
Q. How much money will the EMS fee generator for the City each year?

A. It is estimated that the EMS transport fee will generate approximately \$350,000.00 per year. It is also important to remember that this is based on current law and this may change with new laws that may be passed by our Federal Government.

Q. Won't this increase the cost of my insurance?

A. Most people do not realize that almost all health plans already include this type of coverage in their policies, which means it should have no impact on your insurance premiums. In effect, most people have been paying their insurance provider for this benefit already.

Q. What other cities charge EMS fees?

A. Examples of other cities using EMS fees: Amanda Township, New Lexington, Lancaster, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Canton, Akron, Dayton, Fairborn, and Columbus.

Q. Why should you have to pay for EMS transport service?

A. As was mentioned earlier, from a budgetary standpoint, some fees must be used in order to keep taxes down. EMS fees were selected in part because they affect a small amount of users, but also because health care is one of the most costly and rapidly expanding industries in the nation.

*The need to resort to fees in this area reflects what is happening throughout the country. It is important to realize that the nature of EMS service has changed drastically since the City first began providing this type of service. The complexity of the health care industry has raised the level of expertise and equipment required by EMS employees to do the job right. That has driven up the cost tremendously over the years. Although the city has been able to absorb that cost up until now, it cannot do so any longer while keeping the **income tax** rate at the same level.*

Examples of increased cost to provide EMS service to the citizens of Circleville:

- *To purchase and equip a medic vehicle in 1988, the cost was approximately \$65,000.00. Today's costs are approximately \$150,000.00.*
- *The cost of EMS equipment has also increased. For example, the approximate cost of a heart monitor in 1988 was \$7,000.00, while today's cost is approximately \$20,000.00.*
- *In 2003, EMS activity was in excess of 2,000 calls for service.*
- *These costs do not include the thousands of extra dollars it requires in order to train and certify fire and paramedic crews in order to meet today's tough medical standards.*

What you should know about Circleville's EMS User Fee



Q. & A. EMS Fees

During the 2004 budget hearings, it became quite clear to the City of Circleville that there was going to be a short fall in 2005 General Fund receipts. In order to balance the General Fund budget, the largest two (2) General Fund departments would have to reduce their budgets by approximately \$244,836.00. The only way that this could be accomplished was by a freeze in all areas of spending and by reducing personnel. The reduction of personnel could result in the laying-off of two firefighters and six personnel in the Police Department.

The City of Circleville's Mayor, Safety Director, City Council, Fire Department & Police Department began looking into ways of enhancing the General Fund revenues. Several options were discussed which included increase in Income Tax, Service Fees, and User Fees. With all of the alternatives considered, City Council and the City's Administration decided that the best choice was to institute the User Transport Fee.

Q. What is the EMS Fee?

A. The EMS fee is a true "user" fee, because only those people who use the service will pay for it. The money will assist in defraying the rapidly increasing

cost of providing emergency medical treatment and transportation.

"Transportation" is the key word, because the fee only takes effect if you are transported to our local hospital by the Circleville EMS Unit. In most cases, third party payers (Insurance, Medicare, Medicaid, etc.) will pay the bulk of the cost. Many other cities throughout the state and the nation have already been using EMS fees to reduce the strain on their budgets. Fortunately, Circleville has been able to go this long without instituting the fee. The focus on Third-party payer, coupled with our collection policy is a fair way to generate much needed revenue.

Q. What are the EMS Rates and why?

A. There are two (2) basic forms of Emergency Medical Service. Advanced Life Support (ALS) and Basic Life Support (BLS). Depending on the severity of the crisis, the rate will either be \$466.00 for BLS, \$615.00 for ALS1, or \$890 for ALS2. Local insurance providers regard this amount as "usual, customary and reasonable". These amounts are also consistent with what other communities are charging for their EMS transport fees.

Q. Who will pay the transport fee?

A. As in other cities that have relied on EMS fees for some time, the vast majority of the cost will be paid for by third party payers, such as insurance companies, Medicare and Medicaid. To comply with the law, everyone using the EMS transport

service must receive an actual billing statement; however, these third party payers assume nearly all of the cost.

Q. What does Resolution 06-54-2004 say and what about people who can't pay the fee?

Resolution 06-54-2004 clearly states that the billing agency will follow the directives of the City of Circleville, hereafter enumerated:

- 1. Indigent individuals should be considered for waivers;*
- 2. Special hardship situations should be considered for payment plans or special arrangements;*
- 3. Uninsured patients not on Medicaid or Medicare may be referred to the Department of Human Services to determine eligibility of coverage;*
- 4. Each case should be reviewed for special circumstances on a case by case basis;*
- 5. It is hereby directed that this resolution should be the basis for contracts and entered into for billing and/or collection on behalf of the City of Circleville.*

It is important to note that anyone who needs medical attention will receive treatment and transportation to our local hospital. The City of Circleville will not refuse treatment to anyone based on the inability to pay for the services.