



**INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM**  
Department of Public Protection  
125 W. New York Ave., Suite 183  
DeLand, FL 32720  
386-740-5120 – FAX 386-740-5283

**TO:** Michael Collins, Lt. Paramedic  
Division of Emergency Medical Services

**DATE:** August 21, 2013

**FROM:** George Recktenwald, Director  
Department of Public Protection

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "GR", enclosed in a circular scribble.

**FILE NO:** DPP13-091

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Dismissal

**REFERENCE:** DPP13-079, NOID

**Purpose:** The purpose of this memorandum is to provide notice of dismissal. This action is the result of your violation of County Policy. This action will be effective on Wednesday, August 21, 2013.

You received my Notice of Intent to Dismiss and Notice of Administrative Leave on Thursday, August 1, 2013. Later that same day you contacted my office requesting a meeting. The appointment to discuss your Notice of Intent to Dismiss was scheduled for Tuesday, August 6, 2013 at 10:30 a.m. and you and I met along with Deputy Director Terry Sanders, Division Director John Zaragoza, Assistant County Attorney Nancy Jones, and your legal representative, Jason Harr, Esquire. I have considered the information provided by you in our meeting. I also scheduled a separate meeting with Charlie Bailey to follow up on your comments made in our meeting and in your fact finding interview. Mr. Bailey corroborated the statement made by Tamara Buczek in regards to your asking to lick her hand as you all left Risk Management from taking the UA test. Therefore, your denial of making the comment during the Human Resources fact finding summary was untrue.

**Background:** On Friday, March 22, 2013, a series of events unfolded wherein Sergeant (Sgt.) Tamara Buczek alleged she was harassed within her workplace. Inclusive in this action were inappropriate comments of an offensive nature uttered by you and directed towards Sgt. Buczek. These comments were subsequently verified not only by Sgt. Buczek but by another EMS/EVAC employee. In addition to your inappropriate behavior, false statements were given by you during the fact finding interviews.

**Information:** On Friday, March 22, 2013, Sgt. Tamara Buczek and Paramedic Charlie Bailey were notified by Lieutenant Paramedic (Lt. PM) Mike Prater that they needed to go to Risk Management for a random Urinalysis (UA). Due to unforeseen circumstances Sgt. Buczek was asked to wait until Risk Management could complete the test. Sgt. Buczek states that she became frustrated from being taken away from her duties. Lt. PM Prater apologized for the inconvenience and offered that you would contact her for further instructions/clarification.

At approximately 12:30 pm, as Sgt. Buczek was exiting the Bank America Building, she encountered HR personnel (Tammy King, and Chandra Gordon), who expedited Sgt. Buczek's test. Upon

*(Continued)*

completion of taking her UA, you asked her to provide you a copy of the results. Sgt. Buczek declined and advised notification/confirmation of the UA will come directly from Risk Management not the employee. She thought that odd that you would ask her for that information.

As Sgt. Buczek, PM Charlie Bailey, and you were leaving Risk Management, Sgt Buczek commented she didn't mind taking the UA, "But it's degrading and I pee on my hand every time." She stated you grabbed her hand and said, "Can I lick it?" and then you attempted to lick her hand. Sgt. Buczek stated she snatched her hand away and said, "Ewww, you are nasty!"

In the fact finding interview, you denied making that statement/action stating, "You would never have said that to anyone. Why would I want to lick her urinated hand?" It was later confirmed with PM Bailey during his interview that Sgt. Buczek made that comment and that you had asked to lick her hand.

Later that same day at approximately 5:00 pm, Sgt. Buczek received a request for her to work an overtime shift that same day beginning at 7:00 pm. Sgt Buczek confirmed her ability to work the shift and advised that she would need time to set up childcare; which was accomplished. After dropping off her son with the babysitter, Sgt Buczek realized she would be late for the 7:00 pm shift and she contacted you and explained she would be about five (5) minutes late and asked not to be written up. Sgt Buczek also advised that she may be late for the March 23, 2013 morning shift due to the long hours working the current shift.

