



AGENDA MEMO
6/4/2019 Agenda

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Council

FROM: Randy Howell

SUBJECT: Ambulance (MICU) Service Fee Schedule Update

BACKGROUND:

The current base fee structure for delivery of emergency medical services has been in place since 2011 with minor revisions in 2013. Adoption of these changes would update our fee schedule to more accurately reflect current regional provider comparison, offset the increase in related expenses and remain in compliance with Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)/Medicare EMS billing standards.

The following is a brief summary of recommended changes:

- Increase mileage fee from \$9.00 to \$24.00 per mile traveled during transport.
- Increase current Basic Life Support (BLS) resident transport fee of \$800 to \$1,050 and increase current BLS supplies fee of \$200 to \$300. This would include assistance provided not requiring advanced skills or intervention. Examples would include bandages, splints, cold packs, etc.
- Increase current Advanced Life Support (ALS1) resident transport fee of \$800 to \$1,250 and increase of current ALS supplies fee of \$300 to \$400. This would include assistance provided requiring advanced life support (ALS) assessment or at least one ALS intervention. Examples include cardiac monitoring or IV access.
- Increase current Advanced Life Support (ALS2) resident transport fee of \$800 to \$1,350 and increase of current ALS supplies fee of \$300 to \$400. This would include assistance provided requiring (1) at least three separate administrations of one or more medications by IV push /bolus or by continuous infusion or (2) at least one of the following ALS2 procedures; manual defibrillation/cardioversion, endotracheal intubation, cardiac pacing, chest decompression, placement of a surgical airway, or initiation of an intraosseous line.
- Oxygen administration increased from \$50.00 to \$119.00.

Note:

Non-resident transport fee of an additional \$100 will remain intact.

The base fee of \$200.00 will remain intact and will be charged to all patients who are not transported to a hospital but on whom medical supplies and/or drugs are used.

PROPOSED DELETION:

The current fee schedule also includes a charge to be assessed for services provided by UPFD paramedics to an incapacitated resident. The schedule states:

A fee will be charged to any incapacitated citizen needing assistance from a paramedic in accomplishing physical movements, such as exiting and entering automobiles or movement within a residence, if such assistance is not needed in connection with an immediate medical condition and does not constitute an emergency in the judgment of the paramedic at the scene. The first such call in a calendar quarter will be at no cost to the citizen. The second and subsequent calls in the same calendar quarter for the same citizen will result in a fee being charged to the citizen in the amount of \$32.00 per call. This fee will be in addition to any other fee authorized by this section.

I am proposing that this wording and related charge be removed from the schedule for the following reasons:

- (1) It is administratively difficult to consistently track and ensure that fees being assessed are in compliance with the schedule.
- (2) In review of past requests for service, the need for assistance of this nature has not been used to excess by our residents. In 2018 UPFD responded to 62 invalid assist calls with 11 being requested at the same address.
- (3) I would prefer to offer this service to our residents as a gesture of good will without the need to assess a fee. The focus should be on providing 24hr. immediate assistance when needed with the intention of making sure the resident receives the support necessary to identify a long-term solution if appropriate.

Proposed Fee Schedule

Sec. A4.003 Ambulance (MICU) service

The Fire Department shall provide emergency ambulance service within the City. The Fire Department may provide for emergency ambulance service by using City ambulances, apparatus or equipment, or through an inter-local agreement with another governmental entity. In a catastrophe, the Fire Department may provide emergency ambulance service through the use of the ambulances, apparatus or equipment of another governmental entity, with or without an inter-local agreement, or through the use of private ambulance providers, as determined necessary by the Fire Chief.

The following fees shall be charged for transport by emergency ambulance to a hospital or other approved location for the provision of emergency medical aid within the boundaries of Dallas County:

- (a) A base fee shall be charged per trip per person for transportation by the Mobile Intensive Care Unit (MICU) to a hospital providing emergency medical attention. The related fee shall be as follows: Basic Life Support resident fee of \$1,050.00, Advanced Life Support (ALS1) resident fee of \$1,250 and Advanced Life Support (ALS2) resident fee of \$1,350. An additional fee of \$100.00 will be charged for nonresidents. In all cases, whether one person or more than one

person is transported in the same MICU, the appropriate charge per trip applies to each individual transported.

(b) Additional fees will be charged for each emergency medical aid provided to the person or persons transported including, but not limited to, drugs, syringes, bandaging, oxygen, airways, intravenous fluids, electrocardiogram (EKG), etc. The charge for these items shall be as follows: BLS supplies \$300.00, ALS1/ALS2 supplies \$400.00, and oxygen administration \$119.00.

(c) Each patient transported will be charged a mileage fee from the point of patient loading to the hospital destination. The mileage fee shall be \$24.00 per mile. The appropriate receiving facility will be determined by paramedics based on the patient's best interest.

(d) A base fee of \$200.00 will be charged to all patients who are not transported to a hospital but on whom care is rendered and medical supplies and/or drugs are used.

Charge rates for MICU and paramedic medical services provided at events apart from customary 911 emergency response will be determined and assessed at the discretion of the Fire Chief.

The person receiving emergency ambulance service, whether transported by ambulance or treated without being transported by ambulance and any person contracting for the service shall be responsible for payment of all fees except as otherwise provided. In the case of service received by a minor, the parent or guardian of the minor shall be responsible for payment of all fees.