

**FLAGLER COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
CONSENT / AGENDA ITEM # 7e**

SUBJECT: Consideration of a Resolution Increasing Emergency Medical Services User Fees.

DATE OF MEETING: June 4, 2018

OVERVIEW/SUMMARY: Staff is seeking Board approval to increase the Emergency Medical Services User Fees. Flagler County has been providing countywide emergency medical services and transport to residents and visitors since the 1970's. Florida State Statute, along with prior litigation provided a movement many years ago allowing EMS transport agencies to bill their users. With the ever-increasing cost of providing service, it is customary for providers to reevaluate user fee rates charged every few years. It has been over ten (10) years since Flagler County Fire Rescue (FCFR) conducted an EMS transport user fee rate comparison to other area fire rescue or EMS agencies. Based on the comparison in 2007, the Board approved a user fee rate increase which raised the County's rates slightly to align better with the other agencies. Fire Rescue staff recently performed a rate comparison using eleven (11) of the surrounding counties that are providing similar services (Attachment 2). The table below provides the proposed changes to the user fee rates for emergency medical services and transport based on the previous methodology used by taking the average charges for services when compared to other providers.

DESCRIPTION	CURRENT USER FEE RATES 2007	PROPOSED USER FEE RATES	% INCREASE
ALS1 Emergency	\$465.00	\$690.00	48%
ALS1 Non-Emergency	\$450.00	\$590.00	31%
ALS2 Emergency	\$630.00	\$781.32	24%
BLS Emergency	\$400.00	\$584.40	46%
BLS Non-Emergency	\$400.00	\$550.00	38%
Loaded Miles	\$ 9.50	\$ 11.00	16%
Helicopter	\$4,700.00	\$9,700.00	106%
Helicopter Mileage	\$ 75.00	\$101.00	35%
Back Board Out Of County	\$150.00	\$250.00	67%
Ked Out Of County	\$150.00	\$250.00	67%
Traction Splint	\$150.00	\$250.00	67%
Vehicle Extrication	\$250.00	\$400.00	60%

Staff is seeking approval to increase the amount charged during emergency medical transports at all levels. The attached resolution provides further information to support this request.

FUNDING INFORMATION: N/A

DEPT., CONTACT, PHONE: Fire Rescue Chief, Don Petito (386) 313-4255

RECOMMENDATION: Request the Board approve the resolution increasing rates for EMS transport services.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution
2. Memo to Administration

Craig M. Coffey

Craig M. Coffey, County Administrator

12 June 2018

Date

RESOLUTION 2018 – _____

A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONER OF FLAGLER COUNTY, FLORIDA AMENDING AND SETTING FEES FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES USER FEES FOR COUNTYWIDE EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AND TRANSPORT PROVIDED BY FLAGLER COUNTY FIRE RESCUE; AND ESTABLISHING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

WHEREAS, Chapter 191 Florida Statutes, authorizes counties to provide a reasonable schedule of charges for emergency services; and

WHEREAS, the County evaluates the rates charged for Emergency Medical Service (EMS) transport service every several years to ensure the rates keep pace with the increasing costs of providing the service; and

WHEREAS, Flagler County Fire Rescue (FCFR) assesses whether its fees keep up with the cost of service by comparing its rates with other fire rescue or EMS agencies within the region; and

WHEREAS, FCFR last compared EMS transport rates with other area fire rescue or EMS agencies in 2010, and in 2011, the County raised rates slightly to a level comparable with other agencies at that time; and

WHEREAS, FCFR staff recently performed a comparison of EMS transport rates with eight counties within our general region that provide similar services; and

WHEREAS, the County wishes to raise the rates for EMS transport services to bring them up to date and more in line with the average rates of other counties within the region.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved by the Board of County Commissioners of Flagler County, Florida:

Section I. Definitions.

- A.) Basic Life Support (BLS).** BLS calls originate via the E911 system. BLS transports with a County owned ambulance may involve variable use of a backboard, bandaging, and supportive care provided by the firefighter/paramedics of the County. BLS does not include the administration of medication.
- B.) BLS Emergency.** FCFR transports of a patient in a County owned ambulance using BLS services.

