

ORDINANCE-3810

**AN ORDINANCE TO ADD A SECTION TO THE CITY CODE PERTAINING
TO CHARGING FOR AMBULANCE SERVICES**

SECTION ADDED: § 2-426

WHEREAS, the City of Virginia Beach is served by dedicated volunteer rescue squad members and career emergency medical providers who together comprise the Virginia Beach Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system; and

WHEREAS, the Department of EMS began exploring compassionate billing for ambulance services as a sustainable funding source for Emergency Medical Services operations following the adoption of the FY 2024-25 Operating Budget in partnership with the Council of Virginia Beach Volunteer Rescue Squads, Inc. to benefit the EMS system as a whole; and,

WHEREAS, on December 10, 2024, the City Council of the City of Virginia Beach approved a resolution allowing the Department of EMS to begin the administrative processes of implementing compassionate billing to include within the FY 2025-26 Budget including developing draft MOUs with the Rescue Council,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA:

That Section 2-426 of the Code of the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia is hereby added and ordained to read as follows:

Sec. 2-426. Charges for Ambulance Services

- (a) Except as otherwise provided by subsection (c), a service charge for basic life support (BLS) transport, for advanced life support, level 1 (ALS1) transport, for advanced life support, level 2 (ALS2), for specialty care transport (SCT), and treatments with at least one advanced life support (ALS) intervention and use of an intravenous therapy supply or medication kit without transportation is hereby imposed on each person being treated by an emergency medical services vehicle that is operated or maintained by the City of Virginia Beach or its volunteer rescue squads. The term "emergency medical services vehicle" has the definition specified in Va. Code §32.1-111.1. The funds received from the payment of this fee shall be paid into a designated special revenue fund to be utilized for emergency medical services and volunteer rescue squad operating expenses.
- (b) The city manager is hereby authorized to direct and establish uniform rules and regulations for the administration and collection of charges imposed by this section. Such regulations shall include the (i) establishment of uniform billing standards allowing the waiver of copayment requirements relative to City of Virginia Beach residency; (ii) uniform payment reduction or waiver standards in case of financial hardship; (iii) establishment of uniform billing standards allowing the cessation of attempts to collect, and absolution of, debt resulting from these charges after normal and customary billing attempts are completed.
- (c) No charge shall be imposed on persons in the following instances:
 - (1) Persons in the custody of the Virginia Beach Sheriff;
 - (2) When the patient is a City of Virginia Beach employee or any other volunteer meeting the definition of employee under Code of Virginia §65.2-101(I) for any work-related illness or injury compensable under the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act;
 - (3) Persons who demonstrate financial hardship as defined in the rules and regulations established by the city manager.

(c) Definitions.] The following definitions shall apply to ambulance charges:

(1) Advanced life support level 1 (ALS-1) services shall be medical treatment or procedures provided to a patient beyond the scope of an EMT-basic as defined by the National EMS Education and Practice Blueprint.

(2) Advanced life support level 2 (ALS-2) services shall be defined as advanced life support (ALS) services provided to a patient including any of the following medical procedures: (a) manual defibrillation/cardio version; (b) endotracheal intubation; (c) central venous line; (d) cardiac pacing; (e) chest decompression; (f) surgical airway; or (g) intraosseous line, and/or (h) the administration of three (3) or more medications.

(3) Basic life support (BLS) services shall be medical treatment or procedures provided to a patient as defined by the National EMS Education and Practice Blueprint for the EMT-Basic.

(4) Ground transport mileage (GTM) shall be assessed in statute miles from the location of an incident scene, or center point of a fire demand zone where an incident scene or address is located, to a hospital or other facility where a patient is transported.

(5) Health care facilities is defined to included, but not be limited to, hospitals, nursing homes, advanced care facilities, psychiatric facilities, out-patient care facilities, minor emergency care centers, physicians' offices or any other facility where licensed or certified health care professionals are routinely present and provide medical treatment for patients.

(c) Charges.

(1) The charge for nonemergency or emergency incident response, evaluation and treatment with at least one ALS intervention and use of intravenous therapy supply or medication kit, with no ambulance transportation provided, shall be two hundred dollars (\$200.00).

(2) The charge for emergency incident response and ambulance transport by the department of Emergency Medical Services, with BLS services provided to a patient, shall be five hundred eighty three dollars (\$583.00).

(3) The charge for emergency incident response and ambulance transport by the department of Emergency Medical Services, with ALS-1 services provided to a patient, shall be seven hundred one dollars (\$701.00).

(4) The charge for emergency incident response and ambulance transport by the department of Emergency Medical Services, with ALS-2 services provided to a patient, shall be nine hundred ninety-seven dollars (\$997.00).

(5) The charge for ground transport mileage (GTM) on ambulances operated by the department of Emergency Medical Services shall be thirteen dollars (\$13.00) per loaded mile which shall be charged in addition to transport charges defined by subsections (2), (3), and (4) above.

(6) A charge of two hundred dollars (\$200.00), in addition to the ambulance transport and ground mileage charge as defined by subsections (2), (3), and (4), above, shall be billed to an originating health care facility requesting interfacility ambulance transport services for a patient when it is determined by the Department of Emergency Medical Services Operational Medical Director that the patient did not have a medical emergency warranting the use of an emergency ambulance.

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105 BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED:
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- 107 1) That the City Manager or his designee is hereby authorized to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement
108 with the Volunteer Rescue Squads of Virginia Beach and to execute all documents that may be
109 necessary or appropriate in connection with implementing compassionate billing in a form deemed
110 satisfactory by the City Attorney.
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- 112 2) That the effective date of this ordinance shall be July 1, 2025.
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115 Adopted by the Council of the City of Virginia Beach, Virginia, on this 13 day of May, 2025.