

OBJECTIVE: The purpose of this manual is to provide the Field Training Officer (FTO) with a reference and information source while orientating, educating, and evaluating new paramedics and other EMS employees of Carrollton Fire Department.

The FTO is a vital link between classroom training and the creation of a quality health care provider. Employees should benefit from field application of skills and judgment from the FTO.

The purpose of the FTO program is to ensure and continually improve employee performance. It is the FTO's responsibility to assist employees of Carrollton Fire Department to reach that goal.

411.01 FIELD TRAINING PROGRAM

The FTO has five areas of responsibility for new medics:

1.1 Orientation

By the end of the orientation process, new medics should have a good understanding of the scope and responsibilities of the CFD operation, know their way around the MICU, know where to find equipment, and have a working knowledge of personnel resources.

1.2 Cultural Development*

CFD is a highly focused provider of clinical care and customer service. There is a "way that we do things" in the accomplishment of our mission that sets us apart from other EMS organizations. It is the FTO's responsibility to help new medics adopt the style and traits of CFD into their personal practice.

1.3 Education*

The FTO should play an important role in education of all CFD medics. The new medic typically has a gap between formal education and the streetwise education. Since high standards of clinical care are expected by our organization, the FTO's responsibility is to assess and discover these gaps and help the new medic close them.

1.4 **Counseling***

It is not uncommon for new medics to experience fear, self-doubt, confusion and general stress during their first few months on the MICU. One of the FTO's roles is to provide peer support and encouragement for the new medics.

1.5 **Evaluation***

As an organization we have a moral, ethical and expected responsibility to provide the best possible clinical care and customer service to the citizens of our community. The FTO helps ensure our obligations are met by evaluating the skills, knowledge, and style of new medics prior to requesting their evaluation by the EMS Coordinator.

**** Categories that also apply for current medics***

411.02 SELECTION OF FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS

2.1 Process of Selecting Field Training Officers

a. Staffing

A total of 12 FTOs will be maintained. This includes a total of 4 per shift. The EMS Chief will make the written announcement upon the availability of a FTO position.

b. Qualifications

1. 85% or better on the most recent UT Southwestern biannual examination
2. Minimum of 2 years of field experience

2.2 Process of Becoming a Field Training Officer

- a. Paramedic submits a written request to the EMS Chief stating he/she would like to be considered for the Field Training Officer position.
- b. Qualification by EMS Chief
 1. Chart Evaluations
 2. Radio Report Reviews
- c. Protocol Examination
 1. 50 questions
 2. 85% or better for passing
- c. FTO Simulation Mega Code - Minimum of three separate scenarios testing all aspects of paramedic skills
- d. Oral Interview before a board of evaluators
- e. Willingness to change shifts to accommodate promotions and FTO staffing.

2.3 Process for Withdrawing as a Field Training Officer

- a. May be the FTO's decision to withdraw
- b. The FTO has a non-willingness to transfer shifts
- c. There is a failure to perform duties of a FTO

411.03 PROCESS OF NEW PARAMEDIC TRAINING AND EVALUATION

Well before an FTO makes his/her first call with the new medic; the FTO will discuss his/her level of involvement in the calls, how concerns will be communicated, and how necessary interventions will be handled. The new medic will be assured that the FTO is there to assist in any way needed.

3.1 Responsibilities during the Field Internship

It is important for the FTO to realize that when a new medic first begins his or her internship that although the trainee has acquired skills and knowledge he or she may not have the ability to perform in the field. This is where the FTO will provide the missing ingredients: experience, judgement, and street smarts. As the internship progresses, your role will evolve.

- a. The FTO should match his or her role to the needs of the trainee and the needs of the patients being served. These roles include guide, teacher, counselor, and evaluator.
- b. The FTO should be very aware of all actions taken by the trainee and is at all times responsible for patient care rendered by the trainee.
- c. Counseling and evaluations should be done privately. The primary objective of the FTO is to help the trainee be successful. Consequently trainees should always be treated with compassion, dignity, and respect.
- d. The skill evaluation guidelines can be helpful in critiquing a call. It is often a good learning process for the trainee to first critique the call followed by a critique from the FTO. Comparing the evaluations provides the trainee the opportunity to learn and the FTO the opportunity to assess the trainee's thought process.
- e. If a trainee is not progressing at an acceptable rate, the FTO should recommend ways to correct deficiencies.
- f. All information concerning progression of field internship is turned over to the EMS Coordinator.

