

Privilege to Practice Code of Conduct

Position Paper 2024-02

Adopted By the Commission on 16 October 2024

Medical professions adopt codes of conduct to reinforce expectations, establish, and maintain professional standards of behavior and ethical conduct. These codes serve as guidelines that outline the expected conduct, responsibilities, and ethical principles that healthcare professionals should adhere to in their practice. The Hippocratic Oath, which is one of the oldest and most well-known codes of conduct in healthcare, has been a guiding principle for physicians for centuries. Its emphasis on ethical principles such as confidentiality, honesty, and respect for patients has influenced the development of modern codes of conduct for healthcare professionals.

The EMS Compact is comprised of individually licensed EMS practitioners with a Privilege to Practice in multiple Member States, creating a need for a unified Code of Conduct that is adopted and implemented by all states and jurisdictions licensing EMS personnel. Codes of conduct help in ensuring high standards of behavior and ethical conduct in the field and they serve as a critical tool in maintaining public trust in the profession. Therefore, the EMS Compact has officially adopted this document as the official Code of Conduct for EMS Clinicians utilizing a Privilege to Practice, and the Commission is calling upon all State EMS Licensing authorities to adopt a similar companion Code of Conduct linked to State EMS Licensure.

The following Uniform EMS Code of Conduct was adopted by the Commission on 16 October 2024:

Uniform Code of Conduct

As a professional EMS Practitioner, I commit to upholding the following code of conduct:

- Promote professionalism and provide competent emergency medical care to all people.
- Use my professional knowledge and skills to promote health, alleviate suffering, and do no harm.
- Treat all patients with respect, compassion, and dignity regardless of nationality, race, creed, color, age, gender, disability, religion, or socioeconomic status.
- Assume responsibility to uphold professional standards and education, striving to provide competent medical care to every patient that I encounter.
- Advocate for patients that lack medical decision-making capacity and ensure equal access to medical services.
- Act responsibly, ethically, and lawfully within my training, knowledge, and scope of practice to enhance the reputation of the profession.
- Work cooperatively with other healthcare professionals in the best interests of our patients, and act in a responsible and professional manner that does not discredit or dishonor other health care practitioners.

- Act with honesty by being objective, truthful, and complete. I will include all relevant information in data collection and reporting, statements, applications, and testimony, and acknowledge errors and will not distort or alter facts.
- Respect every person's right to privacy by maintaining confidentiality of my patient's condition and history to those only in the medical field with an immediate need-to-know.
- Exercise a level of care and judgment consistent with my level of licensure, certification, and training.
- Abide by all applicable state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and permits.

Furthermore, I understand that as an EMS Practitioner licensed in a Member State or utilizing a Privilege to Practice:

- It is my professional responsibility and obligation to read, understand, and comply with all state statutes and regulations related to the provision of Emergency Medical Services in the relevant jurisdiction(s).
- I can only function as an EMS Practitioner if my license is current, and I have authorization from an EMS Agency Medical Director.
- Maintaining my license, tracking my expiration date, and continuing my education is my individual responsibility.

As an EMS Practitioner, I acknowledge and understand that:

- The State may review and request further information for consideration about any violation of any state or federal law, rules, regulations including but not limited to violations that have been dismissed, deferred, or sealed when determining my fitness to practice as an EMS Practitioner.
- Failure to follow this code of conduct provides just cause for disciplinary action by the Department.
- Sanctions or discipline imposed on my license will be a public record and final dispositions will be reported to the National Practitioner Data Bank, the Interstate Commission for EMS Personnel Practice, and the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians.

Disclaimer: Position papers produced by the Interstate Commission for EMS Personnel Practice are designed to document the official positions of the Commission. It is important to note that these position papers are not administrative rules. Instead, they are intended to provide perspectives and insights on various matters of policy. These documents are meant to guide and inform but should not be mistaken for legally binding regulations or mandates.