Prince WiLLIAM COunty Department of Fire and Rescue ALS internship process

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**I. MISSION STATEMENT**

* The ALS internship process is designed to formalize mentoring of Advanced Life Support (ALS) Paramedic/EMT Intermediates that are striving to become endorsed ALS providers within the Prince William County Fire and Rescue System.

**II.OBJECTIVES**

* Orient prospective ALS providers to Prince William Counties policies, procedures, and protocols so that they may perform independently and competently in the field.
* Ensure providers will be delivering consistent and high-quality medical care to patients.
* Provide a more complete picture of both individual and general provider strengths and weaknesses.
* Adequately assess both EMS (Emergency Medical System) operational and clinical competence prior to releasing an individual provider to practice independently within Prince William County.
* Provide a structured program and resources for providers who are seeking ALS endorsement within Prince William County.
* Provide EMS providers with an experiential learning experience.

**III.ACRONYMS**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| PWC FRS | Prince William County Fire and Rescue System |
| FTO | Field Training officer |
| OMD | Operations Medical Director |
| EMS OPS | Emergency Medical System Operations |
| ALS | Advanced Life Support |

**IV.ROLES**

**A. ALS INTERNS**

ALS Interns are classified as those members of PWC FRS that are actively participating in an ALS internship within Prince William County.

1. **Intern Responsibilities**

Each Intern is responsible for each of the items listed below within the scope of the ALS Internship Process:

* Maintain current credentials required to operate as an EMS provider within Prince William County.  Interns must immediately self-report expired credentials to their FTO and EMS OPS intern coordinator who will then take appropriate action which may include removal of the intern from the internship.
* Report to their FTO self-identified areas of knowledge or skill deficit and actively seek assistance in addressing these issues.
* To not provide medical care without direct supervision of a released Paramedic provider (whether the assigned FTO or another released ALS provider) until successful completion of the program and authorized release by the Medical Director.
* Obtain a comprehensive knowledge and practice of Prince William County's treatment Protocols, Directives, Procedures, Pharmacology and all other relevant EMS materials.
* Participate in station EMS training coordinated by the FTO.
* Engage in self-study when formal FTO/Intern training is not being conducted.
* Actively participate and lead patient assessments and treatments on incidents.
* Maintain records of all EMS training that takes place during the internship using forms located on the EMS resource page.
* Maintain detailed, organized progress notes for all shifts worked during the internship.
* Adhere to the phase schedule as outlined by EMS Operations Attachments B1 and B2 of the ALS internship.  If the intern is unable to meet this schedule at any time during the internship, it is incumbent that the intern informs the FTO and EMS OPS immediately.
* Have all up to date documentation prepared prior to the arrival of EMS Operations.
* Communicate needs or condition changes in a timely manner through the assigned FTO to EMS Operations.
* Immediately communicate any unscheduled SL (Sick Leave) or AL (Annual Leave) with the internship coordinator through assigned FTO.
* Intern is expected to solicit and accept feedback.
* Review policy 5.0.10 - Endorsement of Certified EMS Providers by the Operational Medical Director
* Intern is required to attend all CME’s (Continuing Medical Education) during their internship. When a CME is attended, the internship coordinator should be notified. It is expected that they attend with their assigned FTO.  If this is not possible the FTO must notify the internship coordinator.
* ALS Internship must be completed within 1 year of the completion date of ALS protocols.
* Intern must treat FTO, crew, hospital staff, patients and their family members with dignity and respect at all times.  If disciplinary action is deemed appropriate, FTO or unit officer should follow county policies and procedures

**B. FIELD TRAINING OFFICERS (FTOs)**

A Field Training Officer (FTO) is expected to teach, encourage, train and evaluate the ALS intern over the course of the ALS internship. The FTO’s primary responsibility is to help orient interns new to providing ALS level care within Prince William County on protocols and procedures.  The FTO’s will assess the intern’s ability to function as a competent and caring provider at the Paramedic level.    The FTO will work to ensure any patient care provided maintains the high standards and commitment expected of the Department’s employees.  The FTOs will engage the interns as adult learners by utilizing direct constructive feedback, subtle prompts, and demonstration of exemplary modeling behavior.  Refer to Department of Fire and Rescue FRS FTO policy

1. **Reporting Structure**

FTOs will report to the internship coordinator and their usual operational chain of command.

