

Office of the Fire Chief

City of Richland Hills, Texas

Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor Bill Agan and members of the Richland Hills City Council
From: William Bell, Fire Chief
Date: May 14, 2014
Subject: Amendments to Appendix A: Fees, Chapter 30, Emergency Services, Section 36. Ambulance fees and charges, Richland Hills Municipal Code (City Code of Ordinances)

City Council Action Requested:

Approve amendment to Appendix A of the City of Richland Hills Code of Ordinance, Chapter 30 Section 36 Ambulance fees and charges.

Background Information:

Section 30-36 of the City's ordinances sets fees and charges for the use of the city's emergency medical services. The fee schedule is provided in Appendix A of the ordinances. It is apparent that the fee schedule was not adjusted in the city ordinances when the city last adjusted the EMS fee schedule.

The current Richland Hills EMS billing rates (copy attached) is believed to have been set in 2009 when the current contract between the City of Richland Hills and Intermedix Technologies, Inc. (our 3rd party billing agent) was signed. The current fee schedule is referred to as a cafeteria style billing schedule. There is a base charge for responding then additional charges for each piece of equipment used, procedure performed, or medication administered.

Due to the emergency ambulance service reimbursement policies of health insurance companies as well as Medicaid and Medicare it is recommended to change fee structures to flat fees specific to the level of service provided.

The proposed EMS Billing Schedule is as follows:

ALS1 Emergency Base Rate	\$ 1,600
ALS1 Non-Emergency Base Rate	\$ 1,600

ALS Emergency Mileage	\$ 16
ALS Non-Emergency Mileage	\$ 16
ALS2 Emergency Base Rate	\$ 1,700
BLS Emergency Base Rate	\$ 1,450
BLS Non-Emergency Base Rate	\$ 1,450
BLS Mileage	\$ 16
BLS Non-Emergency Mileage	\$ 16
Ambulance Wait Time (30 min)	\$ 45
BLS Supplies – Routine Disposable	\$ 75
ALS Supplies – Routine Disposable	\$ 150
Extra Attend – 300+lb patient	\$ 75
Oxygen, Administration, & Supplies	\$ 192
SCT Emergency Base Rate	\$ 1,875
Treatment / No-Transport	\$ 175

According to ambulance billing agencies we've had conversations with it is not an uncommon practice for insurance companies to deny itemized charges beyond the base fees. Their argument is since the charge already has the base fee any cost should be included in the base fee and all additional charges are denied. Medicare and Medicaid annually set their allowable rates. Medicare and Medicaid only pay out what their allowable rates are regardless of the fees set by EMS agencies.

Attached is the current billing fee schedule authorized by the city for Intermedix to bill individuals utilizing the City of Richland Hills' ambulance.

Financial Impact:

No additional expense to city, potential increase in ambulance fee collection due to payable services allowed by insurance carriers as well as Medicare and Medicaid.

Staff Contacts:

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ORDINANCE NO. _____

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS,
AMENDING “APPENDIX A – FEE SCHEDULE” CHAPTER 30,
EMERGENCY SERVICES, SECTION 30-36 AMBULANCE FEES AND
CHARGES.**

WHEREAS, the City of Richland Hills, Texas is a home rule city acting under its charter adopted by the electorate pursuant to Article XI, Section 5 of the Texas Constitution and Chapter 9 of the Local Government Code; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has previously adopted total fees and charges for use of the Richland Hills, Texas, ambulance service; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Richland Hills, Texas, desires to update the total fees and charges for use of the Richland Hills, Texas, ambulance service; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Richland Hills, Texas, has determined that the adoption of the amendment herein to update the total fees and charges for use of the Richland Hills, Texas, ambulance service is in the best interest of the public health, safety and welfare and therefore deems it advisable to enact this ordinance.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY
OF RICHLAND HILLS, TEXAS:**

The Code of Ordinances, City of Richland Hills, is hereby revised by amending Appendix A – Fee Schedule, “Chapter 30 Section 36 Ambulance Fees and Charges” to read as follows:

ALS1 Emergency Base Rate	\$ 1,600
ALS1 Non-Emergency Base Rate	\$ 1,600
ALS Emergency Mileage	\$ 16
ALS Non-Emergency Mileage	\$ 16
ALS2 Emergency Base Rate	\$ 1,700
BLS Emergency Base Rate	\$ 1,450
BLS Non-Emergency Base Rate	\$ 1,450
BLS Mileage	\$ 16

BLS Non-Emergency Mileage	\$	16
Ambulance Wait Time (30min)	\$	45
BLS Supplies – Routine Disposable	\$	75
ALS Supplies – Routine Disposable	\$	150
Extra Attend – 300+lb patient	\$	75
Oxygen, Administration, & Supplies	\$	192
SCT Emergency Base Rate	\$	1,875
Treatment / No-Transport	\$	175

Passed and approved this 20th day of May, 2014.

