



MONTGOMERY COUNTY EXECUTIVE REGULATION

Offices of the County Executive • 101 Monroe Street • Rockville, Maryland 20850

Subject INTEGRATED EMERGENCY COMMAND STRUCTURE (IECS)	Number 16-05AM
Originating Department MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE	Effective Date 12-06-05

INTEGRATED EMERGENCY COMMAND STRUCTURE (IECS)

Issued by: County Executive
 Authority: Montgomery County *Code* Section 21-8
 Executive Regulation No. 16-05AM
 Council Review: Method: (2)
 Supersedes: Executive Regulation No. 16-05T
 Register Vol. 22, Issue 7
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SUMMARY: This regulation adopts an Integrated Emergency Command Structure (IECS) that provides a chain of command for use in the control of all incidents, and applies to all Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service personnel. The text adapts the recently reorganized MCFRS operational structure to a Standardized Incident Management System, making it consistent with the regional, State, and national emergency management plan. This regulation conforms to the legislative intent of Section 21-1(a)(3) of the County *Code*. On its adoption, this document supersedes Temporary Executive Regulation No. 16-05T of the same title.

DEADLINE: Montgomery County *Register* Comment: **July 31, 2005.**

BACKGROUND: All Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service Merit System and volunteer uniformed personnel who meet the applicable appointment and certification standards are eligible to advance to certain levels in the chain of command. This IECS is being adopted to reflect the terminology and structural changes implemented during the January, 2005 MCFRS reorganization. The IECS adapts MCFRS' operational structure into a Standardized Incident Management System, to make it consistent with the regional, State, and national emergency management plan. This amended IECS regulation achieves the legislative intent of Section 21-1(a) (3) of the County *Code*.

Sec. 1. Purpose: To adopt an Integrated Emergency Command Structure for the



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Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service that: (a). reflects terminology and structural changes in the operational chain of command for all MCFRS personnel, and (b). adapts the January, 2005 reorganized MCFRS organizational and operating structure into a Standardized Incident Management System that integrates County and local fire and rescue departments with the National Incident Management System, including regional, State, and national emergency management plans. This Regulation also seeks to achieve the legislative intent of Section 21-1(a)(3) of the County Code.

Sec. 2. Applicability. This regulation applies to all IECS-certified MCFRS providers of firefighting, rescue, and emergency medical services, in accordance with Section 21-8(a) of the County Code.

Sec. 3. Definitions.

- a. **Assistant Chief.** A County Merit System employee who has been promoted through a competitive evaluation process to the rank of Assistant Chief, and is responsible for a major organizational program area.
- b. **Battalion.** A geographic area of the County comprising a group of fire and rescue stations, as defined by the Fire Chief.
- c. **Certified Chief Officer.** An MCFRS officer who is certified at the IECS rank of Battalion Chief or above by the Fire Chief or designee, who has met the training and experience requirements identified in the *Certification Standards for Training, Experience, and Credentialing Requirements* Executive Regulation #18-05AM.
- d. **Certified Primary Unit Officer.** An individual who is certified as a Master Firefighter/Rescuer, Fire/Rescue Lieutenant, Fire/Rescue Captain, or any rank above, and who has passed a current competency evaluation, can be assigned as the supervisor of a primary unit. In extenuating circumstances, a Firefighter/Rescuer III who has passed a current competency evaluation, as defined by the Fire Chief, may be assigned as a primary unit officer.
- e. **Division Chief.** An individual who meets the certification requirements for the position of certified Chief Officer, and is appointed by the Executive or promoted by the Fire Chief to this position.



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- f. **Division Chief of Fire and Rescue Operations.** The Chief of the Division of Fire and Rescue Operations is a merit system position. The Division Chief must meet the requirements for chief officer adopted under Section 21-3(c) of the County Code. The Division Chief has operational authority over fire, rescue, and emergency medical services activities of the Fire and Rescue Service, including the local fire and rescue departments, as assigned by the Fire Chief. The Division Chief, subject to the authority of the Fire Chief, may take disciplinary action, including discharge, against any merit system employee in the Service, subject to applicable merit system regulations and collective bargaining agreements.
- g. **Division Chief of Volunteer Services.** The Chief of the Division of Volunteer Services is a non-merit position. The Division Chief must meet the requirements for chief officer adopted under Section 21-3(d) of the County Code, and must have experience as a chief, or assistant or deputy chief, in a volunteer fire and rescue organization in the County. The Division Chief must be given the same rank under the IECS as the Chief of the Division of Fire and Rescue Operations. Under the direction of the Fire Chief, he/she serves as the highest-ranking volunteer officer in the County, and coordinates the operations and administration of volunteer personnel and the local fire and rescue departments.
- h. **Duty Operations Chief.** On-duty operational chief(s) in the County, designated by the Division Chief of Fire and Rescue Operations as the on-duty operations chief for a scheduled period of time. This position may be filled by the Fire Chief, a Division Chief, an Assistant Chief, an LFRD Chief, or any other certified chief officer designated by the Fire Chief.
- i. **Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Provider.** A volunteer member of MCFRS who is certified to provide only emergency medical services.
- j. **Fire Chief.** The Fire Chief is appointed by the County Executive under Section 21-3 of the County Code, and serves as the Director of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.
- k. **First Due Area.** A fire station’s first due area is defined by its first due *engine* area; the two Rescue Squads’ first due area is defined by their first due *ambulance* area.
- l. **Incident.** An event that requires the Emergency Communications Center to dispatch,



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or acknowledge the response of, a firefighting, rescue, or EMS unit.

