



# THE NATIONAL EMS MEMORIAL BIKE RIDE, INC.

5010 E Trindle Rd, Suite 202

Mechanicsburg PA 17050

nemsmbr.org

## **Retiring of the "Winged Rider" Logo and the Term "Muddy Angel"**

### **Introduction**

The National EMS Memorial Bike Ride (NEMSMBR) was founded with the mission to honor Emergency Medical Services (EMS) professionals who have died in the line of duty and to celebrate the lives, contributions, and ongoing service of EMS providers nationwide. Since its founding over two decades ago, the organization has grown into a national movement with multiple routes, an expanding network of riders and supporters, and a deepened commitment to remembrance and inclusivity. A relationship with the National EMS Memorial Service and the National EMS Memorial Foundation has flourished and strengthened.

As part of the organization's reflection and evolution, the National EMS Memorial Bike Ride Board of Directors intentionally decided to no longer use the "Winged Rider" logo or refer to participants as "Muddy Angels."

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### **Background**

The "Winged Rider" logo and the term "Muddy Angel" were both introduced during the early years of the NEMSMBR. The logo featured a bicyclist with wings, which many believed represented a fallen EMS provider whose spirit rides alongside participants. Others have interpreted this to symbolize that the riders are angels aiding the fallen.

The term "Muddy Angel" was a nickname affectionately used to refer to the riders, due to a series of days in which the participating cyclists experienced rainy conditions. While both the logo and moniker were created with sincere intent and deep respect, the organization has evolved and the goals have matured. The decision to retire the "Winged Rider" logo and the term "Muddy Angel" was not made lightly or quickly, and is the result of significant discussion and reflection.

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### **Rationale for the Change**

#### **1. Respectful and Inclusive Language**

The language we use to describe the fallen should reflect the seriousness of their sacrifice and the broad diversity of individuals we honor. The term "Muddy Angel," though once a meaningful tribute, has increasingly been perceived as informal and inconsistent with the gravity and dignity of honoring fallen



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EMS clinicians. It does not resonate with all families, departments, or cultural contexts. It is our responsibility to ensure that our language reflects respect and care inclusively.

## 2. **Visual and Brand Consistency**

The “Winged Rider” logo — while iconic in the past — no longer represents the visual direction of the organization. As we continue to grow and unify our imprint across multiple regions and platforms, the shift toward a more modern, versatile brand ensures our message remains accessible and professional.

## 3. **Alignment with Memorial Standards**

As a partner organization in the broader network of EMS remembrance—including the National EMS Memorial Foundation and the National EMS Memorial Service—it is important that our branding and language align with standards for memorial activities. This alignment increases our credibility, consistency, and impact. The design of a modular logo that can be shared by EMS memorial partners is desired.

## 4. **Intellectual Property Concerns**

NEMSMBR did not receive ownership of the “Winged Rider” artwork, and as such was unable to ensure that its future use would be adequately controlled and monitored to maintain its integrity and protect the reputation of NEMSMBR.

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## **Looking Forward**

The National EMS Memorial Bike Ride remains firmly committed to our evolving purpose: to honor the service and commitment of EMS professionals. While symbols and terms may evolve, our core mission remains steadfast.

We continue to hold space for personal stories, traditions, and memories—but we do so with respect, professionalism, and unity. We believe these changes strengthen our ability to honor the fallen with the dignity they deserve.

For the Board of Directors

Ed Moreland, NRP, FACPE, CEMSO, CAFO  
President