CITY OF RICHLAND HILLS

The Honorable Bill Agan, Mayor

ATTEST:

Linda Cantu, City Secretary

Approved as to form and legality:

City Attorney

Richland Hills, Texas, Code of Ordinances >> PART II - CODE OF ORDINANCES >> Chapter 30 - EMERGENCY SERVICES >> ARTICLE II. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES >>

ARTICLE II. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Sec. 30-31. Operation by fire department; rules and regulations.

Sec. 30-32. Requests for emergency ambulance service.

Sec. 30-33. Emergency medical service area.

Sec. 30-34. Ambulance service for person outside city; conditions.

Sec. 30-35. Ambulance personnel to determine to which hospital patients will be taken.

Sec. 30-36. Ambulance fees and charges.

Sec. 30-37. Ambulance billing and collection.

Sec. 30-38. False statement of emergency unlawful.

Sec. 30-39. Provisions not to limit subsidy plans.

Secs. 30-40—30-60. Reserved.

Sec. 30-31. Operation by fire department; rules and regulations.

Ambulance service shall be operated by the fire department and shall be under the supervision and control of the chief of the fire department and subject to the rules and regulations set forth in this article and subject to any rules and regulations which may be established by ordinance, resolution, or order of the city council.

(Code 1984, ch. 1, § 12(A)(2))

Sec. 30-32. Requests for emergency ambulance service.

Requests for emergency ambulance service shall be made to the police and/or fire department. Calls shall be answered by the fire department of the city. Ambulance attendants shall have the authority to pick up any injured or sick persons from public or private property whenever the need arises and also when and if requested by some person responsible for the sick and injured person. Only emergency ambulance calls will be answered. Emergency shall include very severely sick person or persons who are immobile and require transportation to a local hospital.

(Code 1984, ch. 1, § 12(B))

Sec. 30-33. Emergency medical service area.

Emergency medical service shall be provided within the corporate limits of the city and to other such cities where a mutual aid agreement may be established if such city has its own city operated emergency medical service.

(Code 1984, ch. 1, § 12(A)(1))

Sec. 30-34. Ambulance service for person outside city; conditions.

Ambulance service will be provided to persons outside the city when:

- (1) A mutual aid agreement has been agreed upon and approved by the city council and fire chief.
- (2) Any emergency shall be determined to be an emergency by the authority of the fire chief of the city or by the acting chief in the event of the fire chief's absence.

(Code 1984, ch. 1, § 12(C))

Sec. 30-35. Ambulance personnel to determine to which hospital patients will be taken.

It shall be the sole responsibility of the fire department person in charge of the ambulance at the emergency scene as to which hospital the patient will be taken, based on the hospital's capability and severity of the case.

(Code 1984, ch. 1, § 12(D))

Sec. 30-36. Ambulance fees and charges.

The fees and charges for the use of the city emergency medical services shall be as provided in appendix A.

(Code 1984, ch. 1, § 12(E))

Sec. 30-37. Ambulance billing and collection.

- (a) The fire chief, or his authorized representative, will be responsible for:
 - (1) The billing of charges and sending statements.
 - (2) Receiving payments for services.
 - (3) Forwarding received payments to the city.
- (b) The person transported, or in the event such person is a minor or incompetent, such person's parent or guardian, shall be responsible for the fees or charges incurred for the city emergency medical service. Such fees or charges shall be payable to the City of Richland Hills, 3201 Diana Drive, Richland Hills, Texas 76118.

(Code 1984, ch. 1, § 12(F))

Sec. 30-38. False statement of emergency unlawful.

It shall be unlawful for any person to willfully inform the police/fire dispatcher, or other police or fire official that an emergency medical service is needed at a location or address when such person knows that such statement is false.

(Code 1984, ch. 1, § 12(G))

Sec. 30-39. Provisions not to limit subsidy plans.

This article is not to limit a subsidy plan with any other municipal government if approved by the majority of the city council.

(Code 1984, ch. 1, § 12(H))

Secs. 30-40—30-60. Reserved.



Richland Hills Fire Department

EMS Billing Procedures & Rates

Richland Hills Fire Department has established the following rates for various ambulance service charges. At any time, in accordance with the Service Agreement, Richland Hills Fire Department may modify these rates and/or billing procedures, with proper notice.

Additional instructions regarding billing procedures and rates are located near the end of this document.

Richland Hills Fire Department's current rate schedule (the "Chargemaster") begins on the next page.



