



## **WESTPORT VOLUNTEER EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE**

WVEMS is a volunteer, non-profit charitable organization (tax exempt) responsible for providing volunteer staff for the Town of Westport ambulances. WVEMS also raises funds for all capital purchases (ambulances, defibrillators, radios, etc.), maintenance of the vehicles and equipment, and the purchase of operational supplies for the service. WVEMS was formed in 1979 by Westport Police Inspector Edwin Audley. Prior to that time, the Police Department ran the ambulance with police officers providing medical care. In the beginning, WVEMS had few members and most took the ambulance home with them and responded to calls from home. As the service grew, we were given a small area in the old police headquarters.

WVEMS currently has over 50 members and works out of a three floors headquarters attached to the Westport Police Department Headquarters. WVEMS is managed by its membership. The annual General Membership meeting is held in June every year. Special memberships meetings are called as necessary, but members also gather monthly for an "in service" training. A Board of Directors, elected from the membership, oversees the day to day business of the organization.

## **WEMS and WVEMS**

Westport Emergency Medical Service (WEMS) and Westport Volunteer Emergency Medical Service (WVEMS) are two separate organizations that are so closely related that most people think that they are in fact one organization. We will try and explain the differences between the two though they operate as one team.

## **WEMS**

The Westport Emergency Medical Service (WEMS) is a division of the Westport Police Department under the command of the Chief of Police (Fotios Koskinas). It consists of a Director (Deputy Police Chief David Farell) and seven paid staff members headed by Westport EMS Deputy Director Marc Hartog. All volunteers are working for WEMS while covering an ambulance shift or special event. The paid staff (paid by the Town of Westport) of WEMS cover ambulance shifts and also perform administrative duties. Their assigned administrative duties vary and they hold a variety of titles (training and infection control officer, member relations and safety officer, billing / records / quality assurance officer, supply officer, equipment/vehicle officer).

Currently, there are seven paid staff members:

- Marc Hartog- Westport EMS Deputy Director and Paramedic
- Eric Hebert- Paramedic
- Rick Baumblatt- Paramedic
- Brandon Arias- Paramedic
- James Schwartz- Paramedic



- Todd Laracuenta- Paramedic
- Rob Pocius- EMT.

***You can refer to the WEMS Rules and Regulations document located in the Member Section of [westportems.org](http://westportems.org) for other information about WEMS.***

### **WEMS BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022 - 2023**

The Board of Directors has control over the business and affairs of WVEMS. They authorize all expenditures subject to the WVEMS bylaws. The Board of Directors consists of the corporate officers (President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer) and up to seven elected Directors. Officers and directors are elected by the general membership each June. Please feel free to contact any of them for information or to discuss the affairs of the organization.

The current Board of Directors is as follows:

#### **President: Michael Burns**

The President is the chief executive officer of WVEMS and is in charge of the direction of its affairs. The President's email is [president@westportems.org](mailto:president@westportems.org)

#### **Vice-President: Larry Kleinman**

The Vice-President assumes the responsibilities of President in the absence of the President. The Vice President's email is [vicepresident@westportems.org](mailto:vicepresident@westportems.org)

#### **Treasurer: Stew Reifler**

The Treasurer is responsible for all the WVEMS funds and accounts. The Treasurer's email is [treasurer@westportems.org](mailto:treasurer@westportems.org)

#### **Secretary: Chris Moore**

The Secretary keeps the records of WVEMS and is responsible for general correspondence. The Secretary keeps the minutes of all meetings. The Secretary's email is [secretary@westportems.org](mailto:secretary@westportems.org)

#### **Board of Directors:**

**Andy O'Brien  
Brian Crane  
Josh Rosen**



**Martin Iselin  
Dorrie Harris  
Jon Huzil**

## **MEMBERSHIP**

The following membership categories apply to members of WVEMS. Privileges are granted to persons of each membership category based on their role and volunteer hours. A change in membership category is determined by an action of the Board of Directors.

### **Voting Member**

- A new Voting Member must be cleared from the Clinical Internship Program as a full-duty crew member by WEMS.
- A member not cleared from internship after 6 months remains a Probationary Member (see below) until cleared for full-duty, terminated or allowed an extension of their Probationary Status at the discretion of the Deputy Director of EMS.
- A Voting Member is one who has fulfilled the requirements of the WVEMS Training and Competency Policy.
- A Voting Member is eligible for the uniform allowance program, other member privileges and is covered under the insurance policy.
- A Voting Member may be nominated and, if elected by the General Membership, may after one year of service, hold office and/or serve on the BOD of WVEMS.

### **Non-Voting Member**

- Any member who fails to meet the requirements of the Training and Competency Policy remains an active member, but cannot vote.

### **Probationary Member**

- A Probationary Member is someone who has not been with WVEMS for 6 months, has not served more than an initial 75 hours, or has not yet been cleared from the internship program by WEMS.
- A Probationary Member is a non-voting member of WVEMS, but can attend general membership meetings and is covered under the insurance policy.