FTOs will bring issues and concerns to the attention of the internship coordinator in a timely manner.  The internship coordinator will communicate this to the OMD who manages the FTO program.

1. **FTO Responsibilities**

Each FTO is responsible for the below within the scope of the ALS internship:

* Provide instruction to Interns on current Prince William County Protocols, Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs), and the general tasks expected of employees.
* Supervise Interns during all aspects of patient care and provide timely feedback and guidance to interns on this care.
* Satisfactorily complete and submit all required paperwork for evaluation of the assigned Intern.
* Provide a review of the intern’s performance throughout their time with the intern.   This review should be documented on the Daily observation reports (Attachment C) and phase summative forms (Attachment D).
* Work with Prince William County’s internship coordinator and the Medical director to formulate plans to assist EMS providers failing to meet established program or departmental requirements.
* Keep the Internship coordinator updated on the intern’s progress by submitting required documentation in specified time frames
* If the intern is temporarily assigned to a provider that is not their FTO, the interns FTO should give direction and guidance to the interns temporarily assigned preceptor.
* The FTO should inform the internship coordinator of any prolonged leave of absence from the assigned internship.  This will ensure that there can be alternative arrangements made to allow for continuity in the intern’s education and consistent time with an FTO.

**C. INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR**

Responsibilities of the Internship coordinator:

* Provide guidance to the FTOs and coordinate with the OMD.
* Coordinate with EMS Operations Captain and OMD to pair Intern’s with FTO’s.
* Monitor and guide the progress of interns within the internship.
* Organize and archive documentation related to the Internship.
* Keep the OMD updated as to progress and/or concerns of each ALS Intern.
* Schedule internship phase testing.
* To provide immediate feedback to the OMD on the progression of all internships.
* Responsible for monitoring and tracking that the FTO is actively participating in training and mentoring the intern throughout the course of the internship.
* Keep the Medical Director informed about internship and FTO Program needs.

**D. MEDICAL DIRECTOR**

Responsibilities of the Medical director:

* Monitor and guide the progress of interns within the ALS internship Process
* Determine when an FTO requires removal from the FTO program.
* Determine what types of functions that individual FTO’s can participate in.
* Determine when an Intern requires removal from the ALS internship process.
* Determine patient contact status for Interns.

**V. ALS INTERNSHIP EVALUATOR**

The ALS Intern Evaluator is part of a cadre of FTO’s that are selected by EMS Operations and the OMD to evaluate ALS interns during scheduled phase tests.

**A. APPLICANTS**

* FTO’s interested in becoming part of the ALS internship Testing cadres must meet all requirements outlined on the ALS Internship testing cadre application
* ALS internship evaluators are selected collaboratively by EMS operations and the OMD.

**B. RESPONSIBILITES**

* Evaluate ALS interns during each phase test
* Provide unbiased test results
* Complete all testing materials at the conclusion of each ALS internship phase test and submit this material to the intern coordinator for review by EMS OPS and the OMD.
* Keep an up to date knowledge on all testing procedures, testing material, and testing props.
* Complete an intra-service correspondence and other relevant forms summarizing the completed phase test and submit to the internship coordinator.

**VI. ALS INTERNSHIP PROCESS**

**A. ROUTE OF ENTRY**

* These are providers with an EMT basic certification who have completed the FRS BLS internship successfully, gained BLS endorsement and who are now pursuing ALS endorsement. They have completed an accredited Paramedic or Intermediate training program and hold a current Virginia state Paramedic or Intermediate card.  These providers will complete the ALS internship and its prerequisites in order to be released to operate as endorsed independent ALS provider in the PWC FRS.  These providers will be enrolled in this process when space is available.

**B. ALS Internship**

1. **Requirements for Entry into an ALS Internship**

ALS providers must meet the below requirements to enter the FTEP:

1. Current, non-expired certifications in ACLS, PALS, CPR.
2. Current, non-expired Virginia state Paramedic or Intermediate card.
3. An ALS internship must be initiated through the prospective ALS providers chain of command.  Prospective ALS interns’ request must be submitted by their BC via email to the internship coordinator.
4. Meet all other certification requirements as listed on the EMS provider Information/ Activation form (Attachment A).