- C.) **BLS Non-Emergency.** FCFR transports of a patient in a County owned ambulance from one hospital to another hospital or other health care facility using BLS services.
- D.) **Advanced Life Support One (ALS1) Emergency.** ALS1 Emergency calls originate via the E911 system. ALS1 transports with a County owned ambulance using ALS1 techniques such as the administration of oxygen, EKG and IV by firefighters/paramedics of the County. However, no medication is administered.
- E.) **ALS1 Non-Emergency** calls include the same life saving techniques during transport in a County owned ambulance, but involve transporting a patient from one hospital to another hospital using ALS provided by the originating hospital.
- F.) **ALS2 Emergency.** FCFR transports of a patient in a County owned ambulance using ALS techniques such as the administration of oxygen, EKG, IV, and also the administration of medications by firefighters/paramedics of the County.
- G.) **Loaded Miles.** A charge added to all EMS transports which takes into account the miles traveled by the ambulance from the scene of the emergency to the hospital or from one hospital to another hospital or healthcare facility.
- H.) **Air Transport.** Involves transport to a hospital in the County owned helicopter using ALS.

Section II. Results of FCFR’s County Study.

A.) **Table of Rates for Nine Counties Including Flagler.** FCFR compiled the current EMS transport charges for each of the counties surveyed (including Flagler County), which are listed in the following table.

County	Mileage	BLS	ALS1	ALS2	Treat and No Tx
Alachua	\$11.00	\$382.00	\$458.00	\$647.00	\$128.00
Brevard	\$11.75	\$503.72	\$553.14	\$647.85	\$35.00
Clay	\$12.00	\$600.00	\$650.00	\$750.00	
Flagler	\$ 9.50	\$400.00	\$450.00	\$630.00	
Marion	\$10.16	\$452.00	\$536.00	\$703.00	
Nassau	\$10.50	\$500.00	\$700.00	\$800.00	
Putnam	\$11.10	\$375.00	\$450.00	\$625.00	
St. Johns	\$ 9.00	\$400.00	\$500.00	\$600.00	
Volusia	\$11.00	\$528.00	\$627.00	\$907.00	

B.) BLS Findings.

- 1.) Flagler County's current rate for a BLS transport is \$400. The mean cost for a BLS transport within the nine surveyed counties is \$452. The median cost for a BLS transport is \$460.08. Flagler County's current rate is 33.33% lower than the highest comparable rate within the eleven surveyed counties of \$600 in Clay County.

C.) ALS Findings.

- 1.) Flagler County's rate of \$450 for an ALS1 transport is 35.72% lower than the highest comparable rate of \$700 in Nassau County. The mean average charge for an ALS1 transport compared to 9 surrounding counties that provide EMS Transport is \$547.13. The median cost for an ALS1 transport for the 11 surrounding counties is \$536.00.
- 2.) Flagler County's rate of \$630 for an ALS2 transport is 30.54% lower than the highest comparable rate of \$907 in Volusia County. The mean average charge for an ALS2 transport compared to 9 surrounding counties that provide EMS Transport is \$701.09. The median cost for an ALS2 transport for the 11 surrounding counties is \$647.00.

D.) Mileage Findings.

- 1.) Flagler County's rate of \$9.50 for Mileage for a transport is 20.84% lower than the highest comparable rate of \$12 in Clay County. The mean average charge for Mileage compared to 11 surrounding counties that provide EMS Transport is \$10.66. The median cost for mileage for the 11 surrounding counties is \$11.00.
- 2.) Flagler County's current charges for Air Transport is 42% lower than the average cost. Our air mileage rate of \$75.00 per mile is 25% lower than the average mileage costs within the survey group.

Section III. Adoption of New Rates for EMS Transport. The County hereby adopts the new charges for each of the services listed in the table on the following page.