Richland Hills Fire Department

**EMS Billing
Procedures & Rates**

Chargemaster Item	Rate	Medicaid	Medicare
ALS Emergency Mileage	15.00	15.00	15.00
ALS Non-Emergency Mileage	15.00	15.00	15.00
ALS Supplies - Airway Management	94.00	*	*
ALS Supplies - Autopulse	472.10	*	*
ALS Supplies - CPAP	207.00	*	*
ALS Supplies - Capnography	156.00	*	*
ALS Supplies - Defibrillation	210.00	*	*
ALS Supplies - EKG Pads	36.75	*	*
ALS Supplies - External Pacing	210.00	*	*
ALS Supplies - IO Infusion	450.00	*	*
ALS Supplies - IV Therapy	258.00	*	*
ALS Supplies - Intubation	100.00	*	*
ALS Supplies - Mast Trousers	42.00	*	*
ALS Supplies - NG Tube	88.00	88.00	*
ALS Supplies - Needle Thoracostomy	31.50	*	*
ALS Supplies - Routine Disposable	52.50	52.50	*
ALS Supplies - Surgical Airway	314.75	*	*
ALS1 Emergency Base Rate	855.00	855.00	855.00
ALS1 Non-Emergency Base Rate	855.00	855.00	855.00
ALS2 Base Rate	900.00	900.00	900.00
Ambulance Wait Time (30 min)	31.47	*	*
BLS Emergency Base Rate	787.00	787.00	787.00
BLS Emergency Mileage	15.00	15.00	15.00
BLS Non-Emergency Base Rate	787.00	787.00	787.00
BLS Non-Emergency Mileage	15.00	15.00	15.00
BLS Supplies - Defibrillation (AED)	42.00	*	*
BLS Supplies - Morgan Lens	85.00	*	*
BLS Supplies - Routine Disposable	52.50	52.50	*
BLS Supplies - Scoop Stretcher	35.00	*	*
BLS Supplies - Stair Chair	55.00	*	*
Blood Glucose Test	45.64	*	*
Bone Injection Adult	250.00	*	*
Bone Injection Pedi	250.00	*	*
Dispatch Fee	94.00	*	*
Disposable Linen Kit	*	*	*
Drug - Acetaminophen 5 mL	2.25	*	*
Drug - Activated Charcoal 20cc PO	12.50	*	*
Drug - Adenosine 6mg	66.62	*	*
Drug - Albuterol (.83%) 3 mL	19.83	*	*
Drug - Albuterol/Ipratropium	36.00	*	*
Drug - Aminophyllin 250 mg	88.25	*	*
Drug - Amiodarone HCl 150 mg / 3 mL	335.71	*	*
Drug - Aspirin Chewable 81 mg	2.10	*	*
Drug - Atropine Sulfate 0.3 mg	14.69	*	*
Drug - Benztropine 1 MG	65.00	*	*
Drug - Butorphanol 2 mg	60.00	*	*
Drug - Calcium Chloride 1 gm / 10 mL	7.75	*	*
Drug - Clonidine 0.1 mg	11.00	*	*
Drug - Dexamethasone 4 mg	44.00	*	*
Drug - Dextrose 25% (D25)	29.50	*	*
Drug - Dextrose 50% (D50)	18.88	*	*