- m. **Incident Commander (IC)**. The officer on the scene who is in-charge of an incident, and is responsible for making the strategic decisions and assigning the other primary supervisory functional positions necessary to control an incident. The IC must handle any function or responsibility appropriate to a given incident that he/she has not delegated to another command officer.
- n. **Local Fire and Rescue Department (LFRD)**. An individual fire or rescue squad corporation authorized under Section 21-5 of the County Code to provide fire and rescue services.
- o. **Local Fire and Rescue Department Fire/Rescue Chief (LFRD Chief)**. The senior operational chief officer of an LFRD, as established in the IECS chain of command.
- p. **Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS)**. A department of County government, and a public-private partnership as well, consisting of a Division of Volunteer Services, a Division of Fire and Rescue Operations, and other divisions necessary for effective management and administration, as defined in County Code Section 21.
- q. **Operational**. Activities involved in the planning and preparation for, and control of, any firefighting, rescue, emergency medical service, hazardous materials, disaster mitigation, special operations, or other emergency incident.
- r. **Provisional Period/Status**. Status of an individual who is rated medically unacceptable by FROMS, or who is on leave of absence from MCFRS, or has failed to recertify in his/her current MCFRS rank. These individuals must not participate in IECS activities, except as approved by the Fire Chief.
- s. **Primary Unit**. Staffed apparatus including engines, ladder trucks, towers, quints, rescue squads, and rescue engines.
- t. **Rostered Chief Officer**. A Certified Chief Officer designated by the Chief of the Division of Fire and Rescue Operations as the on-duty chief officer for any battalion, for a scheduled period of time.



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- u. **Standardized Incident Management System.** The organizational structure protocol implementing standards under which an Incident Commander must provide communication, coordination, accountability, and effective action to respond to an emergency, as defined in County Code Section 21-1(c).

Sec. 4. Policy.

- a. **Integrated Emergency Command Structure Established.** The Integrated Emergency Command Structure (IECS) is hereby established in accordance with Section 21-8 of the County Code. The IECS includes an operational chain of command that integrates all fire and rescue service personnel into the County’s **Standardized Incident Management System.**
- b. **Operational Chain of Command Established.** The operational chain of command is established as follows:

- Fire Chief**
- Division Chief**
- Duty Operations Chief**
- An LFRD Chief /Merit System Assistant Chief**
- Rostered Chief Officer**
- All other **Certified Chief Officers**
- Fire/Rescue Captain/**EMS Provider** Captain
- Fire/Rescue Lieutenant/**EMS Provider** Lieutenant
- Master Firefighter/Rescuer or EMS Master Provider
- Firefighter/Rescuer III or **EMS Provider III**
- Firefighter/Rescuer II or **EMS Provider II**
- Firefighter/Rescuer I or **EMS Provider I**
- Firefighter/Rescuer Candidate/Recruit or **EMS Provider** Candidate/Recruit

1. All personnel must be appointed, promoted, or elected by the **LFRD**, or appointed by the County Executive, or promoted by the **Fire Chief**, and certified by the **Fire Chief** or designee to participate at any level in the IECS chain of command.
2. An **EMS Provider** unit officer may act as an **Incident Commander** only if another unit officer is not on the scene of an **incident.**



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3. The first arriving fire and rescue personnel on the scene of an **incident** must establish Command of the **incident** until Command is transferred to another on-scene officer, or the **incident** is stabilized and Command is terminated. The higher-ranking officer's arrival on the scene does not automatically relieve the lower-ranking officer of **incident** Command.
4. The first arriving **Certified Chief Officer** must assume Command of an **incident** involving five or more units. All other responding **Certified Chief Officers** must report to the command post and will support the **Incident Commander** by assuming assignments made by the **Incident Commander**. Transfer or assumption of Command by a higher-ranking officer should be made only to improve the quality, safety, and effectiveness of the command organization.

The highest-ranking **Certified Chief Officer** should assume a position in the command structure that allows for oversight, support, and evaluation of the Command process, and the seamless assumption of Command when deemed appropriate. This assumption of Command must comply with the **Command Structure Response Authority**, illustrated in Section 5.d.4., below. The arrival of a higher ranking **Certified Chief Officer** on the **incident** scene does not mean Command is transferred automatically to that officer.

Sec. 5. Procedure.

