

HARFORD COUNTY BILL NO. 23-013 (As Amended)

Brief Title (EMS Ambulance Transport-Increase Rates)

is herewith submitted to the County Council of Harford County for enrollment as being the text as finally passed.

**CERTIFIED TRUE AND CORRECT**

Mylicia A. Devcon  
Council Administrator

Date 6/13/23

**ENROLLED**

Robert Vincent  
Council President

Date 6/13/23

**BY THE COUNCIL**

Read the third time.

Passed: LSD 23-020

Failed of Passage: \_\_\_\_\_

By Order

Mylicia A. Devcon  
Council Administrator

Sealed with the County Seal and presented to the County Executive for approval this 14th Day of June 2023, at 3:00 p.m.

Mylicia A. Devcon  
Council Administrator



**BY THE EXECUTIVE**

[Signature]  
COUNTY EXECUTIVE

APPROVED: Date 6/14/23

**BY THE COUNCIL**

This Bill No. 23-013 having been approved by the Executive and returned to the Council, becomes law on June 14, 2023.

EFFECTIVE DATE: August 14, 2023

COUNTY COUNCIL  
OF  
HARFORD COUNTY, MARYLAND

BILL NO. 23-013 (As Amended)

Introduced by                     Council President Patrick Vincenti at the request of the County Executive                      
Legislative Day No. 23-013 Date April 18, 2023

AN ACT to repeal and reenact, with amendments, to Section 16-28, Department of Emergency Services established; appointment, qualifications, powers, duties and responsibilities of the Director of the Department of Emergency Services, Article IX, Department of Emergency Services, of Chapter 16, Departments, of the Harford County Code, as amended; ~~to provide the Director of the Harford County Department of Emergency Services with the authority to establish, maintain and facilitate adequate fire, rescue and emergency medical services in the County; to allow the president of the Harford County Volunteer Fire and Emergency Medical Services Association, Inc., the option to appeal the Director's decision to the County Executive; and to increase the~~ TO PROVIDE FOR AN INCREASE IN rates charged by Harford County for ambulance transports and medical services; and generally relating to the Department of Emergency Services.

By the Council, April 18, 2023

Introduced, read first time, ordered posted and public hearing scheduled

on: May 16, 2023

at: 6:30 PM

By Order: *Mylin A. Dixon*, Council Administrator

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Having been posted and notice of time and place of hearing and title of Bill having been published according to the Charter, a public hearing was held on May 16, 2023, and concluded on May 16, 2023.

*Mylin A. Dixon*, Council Administrator

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW. [Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law. Underlining indicates language added to Bill by amendment. Language lined through indicates matter stricken out of Bill by amendment.

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1 WHEREAS, the continuing population growth, changing demographics, and an increase in  
2 9-1-1 emergency medical service (“EMS”) calls received by Harford County has strained EMS  
3 provided in the County; and

4 WHEREAS, consistent with the EMS standards provided in the National Fire Protection  
5 Association, the County strives to arrive to the scene of an emergency medical incident within 8  
6 minutes or less; and

7 WHEREAS, in the year of 2022, there were a total of 30,470 emergency medical incidents  
8 responded to; and

9 WHEREAS, in the year 2022, there were a total of 12,978 emergency medical incidents that  
10 took greater than 8 minutes to have an EMS service provider on scene; and

11 WHEREAS, Subsection 16-28(G) of the Harford County Code, effective January 22, 2018,  
12 allowed for the County to charge equal to the allowable amount for Medicare for ambulance  
13 transport services; and

14 WHEREAS, for the Fiscal Year of 2022, Harford County’s operation and maintenance costs  
15 for EMS services was approximately \$8.5 million, but the County only collected approximately  
16 \$850,000.00 for ambulance transportations; and

17 WHEREAS, the budget for the Fiscal Year of 2023 was approximately \$11.9 million, with  
18 the budget projected to increase to approximately \$17 million for the Fiscal Year of 2024; and

19 WHEREAS, the amount collected for ambulance transportation services for the Fiscal Year  
20 of 2023 as of March 22, is approximately \$970,000; and

21 WHEREAS, due to training requirements, certification requirements, the need for additional  
22 personnel, vehicles, and equipment, the County’s operational and maintenance costs for EMS has  
23 significantly increased; and

24 WHEREAS, it has been determined that the existing amount charged for ambulance  
25 transportation are inadequate to meet the operation and maintenance costs for the County’s EMS;  
26 and

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1 WHEREAS, for ambulance transports, the County will bill at the Medicare allowable rate  
2 plus an additional 75% of the allowable rate; and

3 WHEREAS, the cost provided will be earmarked for the Department of Emergency Services  
4 for operation and maintenance costs for EMS in the County; and

5 WHEREAS, the increased rate for ambulance transports are anticipated to raise the County's  
6 revenue for the Fiscal Year of 2024 to an estimated amount of \$3 million.

