

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our Guiding Principles govern our strong commitment to all Fairfax County residents and visitors.

Ability to pay will never be considered when providing service. No one will suffer financial hardship as a result of an emergency medical transport. The system of providing emergency medical services in Fairfax County will be caring and compassionate. The Department will provide the highest quality care possible. EMS transport services billing will never diminish the way care is provided by county EMS providers.



## MISSION AND VALUES

### MISSION

The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department provides the highest quality services to protect the lives, property, and environment of our community.

### VISION

The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department is dedicated to being a premier community-focused fire and rescue department ensuring a safe environment for everyone.

Dear Fairfax County Resident or Visitor,

Using a “service first” philosophy, the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department strives to provide the best emergency medical service to Fairfax County. The people, training, equipment, and professionalism of this department enable us to provide around-the-clock, quality emergency medical care.

Since implementing the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) transport billing program in 2005, we have continued to assure residents and visitors that *no one will ever be denied service because of ability to pay or for lack of health insurance*. When someone needs emergency assistance, we want them to call 911 without hesitation.

Our billing program is based on concern for the medical and financial health of our county residents. This program is designed to minimize out-of-pocket costs for county residents. We are proud and committed to serving the residents and visitors of Fairfax County.

Respectfully,


*The Men and Women of the Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department*

This information is provided in alternative formats, such as large print and braille. Please direct your request to Public Affairs and Life Safety Education at 703-246-3801; TTY 711. Please allow ten days to process your request.

### FOR QUESTIONS OR MORE INFORMATION

 (703) 246-2266; TTY 711

 [fire.EMSTransportBilling@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:fire.EMSTransportBilling@fairfaxcounty.gov)

 [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire-ems/emergency-medical-services-transport-billing](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fire-ems/emergency-medical-services-transport-billing)



## Transport Billing

# EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

*“service first”*



Fairfax County Fire  
and Rescue  
Department

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### When did Fairfax County implement EMS billing?

Fairfax County has been billing for EMS transports since April 1, 2005.

### Where do these funds go and how is charging for emergency medical transport authorized?

Nationally, it is estimated that over 70% of jurisdictions charge for ambulance transport services, including most Washington Metropolitan area jurisdictions. Funds received from EMS billing are placed into Fairfax County's General Fund to assist with the cost of providing emergency medical services. Effective April 1, 2005, Section 4-26-1 to the Code of the County of Fairfax established a fee schedule for EMS transports provided by vehicles operated or maintained by Fairfax County or permitted to Fairfax County. Section 32.1-111.14 of the Code of Virginia authorizes counties to make reasonable charges for the use of EMS vehicles within their jurisdictions.

### How does EMS transport billing work?

Fairfax County contracts with an outside company to handle EMS transport billing, coding, and processing. After patient care is provided, insurance information is obtained for those treated and transported. The hospital often provides this information. Additionally, all patients receive an initial statement from the billing company that includes a request for additional health insurance information. After all insurance payments are applied, **Fairfax County waives co-payments and deductibles for county residents.** For uninsured county residents, Fairfax County has a compassionate billing policy.

### How is my privacy protected?

All Department personnel are trained on patient privacy Health Insurance Portability and

Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements and strictly adhere to those standards.

### What are the charges for emergency medical transport services?

- \$500 for Basic Life Support (BLS) transport
- \$650 for Advanced Life Support, level 1 (ALS1) transport, (serious medical problems or traumatic injury)
- \$800 for Advanced Life Support, level 2 (ALS2) transport, (cardiac arrest)
- \$12 per mile, from pick-up point to the hospital for ground transport

All EMS charges are approved by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Only fire and rescue personnel are dispatched for emergency medical services. The county does not use any private ambulance companies for 911 calls.

### If the co-payment for EMS transport is being waived, will there be any out-of-pocket expenses incurred?

For county residents, the Department accepts health insurance payments as payment in full. There are no additional charges for EMS transport for county residents who have health insurance, Medicare, or Medicaid.

### If I don't have health insurance and cannot pay my bill what options do I have?

Patients who do not have health insurance can

request a hardship waiver form by calling the county's billing service at 1-877-874-4425. The county may waive the transport charge for financial hardship based on guidelines approved by the Board of Supervisors.

**Will visitors or non-county residents be charged a co-payment?** Yes, only county residents' co-payments and deductibles are waived.

### What if my insurance company will not cover my ambulance transport bill?

The county's billing service will attempt to gain all information required to show the medical necessity of the transport. If the claim is rejected by the insurance company the Department will consider the charge uncollectible for county residents.

### I receive requests from county volunteer fire departments (VFDs) for donations. Does this replace volunteer funding?

No. Money collected from EMS billing goes directly into the county's General Fund. The VFDs receive financial support from the county for some capital assets. The majority of VFD capital and operating expenses are covered by donations received from the community.

### Who do I call if I have a billing or insurance problem?

The billing company has customer service representatives to address billing and insurance questions. They can be reached at 1-877-874-4425, Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 7:00pm. If you are not satisfied, please contact the Fire and Rescue Department Patient Advocate at (703) 246-2266.

