheduled person requires time off, the supervisor must be contacted immediately in order to coordinate adequate coverage.
2. The scheduled personnel has arranged for coverage with another person subject to the following:
 - A. A trade of volunteer time for paid time shall not occur. But, exceptions may be made by a supervisor in extraordinary circumstances where a trade among similar personnel cannot occur and paid or overtime hours may be required (e.g. an emergency arises and coverage is required for the last shift of the week).

- B. Shift trades in coverage must be made between persons who are equally qualified to work the shift. For example, a Paramedic cannot trade with an EMT, since the EMT would not be qualified to meet the requirements of the Paramedic.**
- C. Management must be advised of any and all trades as promptly as possible. Management reserves the right to refuse to permit a swap to the extent that it will pose scheduling or other personnel conflicts.**

From time to time, it may be necessary for personnel to be absent during a scheduled shift. Putnam County EMS 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 your supervisor immediately (with at least four (4) hours notice). For additional employee related information on absenteeism, please consult the "Absenteeism and Tardiness" Policy.

- 1. Because all personnel must be alert and able to perform their job at all times, in order to provide the best possible care to patients, all personnel are expected to report to their scheduled shift well rested, 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.**
- 2. From time to time, personnel may be required to arrive for a shift early, or remain late after a shift for coverage purposes. It is requested that you remain at your post until your replacement crew has arrived and is prepared for duty. In all situations, the replacement crew is intended to mean personnel with equivalent credentials (e.g. Paramedic for Paramedic, dispatcher for dispatcher, and driver for driver). This is done to make sure that there is available coverage for calls that may come in at all times. For employees, such additional time worked may qualify for overtime compensation. For additional information on overtime, please consult the "Overtime" Policy.**
- 3. In order to create a fair work schedule, personnel will be assigned weekend coverage on a rotating basis, unless persons specifically volunteer for weekend time (e.g. part time or volunteer members, who may generally request these shifts based upon their other jobs). The weekend schedule will be from Friday at 1630 through Monday at 0630. Trading shifts is permitted as discussed above, to the extent that it does not pose problems or cause unnecessary overtime.**
- 4. Part time staff and volunteer members with other jobs will be placed on the schedule in accordance with their other job requirements. All personnel with other jobs must provide a work schedule to their supervisor so that your work schedule at Putnam County EMS can accommodate your other work schedule.**
- 5. Because of the 24-hour nature of this business, you may be scheduled to work**

at any time of the day, and may vary from week to week. You are asked to cooperate with your assigned schedule. Unauthorized leave from a scheduled shift or failure to follow your scheduled work hours will result in appropriate discipline.

SUBJECT: Sexual and Other Harassment

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

Putnam County EMS will have "zero tolerance" when it comes to any behavior that rises to the level of unlawful discrimination or unlawful harassment.

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, 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 Putnam County EMS activities. For example:

The submission to the improper conduct is made a term or condition of employment or participation in Company 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.

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 Putnam County EMS vehicles or on any Putnam County EMS property.**
- **No one may engage in non-sexual touching that could be perceived or otherwise lead to more intimate sexual conduct.**

c. Other Harassment.

1. No one may harass anyone because of that person's race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, age, 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.

- Touching or adjusting the clothing of another without permission.
- Blocking passageway or cornering a person so they cannot move even if it is just for a brief moment.
- Involuntary seclusion, such as barring the staff member from contact with other crew members while at the station.
- 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.

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 manager or supervisor to whom they may feel comfortable making the complaint. 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. Putnam County EMS will promptly, thoroughly, and impartially investigate

any complaint or report of a violation of this Policy. Additionally:

1. **Putnam County EMS 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.**
- e. Although legitimate complaints made in good faith are strongly encouraged, false complaints or complaints made in bad faith will not be tolerated.**
1. **Failure to prove harassment, provided there is no evidence of bad faith, will not constitute a false complaint.**
 2. **False Complaints are considered a violation of this policy and an employee who makes a false complaint may be subject to discipline.**

Penalties for Violations

- a. **Putnam County EMS will take prompt remedial and possibly disciplinary action if the investigation shows a violation of this Policy. Disciplinary action for career personnel may include verbal or written warning, suspension, or termination from employment. Disciplinary action for volunteer members will be made at the discretion of Putnam County EMS, in accordance with the bylaws and may include verbal or written warning, suspension, or expulsion from membership.**
- 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 will be taken if the investigation shows that deliberately dishonest and bad faith accusations have been made against another staff member.**

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.**

SUBJECT: Smoking and Tobacco Use

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

The use of tobacco containing products is prohibited in all Putnam County EMS buildings, and vehicles. For purposes of this Policy, "tobacco products" includes but is not necessarily limited to cigarettes, cigars, and smokeless tobacco products, such as chewing tobacco.