7 NOW, THEREFORE,

8 Section 1. Be It Enacted By The County Council of Harford County, Maryland that section 16-  
9 28, Department of Emergency Services established; appointment, qualifications, powers, duties  
10 and responsibilities of the Director of Emergency Services, Article IX, Department of Emergency  
11 Services, of Chapter 16, Departments, of the Harford County Code, as amended; be, and is hereby,  
12 repealed and reenacted, with amendments, all to read as follows:

13 **Chapter 16. Departments**

14 **Article IX. Department of Emergency Services**

15 **§ 16-28 Department of Emergency Services established; appointment, qualifications, powers,**  
16 **duties and responsibilities of Director.**

17 {A. There is hereby created the department of emergency services pursuant to sections 402 and  
18 413 of the Charter of Harford County, Maryland, which shall be in the executive branch of  
19 the county government. as provided for herein, emergency services shall not include law  
20 enforcement agencies.}

21 ~~{B}~~ A. B. The Department OF EMERGENCY SERVICES shall be administered by a Director of  
22 Emergency Services. The Director shall have comprehensive knowledge of fire prevention  
23 and suppression, rescue services, emergency medical services, communications and other  
24 aspects of public safety. The Director shall have had at least 5 years of managerial experience  
25 in fire or emergency medical service. The Director shall be appointed solely on the basis of

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1 qualifications for the duties and responsibilities of the office. The Director shall be a resident  
2 of Harford County, shall be appointed by the County Executive, confirmed by the County  
3 Council and serve at the pleasure of the County Executive.

4 ~~[C.] B. C. THE DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES SHALL~~  
5 ~~HAVE THE AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO ESTABLISH, MAINTAIN,~~  
6 ~~PROVIDE, COORDINATE, AND FACILITATE FIRE, RESCUE, AND EMERGENCY~~  
7 ~~MEDICAL SERVICES IN THE COUNTY.~~ The Director shall coordinate with and support  
8 the Harford County Volunteer Fire and Emergency Medical Services Association, Inc., on  
9 issues regarding fire, RESCUE, and emergency medical services ~~AND ACT IN A~~  
10 ~~SUPPORTING CAPACITY DURING ON SCENE OPERATIONS. THE PRESIDENT OF~~  
11 ~~THE HARFORD COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL~~  
12 ~~SERVICES ASSOCIATION, INC., MAY APPEAL A DECISION MADE BY THE~~  
13 ~~DIRECTOR REGARDING FIRE, RESCUE, AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL~~  
14 ~~SERVICES. IF A DECISION IS APPEALED, THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE SHALL~~  
15 ~~MAKE THE FINAL DETERMINATION. NOTHING IN THIS SECTION SHALL BE~~  
16 ~~CONSTRUED AS LIMITING, DIMINISHING, OR EXPANDING THE AUTHORITY OF~~  
17 ~~INCORPORATED TOWNS OR MUNICIPALITIES.~~

18 ~~[D.] C. D. AN ADDITION TO THE POWERS AND DUTIES PROVIDED FOR IN CHAPTER 18~~  
19 ~~OF THE HARFORD COUNTY CODE,~~ The Department of Emergency Services shall be  
20 responsible for the oversight of the affairs of the County in:

- 21 (1) Providing a high quality of Fire/Rescue protection, prevention, suppression, training  
22 and quality assurance.
- 23 (2) Providing a high quality Emergency medical services delivery, training and quality

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1 assurance.

2 (3) Volunteer fire company/~~DEPARTMENT OR AMBULANCE CORPS~~ government  
3 funding, support and coordination.

4 (4) All other aspects of Emergency Services.

5 {E. Upon establishment of the Department of Emergency Services, section 9-200 of the Harford  
6 County Code, as amended, shall hereby be abolished and the powers and duties provided for  
7 in section 9-201 of the code shall merge into the department of emergency services.}

8 ~~{F.}~~ F. The Director shall have such other and further duties as may be provided for from time to  
9 time by direct order of the County Executive or by legislative act of the Council, not  
10 inconsistent with this ~~{Act}~~ ARTICLE OF THE COUNTY CODE ACT.

11 ~~{G.}~~ E. G. County ambulance service.

12 (1) To defray the cost of ambulance [service] SERVICES provided IN THE COUNTY,  
13 [by a County-owned ambulance,] an individual who is transported to a hospital AND  
14 BILLED by [a] THE COUNTY, [County-owned ambulance] shall pay a charge as  
15 follows:

16 (a) Equal to 175% OF the Medicare allowable amount for such transportation.

17 (b) The charge shall increase or decrease as the Medicare allowable amount  
18 changes over time.

19 (c) If any type of medical care or service is provided at the time of ambulance  
20 service and there is no comparable Medicare allowable charge for said  
21 service, the Director of Emergency Services and the Treasurer shall  
22 determine the applicable charge.

23 (2) If an individual is not covered by insurance, these charges may be waived upon a

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1 determination by the Director of the Department of Emergency Services and the  
2 Treasurer that the individual is not covered by health insurance or that the individual's  
3 insurance does not treat the charge as a covered medical cost and the individual is not  
4 able to pay the charge. The County shall not question an individual about the ability  
5 to pay the ambulance service charge at the time service is requested or provided or  
6 fail to provide said service because of the individual's perceived or actual inability to  
7 pay the charge.

8 (3) The Department of Treasurer may adopt rules and regulations for:

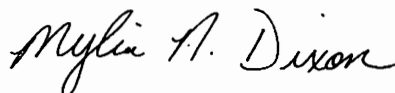
9 (a) The collection of charges, including the applicable charge for medical care  
10 services provided; and

11 (b) The waiver of a charge as provided under this subsection.

12 Section 2. And Be It Further Enacted that this Act shall take effect 60 calendar days from the  
13 date it becomes law.

EFFECTIVE: August 14, 2023

*The Council Administrator does hereby certify that  
fifteen (7) copies of this Bill are immediately available for  
distribution to the public and the press.*



\_\_\_\_\_  
Council Administrator