



OLD DOMINION EMS ALLIANCE

SERVING PLANNING DISTRICTS 13, 14, 15, & 19



The Art of Writing an Outstanding EMS Award Nomination



A How-to Guide for Writing an Informative and Persuasive Regional EMS Award Nomination

REVISED AUGUST 18, 2026



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What Are the Regional EMS Awards?

Do you know a provider, organization, or program that should be recognized for its excellence, dedication, and contribution to Virginia's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system? Anyone can nominate a person or organization for a regional award. Let us help you nominate someone today!

The Old Dominion EMS Alliance administers the OEMS Region 6 Regional EMS Awards program in cooperation with the Virginia Office of Emergency Medical Services. Each of Virginia's seven Regional EMS Councils conducts its awards program in its respective region by soliciting nominations.

There are a total of 8 Regional EMS Awards that can be awarded in each region, along with a \$1,000 scholarship that is awarded to a High School Senior or GED Recipient in the region. Each regional EMS council decides the start and end dates of its nomination period. In most circumstances, nominations are accepted after OEMS has confirmed

that the state nomination form has been updated.

Once the nomination period has closed, nominations are compiled and reviewed by a committee of previous award winners.

Winners are announced at the OEMS Region 6 Awards Ceremony either at a physical venue or virtually, with a press release sent to all news outlets in the region.

Following the presentation, regional nominations are revised as needed. Each regional winner is then nominated by their EMS Council for the same award category as a nominee for the Governor's EMS Awards. The Governor's EMS Awards Selection Committee reviews the nominations and forwards its recommendations for the award winners to the Governor's Office.

The Regional and Governor's EMS Awards provide much-needed recognition to the Region and State's EMS providers and agencies.





Regional and Governor's EMS Award Categories

- Excellence in Emergency Medical Services
- Outstanding EMS Prehospital Provider
- Physician with Outstanding Contribution to EMS
- Outstanding EMS Prehospital Educator
- Outstanding EMS Agency
- Outstanding EMS Leadership
- Outstanding EMS Telecommunicator
- Outstanding Contribution to EMS for Children
- Outstanding Contribution by a High School Senior or GED Recipient (Scholarship)



To learn about each award category, including the criteria and eligibility, scan the QR code or visit:

<https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/emergency-medical-services/governors-ems-awards-program/11-ems-award-categories-and-a-scholarship/>

Governor's EMS Awards

- Only regional winners will be judged at the state level in the Governor's EMS Awards program.
- The Governor's EMS Awards Selection Committee will review the first-place winners in each of the seven Regional EMS Councils' competitions. Winners selected at the state level will be forwarded with the Committee's recommendations to the Governor.
- Governor's award nominees become ineligible to receive the Governor's EMS Award if they have won in the same category within the last five years.
- If the applicants in an award category fail to meet the required criteria, then the Nomination Committee can omit the selection of a winner for that category. If a nominee is better suited in another award category, the Regional EMS Council is responsible for making that change before submitting it to the Committee.



Guidelines for EMS Awards

- Anyone may submit nominations for the Regional EMS Awards.
- Nominations for the Governor's EMS Awards MUST be submitted through the Regional Awards Program. Failure to do so will render the nomination invalid and it will not be presented to the Governor's EMS Awards Selection Committee.
- For all categories the nomination may be based on a pattern of conduct/activities that has culminated in an exceptional improvement of the emergency medical services system in the locality, region or state. The nomination may also be based on a single unusual event that was beyond ordinary duty.
- Using the official Nomination Form on the Regional EMS Council webpage, nominations can be submitted electronically or typed on the Nomination Form and mailed to the Regional EMS Council. Hand-written nominations will NOT be accepted.
- The person making the nomination should have extensive knowledge of the nominee's qualifications and carefully select the category that most appropriately matches the nominee's accomplishments.
- The nominee must have current licensure or certification in the category in which he or she has been nominated.
- Nominees must meet all criteria listed as listed on the nomination form.
- One letter of recommendation and a maximum of two additional attachments, which can include a resume or CV, newspaper/periodical articles, or other materials, may be included with the nomination form.
 - Please note: Only three attachments in total will be accepted.





How do I write a compelling nomination?

The key to a well-written nomination is providing the committee members with specific information illustrating how the individual's or group's achievements have had a positive impact on the locality, regional, state, and/or national EMS system.

For your nomination to stand out against many other submissions, you must explain and include evidence and clear examples of what makes your nominee so exceptional. Below is a recommended format for writing a quality Regional EMS Award nomination. Your nomination's summary should be written in 3 parts: **Opening Statement, Supporting Statement, and Closing Statement.**

Opening Statement:

Start with a clear, direct, and specific statement of why the nominee deserves recognition. Include enough information for the committee to become familiar with the nominee's specific challenges faced, actions taken, and results or goals met. List the most important information in the first few sentences and then elaborate as necessary.

