



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 8/30/2022

File #: 22-1096

To: Board of Supervisors

From: DHHS: Public Health

Agenda Section: Consent

SUBJECT:

Request to Increase Ambulance Fees for Service Area 1 (Northwestern Humboldt County)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Approve and authorize an increase in billing rates for ambulance services provided in Service Area 1 (Northwestern Humboldt County).

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Private Revenues

DISCUSSION:

County Code Title V - Health and Safety Division 5, Emergency Medical Services System, Section 551-6 Ambulance Service Rates requires that all rates of the schedule shall remain effective until any rate changes are amended or approved by the Board of Supervisors.

On May 10, 2022, Arcata-Mad River Ambulance, LLC contacted Humboldt County Public Health requesting a rate adjustment to their current fee schedule for Service Area 1, which covers the northwestern portion of Humboldt County as defined in the County's Health and Safety Code, Title V, Emergency Medical Services System, Standards of Ambulance Equipment and Operations, Section 551-9 (c). The last request for a rate adjustment for this service area that was approved by your Board was approved on June 25, 2019. In November 2021, Arcata Mad River Ambulance submitted a rate increase request to Public Health but were unsuccessful in getting the request through the rate increase review process, which included review by the County Auditor-Controller's Office after initial review by the County Health Officer. In June 2022, Public Health updated the internal policy and procedure to require reviews by the Humboldt County Health Officer and Public Health Fiscal.

Arcata-Mad River Ambulance, LLC is requesting the increase with the intention of offsetting significant increases in employee wages in the face of outside competition and to cover other increased costs including fuel and supplies. Arcata-Mad River Ambulance, LLC. does not receive tax subsidies for providing emergency and non-emergency ambulance services and relies fully on fee for service.

This request was reviewed by the County Health Officer and supporting financial documentation was provided to Public Health Fiscal for analysis. Public Health Fiscal reviewed the detailed financial records pertaining to the ambulance services provided by Arcata-Mad River Ambulance, LLC. and supports the proposed rate increase.

Accordingly, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) - Public Health recommends that your Board approve the proposed rate increase. This will help to ensure that the highest level of emergency transportation service continues to be available for residents and visitors in Service Area 1.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The request before your Board will increase Arcata Mad River Ambulance, LLC's Base Rate for all emergency responses from \$2,088 to \$2,650 for insurance and private pay clients. The proposed increase does not affect the reimbursement rate from Medi-Cal and Medicare. There is no impact to the General Fund or the Public Health Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by protecting vulnerable populations and providing community-appropriate levels of service.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

N/A

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Your Board could choose not to authorize and approve this request; however this is not recommended. To do so would impact Arcata-Mad River Ambulance, LLC.'s ability to maintain highly trained ambulance crews and cover increased operating costs.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Arcata-Mad River Ambulance, LLC's rate increase request, with current and proposed ambulance rate schedules, dated May 10, 2022.

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: C-37
Meeting of: 06/25/2019
File No.: 22-1096, 19-828