### **Honorary Members**

- An Honorary Member is someone outside of the general membership who is designated by an action of the BOD to recognize service and contributions to WVEMS.
- An Honorary member is a non-voting member of WVEMS, may not attend general membership meetings (unless authorized by the President), cannot



serve on the BOD, and cannot hold office (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, etc.) in WVEMS.

#### **TERMINATION:**

The BOD will terminate membership of any member based on the current bylaws of the organization. Termination may be appealed to the executive committee.

#### **RESIGNATIONS:**

Resignations are to be in writing and accompanied by the return of all issued equipment including but not limited to: jackets, rules and regulations manual and radios.

#### **MEETINGS**

##### **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS**

WVEMS holds its annual General Membership Meeting in June and other General Membership Meetings as necessary or required under the bylaws. Business relating to WVEMS is discussed and annual recognition awards are given out. All members of WVEMS are encouraged to attend the meetings and may petition to hold a General Membership Meeting.

##### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS**

The Board of Directors meets virtually on the first Tuesday of every month at 7:00PM or as otherwise directed by the President. All members are encouraged to attend and participate.

##### **MONTHLY IN-SERVICE**

Members are encouraged to attend monthly in-service training sessions held the second Wednesday of every month. Members also receive periodic on line training assignments and have access to a large online training library available through a vendor website. In-service training will count towards EMT recertification CME's.

#### **WVEMS BENEFITS**

##### **ABATEMENT/AWARDS PROGRAM**

- The Town of Westport has a program in its municipal code to reward volunteers in service to Westport. **WVEMS has no control over this policy.**
- As of this writing, members can get either a reduction in their local taxes or a payroll check for their service. That service is defined in the municipal code which can be found at the link below under Tax Exemptions Abatements or Relief.
- WVEMS will submit a list to the town in the spring following a calendar year detailing the service given by its members.



- It is the responsibility of the members to provide correct information and forms in order to receive this benefit.

[https://library.municode.com/ct/westport/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances/?nodetid=PTIICOO RTOWE\\_CH54TA\\_ARTIITAEXABRE\\_DIV3EXVOFIDEWVVOEMMESEWV\\_S54-97BE](https://library.municode.com/ct/westport/codes/code_of_ordinances/?nodetid=PTIICOO RTOWE_CH54TA_ARTIITAEXABRE_DIV3EXVOFIDEWVVOEMMESEWV_S54-97BE)

### **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

WVEMS subscribes to the Public Safety Employee Assistance Program. EAP offers a wide range of confidential counseling and referral services for members experiencing problems ranging from substance abuse to financial difficulties. Members can contact EAP free of charge for up to five counseling sessions. The phone number is 203-234-1035.

### **INSURANCE**

- Each member is responsible to obtain his or her own insurance programs providing protection adequate for their own circumstances. Nevertheless, while on duty, members are covered by the Town of Westport CIRMA (Connecticut Interlocal Risk Management Agency) coverage. This policy provides medical expense coverage (*worker's comp*). Coverage is limited under this policy. Important information such as coverage limits and conditions are available through the Crew Chiefs' Office.
- Some additional insurance is afforded to members under the US Department of Justice Public Safety Officers' Benefits. This is another line of duty death benefit provided by the Government for both paid and volunteer EMS providers. The benefit amount changes every October.

### **BEACH PASSES**

Every voting member of WVEMS is allowed to purchase beach parking stickers for their personal car at the Westport resident prices.

### **Garment Loaners**

- Uniform shirts: Loaner shirts are available for new interns to use on shifts. The shirts are available with a \$100 deposit check made out to Westport Volunteer EMS. Please refer to the BOD Loaner Garment Policy for details.
- COATS: Loaner protective coats in various sizes to wear while working on the ambulance are available for every shift. Members are expected to hang them back up after each shift. Please refer to the BOD Loaner Garment Policy for details.



### **UNIFORM ALLOWANCE POLICY**

WVEMS members are entitled to an annual uniform allowance based on their volunteer hours. The allowance is restricted to purchases of uniform or equipment items necessary to the performance of Westport EMS duties. Members should refer to the BOD Reimbursement Policy for details.

### **SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

WVEMS has a scholarship program for eligible persons. Please refer to the Audley Scholarship Policy for details.

### **TRAINING REIMBURSEMENT**

Reimbursement for some training is available to voting members. Please refer to the Reimbursement Policy for details.

### **SERVICE RECOGNITION**

There is nothing like the satisfaction of helping someone in great need, particularly when this person is experiencing a medical emergency. Nevertheless, the organization maintains a few programs recognizing the invaluable service provided by its volunteers to the community.

The WVEMS Annual Awards are given at our annual meeting to the:

- Volunteer of the Year
- EMT of the Year
- Volunteer Crew Chief of the Year
- Youth Corps Member of the Year.

Years of service pins are given upon reaching 5 years of service milestones. WVEMS is also a certifying organization for the President's Volunteer Service Award. Members are encouraged to submit proof of their citizenship or green card to be considered for this premier volunteer service national recognition program. Finally, the You Make a Difference Program allows members to choose items from a selection of corporate tokens of appreciation based on their service hours accrued.