



POLICY AND PROCEDURE

No. 02-01AMII

MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE COMMISSION

EFFECTIVE DATE:

11/15/2004

TITLE

RECORDS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (RMS)

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MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE COMMISSION INTERIM POLICY

RECORDS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (RMS)

Issued by: Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Commission

Interim Policy No. 02-01AMII

Supersedes: *EMBR Policy*, No. 02-01AM

Authority: Montgomery County Code Sec. 21-2.(d)(2)

Effective Date: November 15, 2004

SUMMARY:

The Records Management System (RMS) is an automated data collection, records management, and reporting system for fire and rescue incidents, used to manage records of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service. This policy includes procedures, including responsibilities and requirements for completing and reporting incident information, and for system security and appropriate release of information. In addition to meeting the requirements of this policy, all personnel must also comply with security provisions in the Fire and Rescue Commission's *Office Automation Security Policy* No. 01-04, dated 7/1/98, which is incorporated by reference and made a part of this policy. This policy supersedes and repeals the *EMBR* automated data collection, records management, and reporting system.

DEADLINES:

Montgomery County Fire Board Comment: August 15, 2004

Div. of Fire and Rescue Services Review: August 15, 2004

Local Fire and Rescue Departments Review: August 15, 2004

ADDRESS:

Send comments pertaining to the proposed policy to Beth Feldman, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service, 12th Floor, 101 Monroe Street, Rockville, MD 20850. Comments may also be emailed to beth.feldman@montgomerycountymd.gov

STAFF:

For additional information, please contact Beth Feldman, Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service, on (240) 777-2423.

BACKGROUND:

The Records Management System (RMS) operates over a wide area network, with terminals in all Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service work sites. The information collected fulfills data



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reporting requirements of several Federal, State, and local agencies and programs. These agencies and programs include the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA); the National Fires Incident Reporting System (NFIRS); the Sen. William H. Amoss Fire, Rescue and Ambulance ("508") Fund; the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services System (MIEMSS); and the Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP). The data collected is also critical for fire and rescue service management, budgetary, and planning purposes.

Sec. 1. Purpose: To establish procedures for the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service (MCFRS) regarding data entry, system security, and appropriate release of incident documentation.

Sec. 2. Applicability. This policy applies to all Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service personnel.

Sec. 3. Definitions.

- a. **Department of Technology Services (DTS).** The Montgomery County agency that provides technical assistance to the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service RMS Systems Administrators.
- b. **Division of Fire and Rescue Services (DFRS).** The division of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service comprising career employees and DFRS volunteers that shares with the Local Fire and Rescue Departments the responsibility for providing direct fire suppression, rescue, and emergency medical services.
- c. **EMS Report.** A document containing patient and service data fields required by the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services System (MIEMSS). An EMS Report must be completed for each patient assessed, treated, or transported. Participation in this reporting system establishes a Maryland county's eligibility for State grant funds.
- d. **Fire Administrator.** The non-uniformed department head of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service who is appointed by the County Executive. The Administrator serves as ex officio chair of the Fire and Rescue Commission and is responsible for implementing and enforcing Commission policies,



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administering all fire and rescue services provided in the County, and supervising the Chiefs of both the Division of Fire and Rescue Services and the Division of Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services. The Fire Administrator is the custodian of all records, as currently required by the Montgomery County *Code*.

- e. **Incident Report**. Report containing service data fields required by the Fire and Rescue Commission. One Incident Report must be completed for each incident dispatched by the Public Safety Communications Center (PSCC).
- f. **Local Fire and Rescue Department (LFRD)**. A component of MCFRS that provides direct fire suppression, rescue, and emergency medical services, in conjunction with the Division of Fire and Rescue Services.
- g. **Personnel**. Staff of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.
- h. **Record Management System (RMS)**. Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service's automated incident data recording, storage, reporting, and retrieval system recording incident information.
- i. **Unit Officer**. Officer in charge of a specific unit, certified as a Firefighter/Rescuer III, Rescuer III, or higher rank, in accordance with the *Integrated Emergency Command Structure*.
- j. **Unit Report**. Report containing data fields recording rank, affiliation, and riding positions of unit personnel, type of service provided, tools and equipment used, miles traveled, etc. These data fields are used for MCFRS management, budgetary analysis, and planning purposes.

Sec. 4. Procedure.

- I. **Report Preparation**. A **Unit Report** must be completed for every unit dispatched on an incident. The appropriate **personnel** must complete the **Unit Report, Incident Report, EMS Report**, and other related reports as soon as possible after the conclusion of an incident. The **personnel** who are responsible for completing reports of specific types of calls are indicated below.
 - a. **Single Unit Response- Fire Call Type**. The **unit officer** of the unit dispatched on the incident is responsible for completing both the **Unit Report** and the **Incident Report**.