DESCRIPTION	PREVIOUS CHARGE	NEW CHARGE
ALS1 EMERGENCY	\$465.00	\$690.00
ALS1 NON-EMERGENCY	\$450.00	\$590.00
ALS2 EMERGENCY	\$630.00	\$781.32
BLS EMERGENCY	\$400.00	\$584.40
BLS NON-EMERGENCY	\$400.00	\$550.00
LOADED MILES	\$9.50	\$11.00
HELICOPTER	\$4,700.00	\$9,700.00
HELICOPTER MILEAGE	\$75.00	\$101.00
BACK BOARD OUT OF COUNTY	\$150.00	\$250.00
KED OUT OF COUNTY	\$150.00	\$250.00
TRACTION SPLINT	\$150.00	\$250.00
VEHICLE EXTRICATION	\$250.00	\$400.00

Section IV. Effective Date. This Resolution will take effect upon adoption.

Done and Adopted by the Flagler County Board of County Commissioners at its regular meeting on the 18th Day of June 2018.

FLAGLER COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ATTEST:

Gregory L. Hansen, Chair

Tom Bexley, Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller

Approved As To Form:

Al Hadeed, County Attorney



Fire Rescue

1769 E. Moody Blvd. Bldg 3
Bunnell, FL 32110
Phone: 386-313-4200
Don Petito, Fire Chief



To: Craig Coffey, County Administrator

Ref: EMS User Fees

Florida State Statute along with prior litigation has provided a movement many years ago that allows EMS transport agencies to bill their users.

Traditionally, the rates charged for EMS transport service are evaluated every ten years or so to keep up with the ever increasing costs of providing the service.

It has been over ten years since Flagler County Fire Rescue has compared EMS transport rates with other area fire rescue or EMS agencies. In 2007, FCFR raised their rates slightly to compare with other agencies.

Fire Rescue Staff recently performed a comparison of rates with 11 surrounding counties that provide similar services. Below are the findings for the comparisons followed by my recommendations.

Flagler County's rate of (\$400) for a BLS transport is 33.33% lower than the highest comparable rate of \$600 in Clay County. The average charge for a BLS transport compared to 11 surrounding counties that provide EMS Transport is \$482. The median cost for a BLS transport for the 11 surrounding counties is \$487.15
(BLS Transport is Basic Life Support using minimal equipment)

Flagler County's rate of (\$450) for an ALS1 transport is 35.72% lower than the highest comparable rate of \$700 in Nassau County. The average charge for an ALS1 transport compared to 11 surrounding counties that provide EMS Transport is \$560.72. The median cost for an ALS1 transport for the 11 surrounding counties is \$575.
(ALS1 transport is Advanced Life Support using minimal advanced equipment)

Flagler County's rate of (\$630) for an ALS2 transport is 30.54% lower than the highest comparable rate of \$907 in Volusia County. The average charge for an ALS2 transport compared to 11 surrounding counties that provide EMS Transport is \$701.27. The median cost for an ALS1 transport for the 11 surrounding counties is \$766.
(ALS2 transport is Advanced Life Support using advanced equipment and administration of medications)

Flagler County's rate of (\$9.50) for Mileage for a transport is 20.84% lower than the highest comparable rate of \$12 in Clay County. The average charge for Mileage

Charles Ericksen, Jr.
District 1

Greg Hansen
District 2

David Sullivan
District 3

Nate McLaughlin
District 4

Donald O'Brien Jr.
District 5

compared to 11 surrounding counties that provide EMS Transport is \$10.54. The median cost for mileage for the 11 surrounding counties is \$10.50. (Mileage charges are added to every transport)

County	Mileage	BLS	ALS1	ALS2	Treat and no Tx
Alachua	\$11.00	\$382.00	\$458.00	\$647.00	\$ 128.00
Brevard	\$11.75	\$503.72	\$553.14	\$647.85	\$ 35.00
Clay	\$12.00	\$600.00	\$650.00	\$750.00	
Flagler	\$ 9.50	\$400.00	\$450.00	\$630.00	
Marion	\$10.16	\$452.00	\$536.00	\$703.00	
Martin	\$ 9.96	\$571.58	\$644.84	\$754.77	
Nassau	\$10.50	\$500.00	\$700.00	\$800.00	
Putnam	\$11.10	\$375.00	\$450.00	\$625.00	
St. Johns	\$ 9.00	\$400.00	\$500.00	\$600.00	
Volusia	\$11.00	\$528.00	\$627.00	\$907.00	
Sarasota	\$10.00	\$600.00	\$600.00	\$650.00	\$ 125.00

