



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2022.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).


PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Cumberland County
Program Title: Cumberland County Unified Fire and EMS System
Program Category: Criminal Justice and Public Safety

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Derek Stamey
Title: County Administrator
Signature: 

VACO Award Submission – Cumberland Unified Fire and EMS System

Introduction / Problem Defined:

As rural localities continue to grow and develop, pressure on local governments to provide appropriate and cost-effective services becomes increasingly difficult. Public safety and the protection of life and property is one of the most significant pressures absorbed by a small, rural, or developing locality. Over time volunteer fire fighting departments and rescue squads became the norm in terms of a locality's fire and EMS service, often times serving and focusing on specific areas of the locality. As localities continue to strive to meet the Fire and Rescue needs of its residents, a cohesive and unified approach to Fire and Rescue Administration, EMS services, and Volunteer Fire Fighting Departments is necessary. Cumberland County's efforts to unite its volunteer fire departments, along with paid contracted EMS staff, managed by a County paid professional Fire and EMS Chief is a model that can positively serve other small, rural localities in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Identified Problems:

1. Funding for Paid Staff and Apparatus – funding for full time paid staff for Fire and EMS is truly cost prohibitive for many small, rural localities in Virginia. Apparatus replacement costs are also a significant burden on localities often reaching hundreds of thousands of dollars.
2. Volunteerism is Shrinking – volunteerism across the country is shrinking regardless of the activity or location. This is no different for Cumberland County.
3. Territorialism – Volunteer based firefighting units are naturally territorial and a splintered approach of multiple volunteer fire stations often led to apprehension and distrust of local government and with one another.

Solution Offered:

In late 2020 and ultimately implemented in 2021, Cumberland County began the process of unifying the Fire and EMS services provided by the County and its partners. This process was undertaken by the Board of Supervisors along with the County Administrator's office with no outside assistance other than systematic advice and experience from other local Fire and Rescue agencies. The success of this program would not have been attainable without the support of local government officials, coordination at the County Administrative level, and through the openness and willingness of all of the volunteer fire associations to participate. Cumberland County would provide for a paid Chief of Fire and EMS in the mode of coordinating

the unified efforts of the individual Volunteer Fire Departments as well as integrating the use of paid, contracted EMS staff in areas where volunteerism has declined.

Implementation:

Cumberland County ultimately created the position of Chief of Fire and EMS, procured through a request for proposals process, and through the use of service level agreements – unified the efforts of all of the Volunteer Fire Departments.

Each individual volunteer fire and rescue department (Cumberland, Randolph, Cartersville) were asked to enter into the following service level agreements which include the following highlights and responsibilities for both parties:

Service Level Agreement (entered into and implemented in April 2021 – see appendix)
Defines and lays out administrative and operational responsibilities between Cumberland Fire and EMS and its volunteer fire departments.

Cumberland Fire and EMS (CFEMS) provides authority and access to volunteer departments to operate, empower departments in multiple ways, serve as administrator of the county-wide EMS license, serve as the custodial manager of all patient medical records related to providing EMS response under the County license, provide administrative advice, provide access to matching funds, grants, etc.

All volunteer companies adopt a code of conduct, emergency vehicle driving policy, appoint a member as company Chief, appoint members for roles associated with infectious disease, EMS, company training officer. Maintain written and electronic personnel files, etc. Maintain 501 c(3) status and provide access upon request for audited company financial records.

Operationally – CFEMS will provide system-wide oversight to the volunteer departments, provide a Chief Officer to manager overall system wide resources and needs.

Operationally – volunteer departments manage all incidents through command-and-control procedures, dispatch all resources through the County ECC, adopt and comply with CFEMS standard operating procedures, general orders, and medical directives, ensure operational readiness of all apparatus.