- a. Personnel are prohibited from smoking in all vehicles (both passenger compartment and driver compartment) and buildings of Putnam County EMS.
- b. Personnel are not permitted to use tobacco products while on the scene of an emergency response.
- c. Personnel are permitted to use tobacco products in hospital areas which have been designated as smoking areas.
- d. Personnel are permitted to use tobacco products outside of Putnam County EMS buildings.
- e. Personnel are permitted to use smokeless tobacco products in the day room. This provision will be terminated if the use and disposal create a nuisance.
- f. The above standards shall apply to visitors and patients as well as personnel.

Disposal of Tobacco Products

- a. All cigarette butts will be placed in the designated receptacles not the 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 Company property, including in sinks or toilets.

SUBJECT: Telephone Procedures and Personal Telephone Use

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

Answering the phone

The telephone system is for County business. When answering the phone:

- a. Identify the office as "Office of Public Safety"
- b. Identify yourself
- c. If requested person is unavailable:
 1. Ask to take a message
 2. Ask to place caller into voicemail

Personal calls

Putnam County EMS limits personal phone calls while on duty.

- a. Phone lines are reserved for Putnam County EMS business only. 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 Company and business purposes are acceptable, but should be limited in scope to the greatest extent possible.

SUBJECT: 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 Company related business.

Volunteers and career personnel are expected to testify about work related matters, when properly subpoenaed to do so, in an honest and truthful manner. Career 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 personal or vacation time to handle such matters.

- a. At times, personnel may be required to testify in court, for incidents that relate to Putnam County EMS, or personal matters, unrelated to Putnam County EMS. In accordance with the "Scheduling" Policy, appropriate provisions for coverage must be made when testimony conflicts with a scheduled assignment.
- b. Career 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 Putnam County EMS, 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 company scheduling policies, appropriate provisions for coverage must be made when testimony conflicts with a scheduled work assignment.
- d. You must submit to your supervisor 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 your supervisor if you are the subject of personal action by an individual or agency that has any business or patient relationship, affiliation or contact with Putnam County EMS. This includes patients, customers, or operators of vehicles that may be involved in an accident with Putnam County EMS 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.

Reimbursement.

- a. All time spent on Company related court business or testimony should be accurately recorded and submitted to your supervisor.
 - i. Employees will be compensated at the straight-time hourly rate.
 - ii. Jury duty fees received from the court shall be paid to the Putnam County Treasurer in order to receive regular wages.
- b. Putnam County EMS will also provide reimbursement for reasonable travel

expenses (including mileage and meals) when properly submitted with receipts where appropriate.

SUBJECT: Uniform, Dress Code & Personal Appearance

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

Revised April 8, 2017

Putnam County EMS requires all personnel to meet appropriate dress code and uniform standards for the respective position of the staff member.

General standards of appearance

- a. Pins, hats, name/insignia or other identifying symbols which are not professionally related to authorized uniforms are prohibited from being worn.
- b. Any tattoos should be covered wherever possible.
- c. Hair (including facial hair) is to be neat and groomed at all times. If a member or 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).
- d. Perfume, cologne, aftershave, scented lotion, etc., should be used in moderation or avoided altogether.
- e. 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.
- f. Personnel are expected to arrive to work in a clean, presentable manner with all appropriate uniform attire in place.

Uniform(s)

- a. Putnam County EMS will provide uniform allowance for full-time and part-time personnel. Full-time personnel will receive \$50.00 reimbursement towards work boots or work shoes every 2 years. Additional uniforms may be purchased, at the employees' expense, with approval of the EMS Chief or Coordinator, through Putnam County EMS's designated vendor.

Dress Code – Putnam County EMS uniform shirt, black or navy EMT pants, and black, hard sole work boot or work shoes. No tennis shoes.

- b. Only the standard Putnam County EMS uniform shall be worn while on duty.
- c. Uniforms must remain clean, unwrinkled, neat, and in good repair. Uniforms items that are faded, torn, or worn are not acceptable.
- d. Pager, radio, or County-issued phone is considered a part of the uniform and must be worn appropriately.
- e. All personnel are responsible for the care and maintenance of their uniforms. If your uniform becomes soiled during a shift, it should be changed, if at all possible.

- f. Personnel should not wear their uniform when not on duty, except that personnel who are on call may wear their uniform during on call time.**
- f. Putnam County EMS will replace uniforms that are contaminated or damaged in the line of duty.**