Flight Division

Trying to compare costs for Air Transports is a little more difficult for several reasons. Flagler County Fire Rescue's Flight Operations consists of a county owned and operated EMS Air Transport Unit. Most of the surrounding EMS Air Transport Units are privately held corporations for profit. These organizations charge exorbitant amounts for Air Transport compared to County Owned Air Assets that provide similar services. There are other services close by that provide EMS Air Transport via sheriff's office helicopters using fire rescue paramedics. These organizations usually do not charge for EMS services due to the helicopters funding comes from sources other than taxes. Miami Dade County Fire Rescue deploys medical helicopters. They do not charge for EMS Air Transports so that they are not required to comply with Part 135 of FAA regulations.

I was able to find that Martin County charges \$10,269.00 per transport plus \$92.60 per mile. Collier County charges \$5,900.00 per transport plus \$110.00 per mile.

Our current charges for Air Transport is 42% lower than the average cost. Our mileage rate of \$75.00 per mile is 25% lower than the average mileage costs.

It is recommended to raise the rate for this type of transport to \$9700.00 which is 20% above the median charge compared to other counties that provide similar service.

Recommendations

DESCRIPTION	CURRENT CHARGE	PROPOSED CHARGE
ALS1 EMERGENCY	\$465.00	\$690.00
ALS1 NON EMERGENCY	\$450.00	\$590.00
ALS2 EMERGENCY	\$630.00	\$781.32
BLS EMERGENCY	\$400.00	\$584.40
BLS NON EMERGENCY	\$400.00	\$550.00
LOADED MILES	\$9.50	\$11.00
HELICOPTER	\$4,700.00	\$9,700.00
HELICOPTER MILEAGE	\$75.00	\$101.00
BACK BOARD OUT OF COUNTY	\$150.00	\$250.00
KED OUT OF COUNTY	\$150.00	\$250.00
TRACTION SPLINT	\$150.00	\$250.00
VEHICLE EXTRICATION	\$250.00	\$400.00

ALS1 Emergency – is when a patient is transported in the back of a county owned ambulance using Advanced Life Support (ALS) such as administration of oxygen, EKG and IV provided by the paramedics from the county. No medication administration. Calls are originated via the 911 system. It is recommended to raise the rate for this type of transport to \$690 which is 20% above the median charge compared to 11 counties that provide similar service.

ALS1 Non - Emergency – is when a patient is transported in the back of a county owned ambulance from one hospital to another using Advanced Life Support (ALS) such as administration of oxygen, EKG and IV provided by the originating hospital. No medication administration. Calls are originated via the 911 system. It is recommended to raise the rate for this type of transport to \$590 which will bring us in line with other agencies that provide similar service.

ALS2 Emergency – is when a patient is transported in the back of a county owned ambulance using Advanced Life Support (ALS) such as administration of oxygen, EKG and IV and medications all provided by the paramedics from the county. Calls are originated via the 911 system. It is recommended to raise the rate for this type of transport to \$781.32 which is 20% above the median charge compared to 11 counties that provide similar service.

BLS Emergency – is when a patient is transported in the back of a county owned ambulance using Basic Life Support (BLS) such as backboard, bandaging and

supportive care provided by the paramedics from the county. No medication administration. Calls are originated via the 911 system. It is recommended to raise the rate for this type of transport to \$584.40 which is 20% above the median charge compared to 11 counties that provide similar service.

BLS Non - Emergency – is when a patient is transported in the back of a county owned ambulance from one hospital to another using Basic Life Support (BLS) such as backboard, bandaging and supportive care provided by the paramedics from the county. No medication administration. Calls are originated via the 911 system. It is recommended to raise the rate for this type of transport to \$550 which will bring us in line with other agencies that provide similar service.

Loaded Miles – is a charge added to all transports which takes into account the miles traveled by the ambulance from the scene of the emergency to the hospital or from one hospital to another. It is recommended to raise the mileage rate to \$11 per mile to bring us more in line to other agencies and to actual costs.