Supporting Statements:

Support the opening statement with specific examples that address the award criteria and elaborate on why the nominee's accomplishments are worthy of the award. These examples should include outcomes, results, and/or activities where they have gone above and beyond. Include qualities that make this nominee outstanding and relevant to the award criteria. Consider including the following evidence to answer the who, what, when, where, and why in your supporting statements:

- **WHAT did the nominee do?**
 - Projects and/or activities above the nominee's job description
 - Any challenges or issues encountered and overcome
- **HOW did they do it?**
 - Initiative and/or leadership
 - Teamwork
 - Creativity and/or innovation
 - Behaviors and/or attitudes



- **WHAT were the results and/or impact?**
 - What did the nominee's efforts accomplish?
 - Are there specific benefits that were derived from their efforts?

Closing Statement:

Describe how others regard the nominee (e.g., a recognized expert, progressive leader, or exceptionally innovative program). Consider mentioning related awards and/or the nominee's other education, community, efforts, etc.

Additional Suggestions

Verify all information in the nomination.

- Nominations should be checked carefully to verify that all information submitted is accurate.
- Ensure that all acronyms are spelled out and correctly defined, except for common acronyms.

Keep it simple

- Remember that longer doesn't necessarily mean better. When presenting your nominee, keep your explanations clear and to the point while ensuring there is enough information for the awards committee to make their decision.

Use bullet points

- When listing your nominee's pertinent accomplishments, certifications, etc., you should use bulleted lists rather than narratives when possible. The use of a bulleted list allows you to highlight key items in a logical and concise approach. Those that read your nomination will find it easier to digest the information quicker and possibly increase the chances of being selected.

Address each criteria for the award

- Sometimes several sentences describe this, and you must pick out the key ideas/criteria yourself. Group your ideas about your nominee under these key criteria headings so you don't miss mentioning one of them. The committee reading your nomination may have a scoring matrix that matches these criteria, so if the nomination package doesn't mention one, your nominee's chance of winning could be decreased.



Use the language the award uses

- If one criteria is “*leadership qualities*,” for example, say, “*Joe Smith’s leadership qualities include the following . . .*” instead of just saying, “*Joe Smith has great organizational skills, is a good motivator, and . . .*” Also avoid generalities like “*He’s a hard worker*”, “*He goes above and beyond his job duties*”.

Communicate sincerity and personal commitment.

- Show that you personally value the contributions of your nominee. Write your nomination from the heart, and provide as much specific information as you can.

You're not alone. Invite input from colleagues and co-workers

- Get supporting statements from colleagues, administration, students, and others that know the nominee. These can help create a unique picture of your nominee and provide detailed examples you don’t know about. Also, it spreads out the workload. These people can take a few minutes to write a short story or a few sentences providing details about the nominee's efforts. Some of these may help you write the nomination or be used as a letter of support when compiling your supporting documents.

Proofread your writing!

Some rules to follow:

- Write your nomination before you are ready to start the online submission
 - We recommend writing the nomination in a word processing application
 - Use additional proofing services such as Grammarly
- Avoid the use of too many pronouns and run-on sentences
- Check for grammatical errors and misspellings (ex: two/to/too OR your/you're)
- Have colleagues review the nomination for thoroughness and accuracy before submitting it.

What shouldn’t I do?

The Awards Committee evaluate nominees’ merits based on the information provided to them. That is why only the strongest and most compelling nominations result in an award both at the regional and state level.



The nomination package must contain enough convincing information to make a good case. Therefore, your supporting documents should support your nomination by referring the reader to them.

Unless directly relevant to the specific award, your written nomination SHOULD NOT include the bulleted items listed below. You may want to include these items as supporting documents and, when necessary, highlight particularly relevant items by directing the reader to a specific section(s) of supporting documents.

- an extended CV or resume
- a full list of educational achievements or transcripts
- a full list of appointments, awards, or posts
- a job description showing what the person has been hired to do

Because weaker nominations often list these things, a regular note from the committee is that the nominee was “simply doing their job” or “nothing exceptional was demonstrated.”

Instead, you should describe what is outstanding about your nominee’s achievements and show memorably and persuasively how and where they have made a difference.

Using AI Tools

Using AI tools like ChatGPT or Claude to help draft or polish your nomination is not cheating — many strong writers use them as a starting point. However:

- You are responsible for the accuracy of everything you submit, regardless of how it was drafted.
- Verify every fact, date, and accomplishment an AI tool generates — don't take its output at face value.
- AI can overstate accomplishments or "hallucinate" details that never happened.
- Proofread the final version yourself before submitting, and never submit anything you haven't personally confirmed is true.

Ready to nominate?

If you are ready to nominate someone:

- Visit: odemsa.net/ems-awards/
- Complete the nomination worksheet and checklist.
- Gather the needed documents to upload.
- Read the instructions carefully.
- Submit your nomination package using the online submission form by the deadline.

Detailed instructions for submitting your nomination can be found on the council's website.

AN INTEGRAL PART OF VIRGINIA'S COMPREHENSIVE
EMS SYSTEM SERVING TO ASSESS, IDENTIFY,
COORDINATE, PLAN AND IMPLEMENT AN EFFECTIVE
AND EFFICIENT REGIONAL EMS SYSTEM.



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