

SUBJECT:
EMS Rate Increase.

MEETING DATE:
March 7, 2023

SUBMITTED BY:
Amanda Postelle

SUGGESTED ACTION:

Consider an adjustment in the rates currently charged by Cherokee County Fire & Emergency Services for ambulance transports.

FACTS AND ISSUES:

Cherokee County's EMS Department receives revenue from ambulance transportation services. The fees charged for ambulance services are based on the severity of illness/injury, services required, and medicine administered. Cherokee County EMS has not had a change in fee schedule since 2013.

Approximately 60% of the transports billed are through Medicare or Medicaid and the remaining 40% are through commercial insurance or are private pay. Since Medicare and Medicaid pay a fixed rate based on the type of transport, a fee increase would impact commercial insurance carriers and private pay individuals. For ALS2 transports, Cherokee County EMS's rate is \$93.80 less than Medicare's reimbursement rate. At the least, Cherokee County should not be billing less than Medicare rates.

The current rates are as follows:

BLS1 - Emergency (resident & non-resident):	\$500
ALS1 - Emergency (resident & non-resident):	\$600
ALS2 - Emergency (resident & non-resident):	\$650
Milage Reimbursement:	\$11 per mile

Cherokee County EMS proposes the following rates:

BLS1 - Emergency (resident & non-resident):	\$800
ALS1 - Emergency (resident & non-resident):	\$900
ALS2 - Emergency (resident & non-resident):	\$1,500
Milage Reimbursement:	\$15 per mile

Comparing Cherokee County's proposed rates to surrounding agencies (both Fire & EMS and private ambulance services) the average rates are as follows:

BLS1 - Emergency (resident & non-resident):	\$938.33
ALS1 - Emergency (resident & non-resident):	\$1,022.00
ALS2 - Emergency (resident & non-resident):	\$1,112.07
Milage Reimbursement:	\$15.32 per mile

Counties included in the rate comparisons: Cobb, Bartow, Paulding, Hall, Gilmer, Pickens, Dawson,

Lumpkin, Habersham, Gwinnett, Henry, and Clayton counties. Grady, Puckett and Metro are included as private services responding in Cobb, Bartow and Paulding counties.

The proposed new rates are below the average of comparable surrounding EMS providers with the exception of ALS2 transports. ALS2 transports are the most critical transports, requiring advanced life saving measures and costs the County over \$1,000 in medicine and supplies for each transport. ALS2 transports require a Paramedic and account for less than 14% of the commercial and private pay transports billed in 2022.

The revenue generated by the increase in rates will go to offset Squad Pay when ARPA funding is no longer available.

ATTACHMENTS:

[EMS Rates 3.7.23 BOC \(002\).pdf](#)