- a. **Certification Process.** The **Fire Chief** is the **IECS** certification authority. In accordance with this Executive Regulation, the **Fire Chief** certifies as eligible to participate in the **IECS** at a specific rank, individuals who meet the **MCFRS** certification standards for training, experience, and performance requirements.
- b. **IECS Certified List.** The **Fire Chief** or designee will provide to the **MCFRS** a current list of **IECS**-certified personnel.
- c. **Rank Structure.** The **LFRDs** may appoint, elect, or promote **IECS**-qualified **LFRD** personnel. The **Fire Chief** may also appoint or promote **IECS**-qualified individuals. The **LFRD Chiefs** must continually keep the **Fire Chief** apprised of any changes in their rank structures by submitting notice to the **Fire Chief** within 7 calendar days of any **IECS** status change. The **Fire Chief** must act on a request for certification within 14 calendar days after its receipt. Personnel above the rank of Firefighter/Rescuer I



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/EMS Provider can participate in the IECS above their certified rank not longer than 21 calendar days while awaiting certification by the **Fire Chief**. The **Fire Chief** or designee will amend the IECS certification list as personnel changes occur.

d. **Certified Chief Officer Availability System.** This system ensures that: **MCFRS Certified Chief Officers** are available for response to emergency incidents occurring in all areas of the County; **MCFRS** provides a unified County-wide perspective regarding emergency responder training and staffing, and apparatus status and availability; responsive and pro-active outreach efforts and education are provided to all communities throughout the County; expedient management of safety and emergent issues are provided to all **MCFRS** personnel; and equitable and expeditious service is provided to all of the County’s citizens.

1. **Division Chief of Fire and Rescue Operations Responsibilities.** The **Division Chief of Fire and Rescue Operations** must ensure adequate **Certified Chief Officer** duty coverage by deploying **LFRD** and **County Chief Officers** effectively at all times.
 - A. Desired on-duty coverage is two County-wide **Duty Operations Chiefs** and two **Rostered Chief Officers** for each **Battalion** at all times.
 - B. Minimum certified chief officer duty coverage is one County-wide **Duty Operations Chief** and one **Rostered Chief Officer** for each **Battalion**, whenever possible.
 - C. **LFRDs** will provide one County-wide **Duty Operations Chief** and one **Rostered Chief Officer** for each **Battalion**, whenever possible.
 - D. The **Division Chief of Fire and Rescue Operations** will assign one County **Duty Operations Chief** and one County **Battalion Chief** for each **Battalion** at all times.
2. **LFRD Chief Responsibilities.** Each month, each **LFRD Chief** must submit a list of **Certified Chief Officers** who are available to serve as **Duty Battalion Chief** and **Duty Operations Chief**, with the dates and times they are available, to the **Division Chief of Fire and Rescue Operations**.



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- 3. **Dispatch of Certified Chief Officers.** **Certified Chief Officers** must be dispatched on **incidents**, as required by the response plans established by the **Fire Chief**. The Emergency Communications Center (ECC) will ensure the availability of a system to notify the **LFRD Chief Officer** of all **incidents** occurring in his/her **first due area**.
- 4. **Response of Certified Chief Officers.** Dispatched **Certified Chief Officers** must respond to any **incident**, subject to procedures developed by the **Fire Chief**. Additional **Certified Chief Officers** may respond, based on their proximity to the incident, and after notifying ECC of their current location. A **Certified Chief Officer** may serve as a unit officer, if qualified on that specific unit. That **Chief Officer** may not serve simultaneously as both a unit officer, and as a **LFRD** on-duty chief officer. The command structure response authority for **Certified Chief Officers** is illustrated below.

COMMAND STRUCTURE RESPONSE AUTHORITY

Fire Chief
Division Chief
Duty Operations Chief(s)
Certified LFRD Chief(s) and Merit System Assistant Chief(s)
Rostered Certified Chief Officer(s)
All other Certified Chief Officers

- e. **Primary Unit Officers.** A **Primary Unit** should have a **Certified Primary Unit Officer** on the unit at all times. However, if a **Primary Unit** responds without a **Certified Primary Unit Officer**, the unit must notify the ECC that it is responding understaffed.
- f. **Removal from IECS.** The Fire Chief may revoke the IECS certification or otherwise remove any individual from IECS for cause. An individual's lack of fitness for duty or loss of required certifications are examples of circumstances that may constitute cause for removal under this section. The **Fire Chief** may place an individual who is removed from the IECS in **Provisional Status**, subject to the requirements in Regulation 18-05, *Certification for Training, Experience, and Credentialing Requirements*. Removal from the IECS or revocation of IECS certification for failure to meet the requirements in Executive Regulation 18-05 is not disciplinary action.



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Sec. 6. Review. The **Fire Chief** regularly must review this *Integrated Emergency Command Structure* Executive Regulation, and amend it as necessary.

Sec. 7. Severability. If a court of final appeal holds that any part of this Executive Regulation is invalid, that ruling does not affect the validity of other parts of the Regulation.

Sec. 8. Enforcement. The **Fire Chief** is the enforcement authority for all **MCFRS** policies and regulations.

Sec. 9. Effective Date. This regulation is effective on the date the County Council adopts a resolution approving it.

Approved:

Douglas M. Duncan,
County Executive

Date



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