3.2 Expectations of the Field Training Officers

- a. To provide a pleasant, cheerful, informative and educational process by which new medics can learn about this EMS system and its protocols.
- b. To provide a comfortable and unbiased look at the inner workings of this EMS system.
- c. To recognize the difference between fact and opinion and strive to impart only the facts during the FTO process.
- d. To encourage independent thoughts and ideas of new medics and discourage them from simply copying their FTO's style.
- e. To provide an atmosphere that promotes trust and security in both their FTO and the FTO process.
- f. To create an atmosphere where success is anticipated but failure is not feared.
- g. To ensure the personal and professional growth of new medics.
- h. To treat others with respect and dignity.
- i. To be critical without being judgmental.
- j. To offer solutions rather than ultimatums.
- k. To treat all trainees as peers and not subordinates.
- l. To create the best atmosphere for learning by being encouraging and supportive to others.
- m. Evaluations are for education, not humiliation.
- n. To attend scheduled FTO meetings
- o. To participate in special projects (i.e. hiring process, orientation, etc)
- p. To sign the FTO agreement.
- q. To fill out all FTO documentation fully and completely.
- r. To communicate all problems or potential problems immediately to the trainee and EMS Coordinator.

- s. To have all documentation signed by the trainee after every shift.
- t. To keep an open mind at all times when dealing with a trainee. *Always remember, just because its not the FTO's way doesn't mean it's wrong.*
- u. To hold other FTOs accountable to these expectations and expect others to hold you accountable as well.
- v. If there is a report of another FTO acting inappropriately in any manner, approach them in a timely manner to discuss that matter for clarification.

411.04 MEETINGS

Monthly FTO meetings will be held in the Training Facility. If schedules or activities do not allow an FTO to attend, he/se may write up questions or concerns and give them to the EMS Coordinator, so they may be discussed. FTO's on duty will be able to attend the meeting and be available on the air at Station 9. Quarterly, mandatory FTO meetings will be held. All FTO's must attend these quarterly meetings unless prior arrangements have been made with the EMS Coordinator. An Unexcused absence will result in suspension from the FTO program.

411.05 SUSPENSIONS AND TERMINATIONS

The EMS Coordinator or the EMS Division Chief may suspend you from the FTO program at any time. Disciplinary offenses include, but are not limited to:

- a. Any departmental disciplinary action
- b. Unexcused absence at a mandatory meeting
- c. Unprofessional conduct with an trainee or in dealing with a trainee
- d. Unprofessional behavior
- e. Incomplete FTO documentation
- f. Failure to follow departmental policy
- g. Discussion of a trainee or trainee's process with anyone not involved in the FTO program
- h. Failure to comply with the FTO agreement

411.06 MISCELLANEOUS PROCEDURES

a. Performance Appraisals

The EMS Coordinator or the EMS Training Coordinator will perform, at a minimum, annual performance appraisals. These performance appraisals will be based on FTO documentation, evaluations performed by trainees, evaluations performed by other FTOs, and recommendations from other management staff. All evaluations and performance appraisals as it pertains to FTO status, will be made available and shared with the medical director.

b. FTO Evaluations

Each trainee at the end of the evaluation process will complete an FTO evaluation sheet. These evaluations are for the purpose of feedback to the FTOs and the EMS Coordinator. These forms will be utilized in the FTO's annual evaluation.

c. Scheduling

When an FTO takes scheduled time off of their shift, they will need to notify the EMS Coordinator. This will help in the scheduling ride time with other FTOs.