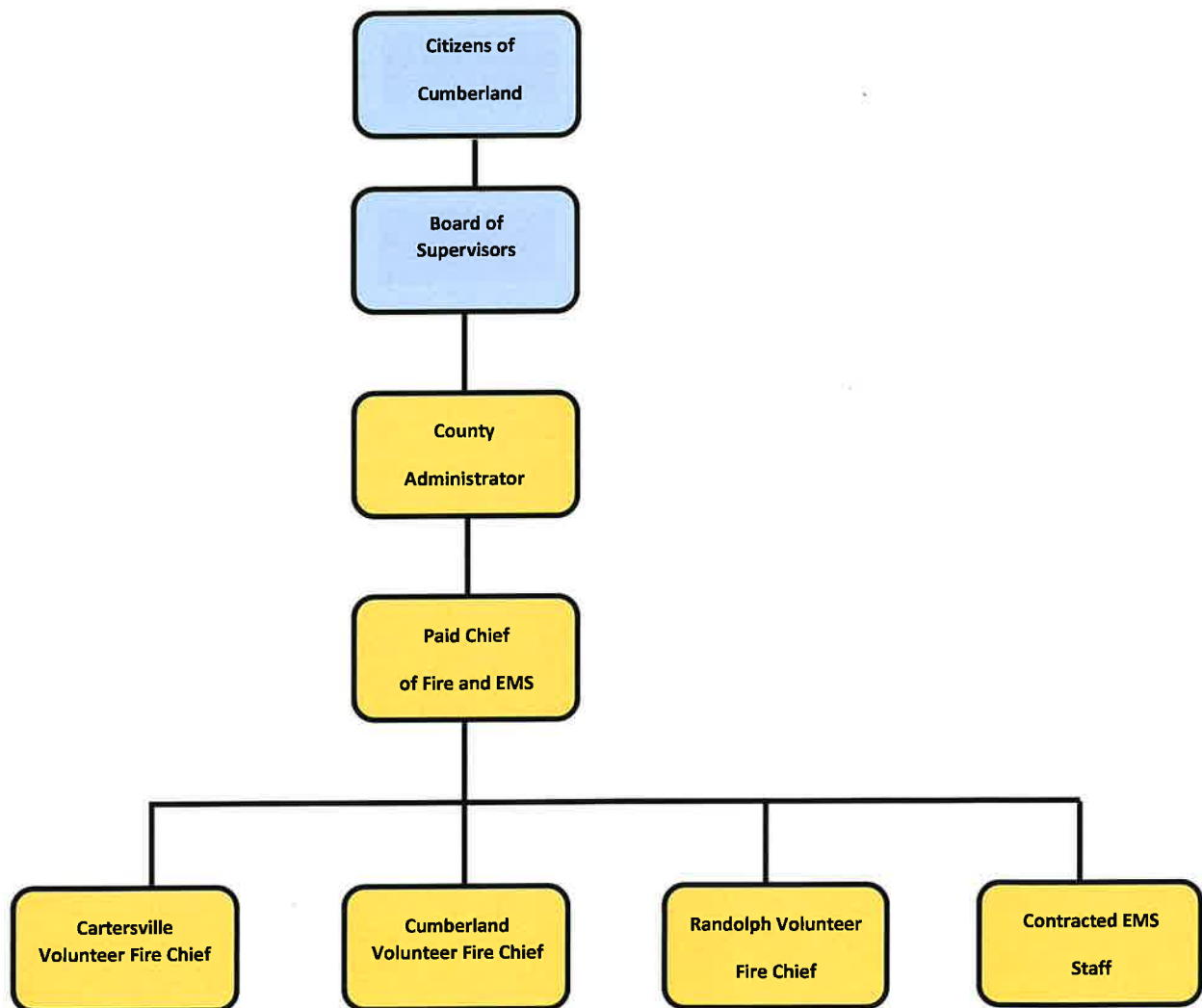
The Service Level Agreements seek to eliminate the territoriality nature of the volunteer department system by providing cohesive and equitable guidelines for support services and for command and control. In addition, the Chief of Fire and EMS would coordinate the annual budget requests from each individual station and also assist with the ongoing record keeping and maintenance requests associated with apparatus repair and replacement. This system also allows the Fire Chief to prepare CIP requests and identifies the fire Apparatus as a combined fleet, without preference for one station over another. Even further as it pertains to apparatus,

the service level agreements allow for the shifting of fire and rescue related equipment to other volunteer department locations in the event of breakdown or other need.

With the onboarding of paid EMS staff, the County was able to coordinate through its agreements with the volunteers' areas where EMS staff could locate and provide the most effective countywide EMS coverage for Cumberland residents.

Conclusion:

While no effort is entirely perfect, Cumberland's efforts to unite its volunteer fire departments, along with paid contracted EMS staff, managed by a County paid professional Fire and EMS Chief is a model that can positively serve other small, rural localities in the Commonwealth of Virginia.



* SERVICE AGREEMENT
* RANDOLPH & CUMBERLAND
VFD's are identical.

