

**K**  
**EMS Fund –**  
**Fire Department**

AGENDA ITEM NO. **5(K)**

**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO**  
**INTERDEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM**  
**FIRE DEPARTMENT**

**TO:** Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** Robert Ojeda, Fire Chief

**THROUGH:** Terry M. Brechtel, City Manager

**COPIES:** J. Rolando Bono, Deputy City Manager; File

**SUBJECT:** Modifying the EMS Transport Fee Rate Schedule

**DATE:** September 18, 2003

**SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This ordinance authorizes the San Antonio Emergency Medical Service (SAEMS) to change the rate structure for its ambulance transport fee associated with the transport of a patient.

Staff recommends approval.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

SAEMS proposes to create a Basic Life Support (BLS) Transport fee of \$350 and increase the current Advanced Life Support (ALS) level 1 Transport Fee of \$350 to \$375 per transport. The addition of a BLS rate is consistent with recently changed Medicare Ambulance Fee Schedule, which established three categories for transports, BLS, ALS 1, and ALS 2.

Basic life support (BLS) is utilized when the patient is transported by ground ambulance and the provision of medical noninvasive emergency lifesaving care is provided. Advanced Life Support, level 1, (ALS 1) is utilized when the patient is transported by a ground ambulance vehicle, medical supplies and services and either an ALS assessment by ALS personnel or the provision of at least one ALS intervention. Advanced Life Support Level 2 (ALS 2) is utilized when a patient is transported by ground ambulance, medical supplies and services, and the administration of at least three medication by intravenous push/bolus or by continuous infusion excluding crystalloid, hypotonic, isotonic, and hyper tonic solutions; or transportation, medically necessary supplies and services, and the provision of at least one of the following ALS procedures: manual defibrillation/cardioversion, endotracheal intubation, central venous line, cardiac pacing, chest decompression, surgical airway, or intraosseous line. The increase to ALS 1 transport fee will help to cover the increase to personnel and other operating costs, which have risen since the last change to the transport fee in October 2002. Thus, it has become necessary to adjust the rate structure for the ambulance transport fee.

**POLICY ANALYSIS**

The proposed ordinance continues existing City policy of requiring users of City services to offset some of the costs associated with operating and maintaining those services.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

The proposed EMS BLS transport fee and the increase to the ALS 1 transport fee would provide an additional \$196,776.00 in revenue to the Special Revenue Fund 29 for FY 2003.

**COORDINATION**

This ordinance has been coordinated with the Office of Management and Budget and the City Attorney's Office.

**SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS**

SAEMS has one of the lowest overall ambulance transport rate structures when compared to other major cities in Texas (Houston, Dallas, Austin, Corpus Christi, and El Paso).



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Robert Ojeda  
Fire Chief



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J. Rolando Bono  
Deputy City Manager

APPROVED:



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Terry M. Brechtel  
City Manager