1. **ALS internship Structure**

The **ALS Internship** will consist of the following:

* 32-40 shifts (minimum of 768 hours) as an intern in the field, functioning as a paramedic provider under supervision.
* Internship will consist of two phases.  Each phase will consist of no less than 16 shifts and no more than 20 shifts (this does not include any shifts that are built in for remediation.)
* All shifts will be completed on a medic unit.  The only exception is for interns that are assigned to a 1:1 station.  In this situation the FTO and internship coordinator may approve hours spent on an ALS engine.  For stations that have 1:1 staffing, of the total hours of each phase the intern must complete a minimum of 288 hours of staffing on the medic unit.
* The Intern should not be used as minimum staffing.  If the intern is detailed to any apparatus other then a medic unit, the time spent on that unit is not counted towards the ALS internship and should be reported to the Internship Coordinator in a timely manner.
* The intern will be paired with a primary FTO.  A current released ALS provider can serve as a backup FTO in the absence of the interns assigned FTO.  The intern’s skills will be limited to the lead ALS provider’s certification level.  Example: if the intern is a paramedic and the lead provider is an Intermediate, the intern’s skill level will be limited to the intermediate level.
* If the intern must remediate during either phase, the remediation will consist of six shifts.  Following the six-shift phase remediation, the intern will then retest the phase scenarios.
* The Intern will be permitted to retest each phase one time.  If the intern fails the initial test and the retest during any phase, the internship will be terminated.
* During the internship, the intern will be expected to complete a minimum of the following:
* At least 32 shifts staffing a medic unit or ALS engine.
* Completion and submission of the internship documents over the duration of the internship.
* Initial phase test attempts should be scheduled between the 16th and 20th shift of the current internship phase.
* A written test will be used as a tool to determine intern readiness for upcoming phase test.
* Phase tests will consist of three practical tests.
* Intern must pass all practical scenarios with minimum competencies as listed on the practical rubric sheets for the phase test to be considered a success.
* The OMD will have the final decision as to whether the intern progresses to the next phase.
* Focused education on any areas of deficiency.  This may require time spent with other educators in the agency e.g. other FTOs, Training Academy staff, or the Medical director.

1. **Tracking Delivery of Education and Comprehension**

Interns will maintain a checklist of the topics as outlined on attachment B1 for phase one and B2 for phase 2.

FTO providing instruction in each topic will:

* Sign off that the educational material was delivered; and
* Comment on the Intern’s comprehension of the teachings and recommendations for further education on that topic if needed.

**C. APPROVAL FOR COMPLETION OF ALS INTERNSHIP**

The Medical Director will make a final determination of successful completion of the program and ability of the Intern to be released as an independent provider with consideration of input from the Phase evaluators, Internship coordinator, and the interns assigned FTO.

**D. REMOVAL FROM ALS INTERNSHIP**

The intern may be removed from the internship at any time for any of the following reasons (this list is not all inclusive):

* Inadequate progress in the internship as described by the FTO and daily documentation.
* Failure to successfully complete the internship program in a timely manner.
* Two failures of any of the phase tests throughout the duration of the internship.
* Unprofessional behavior or academic dishonesty.
* Expiration of any credential required to operate in the field as an EMS provider within PWC FRS
* If an internship is terminated for any reason; the intern must start the internship from the beginning when and if it is permitted by the OMD.
* If an internship is terminated by EMS Operations or the OMD for any reason, it will be the discretion of the OMD when and under what circumstances the intern may start another or restart an internship.

When an Intern is being considered for removal from the program, the Intern’s FTO and the internship coordinator will provide their input to the Medical Director.  The Medical Director will make a final determination for removal from the program in which case the intern’s chain of command will be notified.

**E. INTERNSHIP POSTPONEMENT**

* If at any time an intern requests a postponement of their internship, the request must be done both in oral format and through an intra-service correspondence that is submitted though their chain of command.  This request will be submitted to the internship coordinator.
* Requests to postpone internships will be evaluated by EMS operations and the OMD.  Internship postponement will be granted on a case by case basis.
* If postponement is granted, the internship may only be postponed for a maximum of two months.
* In order to postpone you must be an intern in good standing and have a positive report from the FTO.
* Postponing an internship does not guarantee that an FTO will be available when you return, this will be evaluated when the intern requests to restart the internship.
* Certification dates must be revalidated prior to restarting internship.

When an Intern is being considered for removal from the program, the Intern’s FTO and the internship coordinator will provide their input to the Medical Director.  The Medical Director will make a final determination for removal from the program.