Service Level Agreement

Between

Cumberland County, Virginia,

And

Cumberland County Fire and EMS Department,

And

Cartersville Volunteer Fire Department Inc.

This Service Level Agreement (SLA) is entered into this 4th day of May 2021 by, between, and among Cumberland County, Virginia, a Virginia county and political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Virginia (Cumberland County); and Cartersville Volunteer Fire Department (CVVFD), a volunteer fire company a part of the CFEMS; with Cumberland County, CFEMS, and CVVFD, singly and collectively referred to herein as "Party" or "Parties," as the case and context may be, the Parties all located in Cumberland County, Virginia

I. AUTHORITY; OPERATING RELATIONSHIP

As authorized and outlined by Cumberland County Code Sec. 38.40 the CFEMS is the Designated Emergency Response Agency (DERA) for Cumberland County and by composition of the department, includes partner agencies which are an integral part of the official safety program of Cumberland County.

CVVFD is a Virginia nonstock corporation, operating as such since 1954, also being an organization tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, also being a partner agency as a volunteer fire company of CFEMS.

CVVFD acknowledges and agrees, as a volunteer fire company, that it is subject to direction, control, and supervision by CFEMS and Cumberland County; CFEMS and Cumberland County acknowledge and agree the corporate and tax exempt status of CVVFD are subject to direction and control by the Members and Board of Directors of CVVFD, also subject to oversight by the Virginia State Corporation Commission and the United States Internal Revenue Service; CVVFD acknowledges and agrees, under applicable Virginia law, CFEMS and Cumberland County, for reasons satisfactory to them, under code 38-53, have authority to dissolve CVVFD as a volunteer fire company a part of CFEMS; CFEMS and Cumberland County acknowledge and agree that dissolving CVVFD as a volunteer fire company does not affect the corporate and tax status of CVVFD, and that the Members and Board of Directors of CVVFD have sole authority to make such determinations of CVVFD's corporate and tax status, including a disposition of CVVFD's assets and liabilities in accord with applicable law and regulation.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this SLA is to delineate and define the administrative and operational responsibilities between CFEMS and CVVFD as they relate to the provision of fire suppression and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) within Cumberland County, Virginia.

III. SCOPE

Nothing in this SLA, other than what is stated herein, shall be construed to limit or otherwise affect the independent powers, operations, or liabilities of CVVFD operating within Cumberland County, Virginia. The provisions of this SLA are in addition to the regulations within §Title 27 - Fire Prevention of the Code of Virginia, 12 VAC 5-31, Virginia Emergency Medical Services Regulations requirements, as well as all other applicable federal, state and county laws or ordinances.

IV. PERIOD OF AGREEMENT

This SLA shall begin effective on the date of the last signature herein and shall be in effect thereafter for a period of five (5) consecutive years, unless otherwise amended, as set forth in Article VIII of this SLA.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE

A. Cumberland County Fire and EMS Department (CFEMS) shall:

- 1 Give authority and full access to CVVFD to operate as a volunteer fire company from the facility located at 1600 Cartersville Rd, Cartersville, Virginia 23027 (fire station 3)
- 2 Empower CVVFD to personalize Fire Station 3 to show organizational pride.
- 3 Empower CVVFD to personalize County-owned vehicles (if applicable) assigned to Fire Station 3 in order to show organizational pride. Vehicle color and graphics shall be mutually agreed upon by the Parties.
- 4 Empower CVVFD members to operate County-owned fire and EMS vehicles (if applicable) and equipment assigned to Fire Station 3.
- 5 Empower CVVFD to regulate equipment placement and operation on assigned vehicles, when such decisions are not covered elsewhere within established county wide Standard Operating Procedures (SOP).
- 6 Serve as the custodial manager of all National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) incident reports.
- 7 Serve as the primary administrator of the county-wide EMS license through the Virginia Office of EMS.
- 8 Serve as the primary administrator of the Departmental National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians agency account.
- 9 Empower CVVFD members to operate as EMS providers under the County's EMS license.
- 10 Serve as the custodial manager of all patient medical records related to providing EMS responses under the county license.

