

**OKALOOSA COUNTY  
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE**

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**Title:** Leave and Overtime Distribution  
**Policy:** 116.00  
**Purpose:** To provide procedures for requesting/scheduling leave and the distribution of overtime.

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**Policy:**

The Shift Commander will utilize TeleStaff to manage employee shift schedules. Each employee will be able to view and request changes to his/her schedule via this program.

Leave requests must be submitted to your Shift Commander at least 14 days in advance to allow the time to cover employee vacancies. The Shift Commander has the authority to accept leave requests submitted with less than 14 days notice in certain emergency cases. Request for leave will be accepted up to one year in advance within the same calendar year (January to December). No request for leave should be considered granted until approval is received in writing from the employee's Shift Commander.

Requests for leave will be filled on a first-come, first-serve basis except for the ten (10) County designated holidays to ensure fairness.

**NOTE: No more than two employees per shift (excluding Command Staff) will be allowed to take scheduled leave without the approval of the EMS Chief.**

Sick calls will be made to the on-duty Shift Commander; calls to the Communications Center, other employees, voicemail messages, or text messages are not acceptable. Scheduled personnel, who report for duty any later than 15 minutes after their scheduled time without contacting a supervisor, are considered AWOL and may be subject to disciplinary action. **Employees who call out sick for their assigned duty shift will be ineligible to work a voluntary overtime shift for the next forty-eight (48) hours.**

Compensatory time may be used only as a means of compensating an employee for overtime work actually performed. The employee may accrue compensatory time as an alternative to overtime pay. All compensatory time will be issued in accordance with the Okaloosa County Compensatory Time Policy contained in the Okaloosa County Human Resources Policy Manual. Compensatory time will be documented as follows:

1. All time will be documented on the official county time sheet and submitted to payroll.
2. Date, time and assignment circumstances in which compensatory time was accrued.

The Payroll Department will track accruals and usage of Comp. Time.

Swap time may only be done between full-time employees of the Department of Public Safety that are of the same position classification level, for example, a Lieutenant can only swap with another Lieutenant, and a paramedic can only swap with a paramedic, etc. The single exception to this would be the permitted swap between a BLS-EMT with an ALS-EMT. If an employee swaps time with another employee ('Swap, working') and they are unable to work the scheduled shift (suspension, illness, etc.), it will be the responsibility of the person originally scheduled ('Swap, not working') for that day to find coverage or report to work as originally scheduled.

Swaps cannot be open-ended; you must specify a date to be paid back and that date must fall within six months of the scheduled swap.

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**NOTE: All types of leave may be canceled during times of disaster or declared States of Emergency.**

Overtime will be distributed to employees in the following manner:

- a. Full-time EMTs.
- b. Full-time Paramedics.

**NOTE: No more than 48 consecutive hours will be worked without 12 hours off. The EMS Chief must approve any exceptions to this policy. Two person paramedic teams may be split-up and EMTs utilized for coverage, as needed.**

Overtime will be distributed on a rotating basis with an emphasis on spreading the hours evenly. The following circumstances will allow an employee to remain in the uppermost position on the rotation list for overtime:

- a. Assigned duty day coincides with available overtime.
- b. EMS related school days coincide with available overtime.
- c. An employee is on scheduled vacation during available overtime.
- d. The employee is excused from work by a doctor's written statement (this includes workers compensation).

The following circumstances will place an employee at the bottom of the rotation for overtime:

- a. The employee declines an overtime shift.
- b. Inability to contact an employee.
- c. Disciplinary reasons:
  - 1) Oral warning/ Counseling Form removes an employee from the overtime rotation for two weeks then returns to the bottom of the list.
  - 2) Written reprimand removes the employee from the rotation for 30 days then returns to the bottom of the list.
  - 3) Suspension removes the employee from the overtime rotation for 90 days then they return to the bottom of the list.

The following, but not limited to, may lead to termination of Emergency Relief employees:

- a. Canceling a scheduled shift with less than 24 hours notice (unexcused).
- b. Not working 24 hours within a 30-day period.
- c. Knowingly accepting any shift assignment that would place them over 40 hours weekly.

Once an employee has scheduled overtime shift, in order to cancel the commitment, that employee must notify a Shift Supervisor at least 24 hours in advance to be relieved of that obligation. Cancellation of an overtime shift moves the employee to the bottom of the overtime rotation.

Full Time employees requesting overtime shifts and all Relief employees shall place themselves 'available' in TeleStaff for the days, hours, and shifts desired (first half, second half, full shift). If an employee has a need to alter the start or end time to a shift after it was accepted by them, they must contact the Shift Supervisor via email. At no point should any employee contact the Shift Supervisor and request a particular station or partner. TeleStaff has internal algorithms and will place an available

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employee where it determines they are needed based on the departments needs. It is the employee's responsibility to check TeleStaff for their work schedule and station assignments after placing themselves 'available'. If the Shift Supervisor has to move or cancel an employee's station assignment or shift, they must contact the employee prior to the start of their shift.

**Accountability and Compliance:**

The EMS Shift Supervisors, or delegates, will utilize email notifications or other forms of communication to track complaints of system errors with TeleStaff and/or scheduling. These system errors will be tallied and reported to the EMS Division Chief at the monthly Senior Staff Meeting along with the resolution to the system error.

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