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- b. **Single Unit Response- EMS Call Type.** The **unit officer** (primary patient caregiver) of the unit dispatched on the incident is responsible for completing the **EMS Report, Unit Report, and Incident Report.**
- c. **Multiple Unit Response- Fire Call Type.** The **unit officer** of the first due unit is responsible for completing the **Incident Report** and his/her **Unit Report.** All other units responding must complete their individual **Unit Reports.**
1. If unit(s) that are responding to an incident are placed in service before arriving on the scene, the **unit officer** on the scene who makes the decision is responsible for completing the **Incident Report.** If the call is canceled after dispatch, but before units arrive on the scene, the first due unit is responsible for the **Incident Report.**
 2. If Level II or Level III Command is established, the Incident Commander is responsible for completing both the **Incident Report** and his/her **Unit Report.**
- d. **Multiple Unit Response- EMS Call Type.** On an incident involving only an ALS and a BLS unit (e.g., response for heart attack, trouble breathing, etc.), the first due unit is responsible for completing the **Incident Report.** The **unit officer** of the transporting unit is responsible for completing the **EMS Report.** Both units must complete their respective **Unit Reports.** The **personnel** who are responsible for completing reports of specific types of calls are indicated below.
1. On incidents involving one or more EMS units and a fire unit (e.g., a response for a shooting, stabbing, etc.), the **unit officer** of the fire unit (engine, truck squad, etc.) is responsible for completing the **Incident Report.**
 2. If a personal injury collision (PIC) or other incident involves more than one fire unit, the engine officer is responsible for the **Incident Report.**
 3. If unit(s) that are responding to an incident are placed in service before arriving on the scene, the **unit officer** on the scene who



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makes that decision is responsible for completing the **Incident Report**. If the call is canceled after dispatch, but before units arrive on the scene, the first due unit is responsible for the **Incident Report**.

- II. **Retrieval of Reports.** Reports that were entered before March 25, 1997, exist in hard copy and are deemed to be in the custody of the **LFRDs**. Reports of incidents that occurred after that date are presumed to have been entered into *EMBRs*, and are in the custody of the **Fire Administrator**. However, if an **LFRD** has failed to enter these reports in *EMBRs*, the **LFRD** is considered the custodian of those records. If **DFRS personnel** failed to enter these reports in *EMBRs*, the **DFRS** Division Chief is considered the custodian of those records.
- III. **System Integrity and Security.** **Personnel** must comply with all provisions in FRC Policy No. 01-04, *Office Automation Security Policy*, dated July 1, 1998, to prevent unauthorized and inappropriate access to records.
 - a. Each station must designate a secure location to store reports that exist on paper, pending keypunching, shredding, or removal to another secure form of storage. If the **RMS** application is out of service, **personnel** should consult the **RMS Contingency Plan** (attached) for proper procedures.
 - b. EMS data collection sheets and hard copy of **Incident Reports** used when the **RMS Contingency Plan** is in effect should be shredded and destroyed immediately after completing the **RMS** report.
 - c. Patient Information Release forms (PIRs) should be stored in a secure place until periodic collection by the EMS Section.
- IV. **Release of EMS and Fire Incident Reports.** Release of information from all fires and **EMS reports** is centrally coordinated. Release of this information by anyone other than the **Fire Administrator** or designee is prohibited. Any unauthorized release of information by any party is deemed the sole responsibility of that party. General procedures for the authorized release of **EMS reports** and fire **Incident Reports** are described below.
 - a. All requests for **EMS reports** must be transmitted in writing to the **DFRS** Emergency Medical Services office.



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1. A patient may ordinarily see all patient information recorded on the **EMS Incident Report**, or any other report form regarding his or her care, as permitted by law. Anyone else who requests a patient information report must present a signed statement from the patient (or the patient's natural guardian) that authorizes the release of the information to that person. If the patient is incapacitated or deceased, an authorized representative must sign the release.
2. The appropriate **LFRD** involved will be advised by memorandum that a request was received and acted on.
 - b. All requests for fire **Incident Reports** and/or **Unit Reports** must be transmitted in writing to the **DFRS** Fire Investigations and Explosives office. If applicable, that office will advise the appropriate **LFRD** by memorandum that a request was received and acted on.

Sec. 5. Responsibilities.

- a. The **Fire Administrator** is the official custodian of records and is responsible for the operation and administration of the **Records Management System**. The **Fire Administrator**:
 1. ensures compliance with policies and procedures established by the Fire and Rescue Commission;
 2. submits budget requests annually and as needed for improvements to the **Records Management System**;
 3. provides for sufficient staff to administer and maintain the **RMS** hardware and software components;
 4. will authorize the release of reports, as appropriate, pursuant to legitimate requests; and
 5. encourages and reviews suggestions from system users for improvements and/or changes to the **Records Management System**.
- b. The **DFRS** Battalion Chief or the **LFRD** Duty Chief, as appropriate, must ensure



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that all reports in their district/department are completed in a timely manner.

c. The on-duty station officer is responsible for **RMS** access and security. This officer must ensure that all **personnel** complete and submit the appropriate **RMS** reports in a timely manner.

1. At approximately 2100 hours each day, the on-duty station officer must query **RMS** to determine if all appropriate reports for that shift have been filed. If any reports are outstanding, the station officer must direct the appropriate on-duty **personnel** to complete their reports as soon as possible.
2. If some reports for that station's area are the responsibility of **personnel** at other stations, the station officer must contact the appropriate **personnel** or supervisor and request that the outstanding reports be completed as soon as possible.

d. All **personnel** must accurately, completely, and promptly enter the required information and reports into the **Records Management System**.

Sec. 6. **Enforcement.** The **Fire Administrator** is responsible for enforcing all policies and regulations of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.

Sec. 7. **Effective Date.** This policy is effective on November 15, 2004..

Attest:

Gordon A. Aoyagi, Chairman
Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Commission

Date

Records Mgmt System interim policy 9-29-04 Clean bf wp