- 11 Designate a HIPAA Compliance Officer.
- 12 Designate an Infection Control Officer.
- 13 Be the administrator and responsible financial party for maintaining and administering all aspects of the current NFIRS and Electronic Patient Care Reporting (EPCR) platforms.
- 14 Reserve any "Four-for-Life" funds received from the Commonwealth of Virginia for the purchase durable and non-durable medical equipment for all partner agencies.
- 15 Provide durable and non-durable medical equipment for all licensed EMS vehicles assigned to Fire Station 3.
- 16 Provide advice and procedural assistance on matters of personnel, budget, and administration, when requested by the CVVFD.
- 17 Provide Division of Motor Vehicle record checks on drivers, both CFEMS and CVVFD personnel, prior to the individual's being cleared to drive and then annually thereafter.
- 18 Provide CVVFD an annual allocation to be determined by the board and following all county policies and procedures, Aid to Localities funding for use in departmental training. Approval and appropriation must occur prior to the use of these funds. Unappropriated funds as of June 1 of each fiscal year are released back to the county for other appropriations.
- 19 Provide CVVFD access to matching funds, as available, for grant opportunities to secure equipment and provide member training. Approval and appropriation must occur prior to grant application. Equipment obtained through county matching funds, will be considered county property.
- 20 Provide workers compensation insurance and VFIS coverage for all volunteer members.

B. Cartersville Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. (CVVFD) shall:

Adopt and implement a membership code of conduct equivalent to or greater than, as it may determine, the requirements outlined within the Cumberland County Fire & EMS Department Personal and Professional Code of Conduct. If CVVFD accepts into its membership an individual who is a member at another partner agency within Cumberland County (thereby creating a situation of dual membership), the CVVFD agrees to recognize and enforce any serious disciplinary action against the member levied by the other organization. For purposes of this section, serious disciplinary action shall include suspension, termination or any other action which prohibits the member from performing the duties of an AIC or otherwise providing patient care such as revocation of clearance by the OMD.

- a. Adopt and implement an emergency vehicle driving policy equivalent to or greater than, as it may determine, the requirements outlined within the CFEMS driving procedures.
- b. Ensure administrative, financial and personnel management policies and procedures are established, applied and adhered to as it relates to its members.

- c. Policies shall ensure a drug, tobacco and alcohol-free environment, as well as prohibit harassment and discrimination of any kind.
 - d. Appoint a member as Company Chief, to provide overall guidance and responsibility to the fire company. Attendance and cooperation to the county Chief committee is required.
 - e. Appoint a member to serve as the infectious control liaison officer to work cooperatively with the designated CFEMS infectious control officer.
 - f. Appoint a member to serve as the EMS officer to coordinate EMS supplies, and contribute to EMS Quality Assessment/Quality Improvement. (as applicable)
 - g. Appoint a member to serve as the company training officer to coordinate with the county training committee and training officer.
 - h. Appoint a member to serve as the company logistics officer to coordinate CVVFD PPE and logistics requirements.
 - i. Appoint a member to serve as the company engineer to maintain accountability for, coordinate the repair of, and retain records of all CFEMS owned vehicles and equipment.
 - j. Maintain accountability for and records for all equipment purchased using grant funding.
 - k. Maintain written and electronic personnel files within the CFEMS for training purposes for all members for the purpose of documenting training records, emergency notification and other documentation as required by the Commonwealth of Virginia, Cumberland County, and CFEMS.
1. Be responsible for maintaining a complete roster of all its members and their membership classification to be submitted annually to CFEMS administration.
 2. Maintain accurate and up-to-date emergency contact information for all members.
 3. Submit accurate and all required incident reports, both NFIRS and EPCR, within 48 hours of dispatch to an incident for service, into the appropriate RMS.
 4. Maintain its 501(c)3 tax exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code as well as its corporate status under Title 13.1., of the Code of Virginia, as amended
 5. Per Title§ 27-8 & 27-10 of the Code of Virginia, maintain a membership of 20 effective members.
 6. Provide CFEMS with appropriate receipts to show appropriate spending of any ATL, "Four-for-Life", or County appropriated funding.
 7. Provide to the County upon request, access to company financial records to perform an audit of public funds according to generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and generally accepted auditing standards by an independent certified public accountant. The cost of any such audit will be borne by the fire company.
 8. If an audit or management letter reveals a reportable and/or material issue(s) with regard to compliance with generally accepted accounting principles, CVVFD shall provide a written statement that contains an explanation of each such issue and an action plan (with implementation timetable) for resolving each such issue, and shall provide periodic reports on progress made in resolution of each issue. If a resolution of such issues requires professional advice, CVVFD shall bear the cost of such advice if a lawsuit is pursued.

