

AGENDA



Thursday, June 11, 2009

**Emergency Medical Services
RECOMMENDATION FOR COUNCIL ACTION****Item No. 15**

Subject: Approve an ordinance amending the Fiscal Year 2008-2009 Emergency Medical Services Department Fee Schedule of Ordinance 20080908-006, to increase EMS patient transport and mileage fees and approve a discount base fee.

Fiscal Note: There is no unanticipated fiscal impact.

For More Information: Ernesto Rodriguez, Director, 972-7148

Boards and Commission Action: Recommended by the Austin – Travis County EMS Advisory Board.

The EMS Department has not changed its primary base transport and mileage fees since October of 2006. In February of 2009, the EMS Department conducted extensive surveys to determine fee amounts being charged by various Central Texas emergency medical service providers, as well as fee amounts being charged by national emergency medical service providers that are similar to the EMS Department in terms of size, structure, and medical guidelines. A summary of the data from these surveys is attached and shows that EMS' fees for transport and mileage are at or near the 20th percentile from the bottom of the range among both regional and national comparisons. Both regionally and nationally, the current EMS fees are consistently among the lowest rates being charged.

The Austin Travis County EMS Advisory Board reviewed the survey results and in March 2009 recommended that the EMS Department increase EMS service fees to the 75th percentile of the survey results. Accordingly, EMS is proposing to adjust its rates to be better aligned with regional and national practices and in response to rising costs of service. The new rates proposed would place the EMS rates at approximately the 75th percentile of the organizations surveyed. In addition to the fee increases, EMS is also proposing a new set of transport fees for those patients without any form of insurance who meet certain income criteria. Those patients would be granted a discounted base fee that is slotted to a set percentage above the allowable Medicare fee for ambulance services in Travis County.

On a full fiscal year basis it is estimated these fee increases would generate approximately \$3,700,000 in additional General Fund revenue.