Sgt. Buczek stated that you told her you would have to write her up because she complained to Human Resources about being asked to wait to take her UA. In your fact finding interview you stated that was a false statement and that you never said that. You initially did not remember writing her up but during the interview you later stated that Sgt Buczek called you after 7:00 a.m., which was the start time of her scheduled shift, and she advised you that she had just woken up. You stated you told her you had to complete an Employee Performance Notice (EPN) because she was an hour late and you had to account for an ambulance being out of service.

You were also asked, during the fact finding interview, if you had ever received a call from Mark O'Keefe, the former Operations Manager, telling all Lieutenants not to talk to Sgt. Buczek unless it was work related. You stated you had heard this through the rumor mill that Sgt. Buczek had a complaint against Mark O'Keefe but you did not remember receiving a call from him directly. As the interview continued, you did remember getting a call from Mark O'Keefe about Sgt. Buczek. You stated that he told you not to say anything to Sgt. Buczek unless it was work related.

In summary, the statements that you made related to Sgt. Buczek's UA are vulgar and demeaning.

Your false statements in the fact finding interviews were disconcerting. Veracity is a serious matter in your position and in the patient care field. The accuracy of a supervisor's word must be beyond reproach. Not only is it imperative in your supervisory position as a Lieutenant/Paramedic, it is imperative as a public servant. The public demands – and they deserve – to have ethical, trustworthy, and reliable employees.

*(Continued)*



Actions and behavior such as this will not be tolerated; therefore I am invoking the following:

**Violation:** Your actions have violated the following County of Volusia Merit System Rules and Regulations and HR Bulletins (8), (17):

**Sec. 86-453. Reasons For Disciplinary Action:**

(8)... *dishonest, or other conduct which interferes with effective job performance or has an adverse effect on the efficiency of county service.*

(10) *Incompetent or unsatisfactory performance of duties.*

(12) *Knowingly giving false statements...*

**HR Bulletin 17: Conduct Reminders:** Providing Altered/False Documentation and/or Information, Inappropriate Conduct On or Off Duty, Sexual Harassment/No Harassment

**Conclusion:** As a senior member (Lieutenant) of EVAC's management team you have an obligation to govern yourself in such a manner that would show leadership and be an example to other employees. Accordingly, and based on a close review of the events surrounding your actions on Friday, March 22, 2013, that you were untruthful during your fact finding interview on May 10, 2013 and in your meeting with me on August 6, 2013, I am issuing this letter of dismissal. This action will be effective on Wednesday, August 21, 2013.

**Action:** In accordance with section 86-485 of the Merit System Rules and Regulations you have ten (10) working days from receipt of this notification (or effective date of the dismissal) to appeal this action through the County Personnel Board. Should you decide to exercise your right to appeal, submit you written request to the County Human Resources Office, 230 N. Woodland Blvd., Suite 262, DeLand, FL. 32720.

Dismissals that are appealed are considered non-final administrative action. If you file a notice of appeal, you will be placed in a leave of absence without pay, pending the final decision of the County Manager at the conclusion of the appeal process.

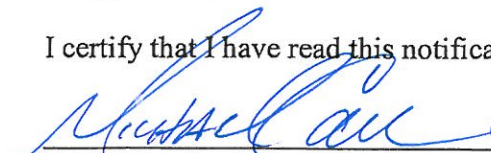
If you do not file your appeal by the time indicated, it will be assumed that you have waived this right.

***Pursuant to Volusia County Merit System Rule Section 86-455, the Volusia County Legal Department and Human Resource Director have reviewed and concur with this action.***

GR/tab

cc: \_\_\_\_\_ Terry Sanders, Deputy Director of Public Protection      \_\_\_\_\_ Tom Motes, Human Resource Director  
      \_\_\_\_\_ John Zaragoza, Director, Division of EMS                      \_\_\_\_\_ Tammy King, EEO Coordinator  
      \_\_\_\_\_ Nancye Jones, Assistance County Attorney

I certify that I have read this notification and acknowledge receipt of the original copy.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature (Or Witness, if Employee Refuses to sign)

8.21.13  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date of Signature)