VI. OPERATIONS

A. Cumberland County Fire and EMS Department (CFEMS) shall:

1. Provide system-wide resource oversight to CVVFD.
2. Provide a Chief Officer to manage overall system wide resources and needs.

B. Cartersville Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. (CVVFD) agrees to the following and shall execute the following:

1. Manage all incidents through command-and-control procedures established by the Incident Command System (ICS) as part of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as adopted by CFEMS and Cumberland County, Virginia.
2. Dispatch of all resources through the Cumberland County Emergency Communications Center. All response resources will be required to comply with dispatch protocols, Emergency Medical Dispatching, and all radio procedures and usage.
3. Adopt and comply with the CFEMS Standard Operating Procedures, General Orders and Interim Medical Directives.
4. The CFEMS Operational Medical Director (OMD) has primary authority over the EMS system and its providers.
5. The County Chief has overall responsibility for system wide resource management and availability.
 - a. Support of the established Cumberland County Local Fire Suppression Response Plan. During all hours the CVVFD will be able to muster a home response of a suppression crew meeting minimum staffing levels defined in department policy within 5 minutes 70% of the time and within 10 minutes 90% of the time.
6. If in the future CVVFD decides to commence EMS services, CVVFD will do the following in support of the established Cumberland County Local Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Response Plan:
 - a. Work with CFEMS to establish an EMS first response crew, for immediate response, during all other non-staffed hours. The goal should be that the CVVFD will be able to muster a home response of an EMS first response crew within 5 minutes 80% of the time.
 - b. EMS first response may be handled by any apparatus licensed as an EMS non-transport vehicle, posted within the primary response district of CVVFD.
7. The CVVFD is strongly encouraged to fulfill dedicated overall County resource staffing needs and obligations prior to committing to other special events or standby requests.
8. Ensure the operational readiness of all its apparatus and assigned equipment and it is strongly encouraged to standardize equipment with CFEMS partner agencies.
9. Maintain, service, and report for needed repair all equipment and facilities associated with its providing fire suppression and emergency medical services within and on behalf of Cumberland County, Virginia, including;
 - a. Conduct annual hose testing
 - b. Conduct annual testing/ maintenance of dry hydrants location in their primary response area.
 - c. Conduct semi-annual Personal Protective Equipment ensemble inspection for all members
 - d. Conduct annual FIT Testing for all IDLH qualified members.

VII. BENEFITS AND INSURANCE

1. The County will provide Accident and Sickness coverage, Line of Duty Act benefits, and coordinate Line of Duty Death benefits to the Members of CVVFD. Any other benefits offered beyond those benefits provided by Cumberland County are the responsibility of CVVFD.

VIII. AMENDMENTS, DEFAULT, AND TERMINATION

1. This SLA sets forth the entire understanding of the Parties and supersedes any prior agreements, arrangements, and understandings related to the subject matter hereto.
2. This SLA may be modified or amended only with the written mutual agreement of all both Parties, and all amendments shall be attached to this SLA.
3. This SLA will be in default by CVVFD if the CVVFD does not meet its obligations for administrative duties and/or emergency response for a period of ninety (90) consecutive days.
4. The Senior Policy Group consists of the Chief of CFEMS and all Chiefs of the volunteer companies. This Group will initially hear and resolve all cases regarding violations of the SLA at their level. If the Senior Policy Group is unable to do so, they will forward cases with their findings and recommendations to the County Administrator for action at the Board of Supervisors level.
 - a. An emergency response SLA fault will be brought before the CFEMS Senior Policy Group for action.
 - i. Sanction Level I - Perpetual dual dispatch of a secondary or staffed company to cover for response deficiencies.
 - ii. Sanction Level ii - CFEMS will take measurements to ensure safety of citizens which may include; reassignment of CFEMS fleet vehicles, providing volunteer or career staffing for the affected company or at an adjacent company to cover for response deficiencies, or other measures it deems appropriate.
 1. Dissolution of CVVFD - CFEMS may seek the dissolution of CVVFD as a volunteer fire company under Title 27-10 Code of Virginia with the Cumberland County Board of Supervisors;
 2. In order to terminate this agreement, it must be mutually agreed upon with ninety (90) days written notice to the general public.

Signatures:



Date: 7 MAY 2021

Chief, Cartersville Volunteer Fire Department



Date: 7 MAY 2021

Chief, Cumberland Fire and EMS



Date: 6 MAY 2021

County Administrator



Date: 6 MAY 2021

County Attorney