

**AGENDA
ITEM**

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CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA STAFF REPORT

DATE: April 10 2024

TO: Mayor and City Council

APPROVED BY: Esperanza Colio Warren, City Manager *Esperanza Colio Warren*

REVIEWED BY: Sandra L. Fonseca, Interim Finance Director *SF*

PREPARED BY: Eduardo Ainza, Acting Fire Chief *EJA*

SUBJECT: Discussion/Action on proposed ambulance fee schedule adjustments

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Recommendation:

Discussion/Action on proposed ambulance fee schedule adjustments

Background:

In 2023, the Calexico Fire Department responded to the following:

- 223 fires
- 4,118 medical aids
- 493 calls categorized as others; which include false alarms, traffic accidents, vehicle lockouts, public assists, and hazmat

Industry standard dictates that a 911 caller can anticipate a fee for any activation of the EMS system.

Presently, the Calexico Fire Department only applies a fee for calls that result in a patient transport.

An EMS user fee study was conducted in 2018 by Willdan Financial Services which resulted in a recommended ambulance fee adjustment. One of the recommendations at the time of the study was a charge that included calls for service that resulted in the patient signing out AMA.

Discussion and Analysis:

An ambulance EMS user fee study report was generated in 2018 with the following three goals in mind:

- (1) Recover as much of the cost incurred of providing the service as possible
- (2) Maintain fees comparable to neighboring agencies providing similar service
- (3) Identify recommended additions or deletions to the City's existing service fee schedule

The study resulted in a recommendation to update the Calexico Fire Department ambulance fee schedule to the amount currently observed. However, one recommendation that was not implemented was the charge for incidents when the patient signs AMA.

Historically, an emergency call that does not result in a transport will not incur a fee, a practice which comes at a great cost to city resources. Additionally, this forementioned study provides a conclusion that the city had chosen to adopt in addition to the new fees, a five-year inflator to keep pace with increasing costs. It is recommended that the council consider implementing the service fee for AMA incidents as well as apply the five-year inflation factor to the entire fee schedule.

Fiscal Impact:

The objective of this proposal is to assist in providing a financially sustainable model to the economic challenges our city faces. At the time of this study, the council of 2018 elected not to implement the AMA fees, which at the time totaled 272 calls with the recommended fee of \$410. The call volume has risen since the time of this study, as has occurrence of AMA calls, and the associated costs. The most recent physical year resulted in 923 AMA incidents prompting the reconsideration of the recommended associated fee as well as the inflation factor.

Coordinated With:

City Manager, Esperanza Colio Warren

Attachment(s):

None