e. Demeanor and Attitude

It is expected that at all times during your interactions with your trainee you will be professional, courteous and respectful. It is your responsibility as an FTO to treat everyone that you come in contact with in this manner, including your partner. The education you provide, as an FTO should not be conducted in a condescending, egotistical or unprofessional manner. This method is inappropriate and could jeopardize your FTO status. It is also expected you will act in the same manner whenever you don't have a trainee and are with all personnel.

f. Documentation/Chart Reviews

Each run form the trainee completes will be evaluated by the FTO. The FTO paperwork must be completed fully and on time, signed by both the FTO and the trainee. You will need to be as descriptive as possible in your documentation. Comments like “good job”, “no problems”, “routine call” are not acceptable. Your handwriting needs to be legible and without abbreviations. Make sure that your name and your trainee’s name are on each separate piece of paper. Your paperwork is your entire record of evaluation and is reviewed by clinical staff, the Medical Director and is a part of your trainee’s permanent file. Part of the FTO performance appraisals will consist of documentation review. Radio reports will also be periodically reviewed with the appropriate documentation completed.

g. Problems

At any time during the evaluation if you encounter problems or situations that are out of the ordinary and not correctable through routine evaluation procedures, the FTO should contact the EMS Coordinator as soon as possible.

h. Length of Evaluation

The new paramedic will be placed with a FTO to further enhance their training and education. The new paramedics will be evaluated by the FTO to establish their readiness for EMS operation. Preceptees will intern with one FTO for a period not to exceed three months, unless it is identified that there was an exceptional low number of calls made. The preceptee will then be evaluated by a second FTO to further establish readiness.

i. Trainee’s Release

The EMS Coordinator or designee will give final approval of all candidates. Approval is based on attainment of required competencies as evidence by release documentation from both FTOs.

411.07 FIELD EVALUATION OF CURRENT EMT'S AND PARAMEDICS

- a. When a FTO is not assigned a trainee, he/she could be assigned another seasoned medic to perform an in-field evaluation. This is only required for a minimum of 1 shift each quarter for each current paramedic. The employee will be informed that he/she is being as opposed to a training process. The purpose of this evaluation is to continually keep a high clinical standard within the department. A current medic could request to be assigned to a FTO for training purposes without documentation. This would be a great instruction and practice tool for the medic. There will not be any disciplinary action in this situation.

- b. Training is most effective when it is focused on issues identified by the medic. The FTO will ask for the medic's input on his/her individual needs. The FTO will provide feedback and observations on the medic's strengths and weaknesses as well as evaluating those areas requested by the medic. After each emergency medical response is complete, the FTO will complete the evaluation documentation with the medic and discuss the incident with them. If the medic expresses any comments or concerns, they will be documented on the evaluation form. If any weakness or need is identified, the FTO will make it known to the EMS Coordinator and the EMS Training Coordinator so remedial training can be administered.

Carrollton Fire Department
FTO Agreement

- As a FTO with the Carrollton Fire Department, I will strive to set an example for others to follow. I recognize that as an FTO, fellow employees and others will look to me for guidance and as a role model. I accept this as my responsibility. I will show, through my attitude and behavior, that I respect the department and the people I work with. I will support the department's philosophies and will serve as an example for its principles.
- I agree never to discuss a trainee's progress and his/her evaluation time with anyone other than the EMS Coordinator, EMS Training Coordinator, or another FTO. I also acknowledge that my professional appearance, behavior, and expectations (i.e. attendance, conduct, documentation, etc.) Will be monitored by the management team.
- I agree that all these issues are imperative to the success of the FTO program. I agree that my actions will have a direct influence on other's perception of the FTO Program.
- I agree to hold other FTOs accountable to this agreement and they me. If it is reported by another person another FTO is acting outside of this agreement, I will approach that FTO and converse with them personally. If it remains a problem, I will take further action with the other FTOs and the EMS Chief.
- I acknowledge that with my signature on this agreement, that if ant any time, any of the above mentioned issues, or others in the FTO Program Manual, become an area of concern, I may lose my status as an FTO. I understand that being a FTO is a privilege, not a right, and that with privilege comes responsibility.

FTO Signature _____

Date: _____

EMS Coordinator _____

Date: _____