



## ***Division of Emergency Services Washington County, Maryland***

***16232 Elliott Parkway, Williamsport, Maryland 21795  
240-313-4360 Fax: 240-313-4361***

### **Quality Assurance Office – Integrity Award**

Integrity is the foundation of everything we do in emergency medical services. Our patients and their families trust us in their most vulnerable moments, and that trust must never be broken. Regardless of how long you've been in EMS, how tired you are, or how frustrated you may feel, professionalism and compassion are non-negotiable.

#### **Integrity Starts Early—And We Are the Role Models**

Integrity isn't something we are born with, nor is it something we can simply teach—it has to be learned. It is shaped by the examples set by society, role models, teachers, and mentors. It comes from a foundation of good human decency and an inherent moral compass.

This is why the way we conduct ourselves matters from day one. Every time we allow negativity, entitlement, or unprofessionalism to go unchecked, we are setting the standard for those coming behind us. Whether it's a ride-along, an EMT student, or a paramedic student, they are watching, learning, and shaping their own professional behavior based on what we show them. We must ask ourselves: Are we demonstrating the kind of integrity that we want to see in the next generation of EMS providers? Or are we passing down bad habits that weaken the profession?

#### **Self-Accountability Matters**

Every one of us has a responsibility to reflect on our own actions, attitudes, and performance. If you made a mistake, own it and learn from it. If you're struggling, ask for help. Blaming circumstances or pointing fingers at others does nothing to improve the situation—taking responsibility does.

Burnout is real. Poor management exists. Long hours and tough calls take their toll. These are all valid reasons to reevaluate your work environment, seek better opportunities, or change your habits to improve your well-being. However, they are not acceptable excuses for treating patients, their families, or your coworkers with anything less than respect. If you find yourself unable to interact with people professionally, this line of work may not be for you.

#### **Being Mean Doesn't Make You "Cool"—It Makes You a Problem**

There is nothing impressive about being rude or hateful to patients or coworkers. It doesn't make you tough, experienced, or respected—it makes you someone people don't want to work with or manage. A bad attitude and a lack of professionalism don't elevate you; they isolate you. If you find yourself constantly frustrated with everyone around you, it's time to ask if the problem is really them—or you.

#### **Entitlement Has No Place Here**

EMS is a team-driven profession. No one is above doing the work, and no one is owed special treatment. Just because you've been here a long time, run a lot of calls, or have more experience doesn't mean you are exempt from professionalism, teamwork, or self-improvement. Everyone earns respect through their actions, not their seniority or their job title.

#### **How We Treat Each Other Matters**

Beyond patient care, how we treat our coworkers directly impacts our work environment. Building each other up, supporting one another, and fostering a positive team culture make this job easier for all of us. On the other hand, constantly finding fault in others, spreading negativity, and creating unnecessary drama only make it miserable to come to work. If you don't like the way things are, be part of the solution—not the problem.

EMS is not just about skills and protocols; it's about people. If you believe being rude, dismissive, or unprofessional—whether to patients, families, or coworkers—is acceptable, it's time to reconsider why you're here. This job requires teamwork, integrity, and accountability. Let's hold ourselves and each other to the highest standards because our patients, our colleagues, and this profession deserve nothing less.

**Has someone demonstrated exceptional integrity?**

Integrity means being honest and having strong moral principles, consistently acting in accordance with those principles, even when facing difficult choices or when nobody is watching. It's about aligning one's conduct with what one knows to be right and good, and refusing to compromise those principles. These actions deserve some positive recognition.

Complete the following form and submit to [MedicalReview@washco-md.net](mailto:MedicalReview@washco-md.net). Nomination forms are encouraged and accepted on a rolling basis.