Richland Hills Fire Department

EMS Billing
Procedures & Rates

Chargemaster Item	Rate	Medicaid	Medicare
Drug - Diazepam 5 mg	26.23	*	*
Drug - Diltiazem HCL 5mg	61.88	*	*
Drug - Diphenhydramine 50 mg	9.44	*	*
Drug - Dobutamine, per 250 mg	54.55	*	*
Drug - Dolasetron 10 MG	55.00	*	*
Drug - Dopamine 400mg/250cc bag of D5W	22.03	*	*
Drug - EPI 1 mg/10 mL IV	9.32	*	*
Drug - EPI 1 mg/cc IV	15.74	*	*
Drug - EPI Pen 1 dose	60.00	*	*
Drug - EPI Pen Pedi	60.00	*	*
Drug - Enalaprilat 5 mg	44.00	*	*
Drug - Etomidate 20mg/vial	33.57	*	*
Drug - Flumazenil 0.5mg	60.00	*	*
Drug - Furosemide 20 mg	20.72	*	*
Drug - Glucagon 1 mg	136.38	*	*
Drug - Haloperidol 5 mg	26.25	*	*
Drug - Hydrocortisone 100MG	42.59	*	*
Drug - Hydromorphone 4 MG	64.00	*	*
Drug - Ibuprofen for Children 4 oz	2.25	*	*
Drug - Ipecac 5 cc	5.25	*	*
Drug - Ipratropium Bromide .18 mg	5.25	*	*
Drug - Isoproterenol HCl .5 %	20.98	*	*
Drug - Ketorlac 15 mg	48.00	*	*
Drug - Labetolol 10 mg	44.59	*	*
Drug - Lidocaine Drip 1 gm / 25 mL	52.50	*	*
Drug - Lidocaine HCl (2%) 50 mg	26.23	*	*
Drug - Lorazepam 2 mg	43.01	*	*
Drug - Maalox 5mL	19.00	*	*
Drug - Mag Sulfate, per 500 mg	22.03	*	*
Drug - Mannitol bag	104.91	*	*
Drug - Meperidine HCL 100 mg	35.50	*	*
Drug - Methylprednisolone 125 mg	41.44	*	*
Drug - Midazolam HCl 1 mg	41.96	*	*
Drug - Morphine Sulfate, 10 mg	58.75	*	*
Drug - NTG Spray 0.4 mg SL	6.99	*	*
Drug - Nalbuphine HCl 10 mg	24.65	*	*
Drug - Naloxone 1 mg IV	12.65	*	*
Drug - Nitrous Oxide gas	80.00	*	*
Drug - Norcuron 10 mg	94.42	*	*
Drug - Ondansetron 1 mg	55.00	*	*
Drug - Oral Glucose Gel 15 g	6.29	*	*
Drug - Oxytocin 10 unit/1mL	19.93	*	*
Drug - Procainamide HCl, 1 g	39.45	*	*
Drug - Promethazine, 50 mg	33.05	*	*
Drug - Proparacaine Opth gtts	39.00	*	*
Drug - Propranolol HCl 1 mg	11.04	*	*
Drug - Racemic Epi Neb	45.00	*	*
Drug - Revex 100 mcg	60.00	*	*
Drug - Rocuronium/Zemuron 50mg/5ml	119.00	*	*
Drug - Sodium Bicarbonate 50 CC	7.74	*	*
Drug - Sublimaze 1mL	75.75	*	*



Richland Hills Fire Department

EMS Billing
Procedures & Rates

Chargemaster Item	Rate	Medicaid	Medicare
Drug - Succinylcholine 20 ml	8.39	*	*
Drug - Terbutaline Sulfate 1 mg	26.02	*	*
Drug - Tetracaine gtt	19.50	*	*
Drug - Thiamine 100 mg IV	13.17	*	*
Drug - Tridil Drip	150.00	*	*
Drug - Vasopressin 40 units	54.55	*	*
Drug - Vecuronium 10 mg	110.00	*	*
Drug - Verapamil 2.5 mg	60.00	*	*
Drug - Xopenex 1.25 mg	35.50	*	*
EKG Interpretation	260.00	*	*
ETCO2 Bulb Adult	32.50	*	*
ETCO2 Bulb Pedi	32.50	*	*
EZ IO	375.00	*	*
Emergency Rate	94.00	*	*
Extra Attend - 300+ lb Patient	40.00	*	*
Extra Attend - CPR	147.00	*	*
Extra Attend - Long Stairs	40.00	*	*
IV - 5% Dextrose/NS 500CC	42.00	*	*
IV - Blood Draw Procedure	21.00	*	*
IV - Collection Tubes	18.75	*	*
IV - D5W 1000CC	47.75	*	*
IV - D5W 250CC	26.30	26.30	*
IV - D5W 500CC	42.00	*	*
IV - Normal Saline 1000CC	47.75	*	*
IV - Normal Saline 100CC	39.60	*	*
IV - Normal Saline 250CC	39.60	*	*
IV - Normal Saline 500CC	41.90	*	*
IV - Ringers Lactate 1000CC	47.75	*	*
Night Call (8p - 8a)	84.00	*	*
Nu-/QuickTrake Surg Airway	300.00	*	*
Oxygen, Administration, & Supplies / hr	119.00	119.00	*
Pulse Oximeter	94.50	*	*
SCT Emergency Base Rate	1662.96	1662.96	1662.96
Spinal Immobilization	184.50	*	*
Treatment / No-Transport	175.00	175.00	175.00
Weekend Call	84.00	*	*



Richland Hills Fire Department

EMS Billing Procedures & Rates

* indicates that charges are waived.

Medicaid patients are only billed the indicated charges.

Only one base rate charge shall be applied to each account.

Base rate and mileage charges shall be applied in accordance with guidelines established by the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

Richland Hills Fire Department instructs its billing agent(s) to assign/adjust off all amounts as permitted or required by Federal and State law and applicable payment policy.

Richland Hills Fire Department in accordance with CMS Manual Section 2309.4 demands that its billing agent(s) waive copayments and deductibles for patients marked "In District" or "Resident" on the electronic patient care report, as permitted by Federal and State law.

Night Rate should be charged for all patient encounters occurring between the hours of 8 pm to 8 am, as determined by the call dispatch time, unless otherwise prohibited or excluded by the Chargemaster.

Weekend Rate should be charged for all patient encounters between 8 pm Friday to 8 am Monday, as determined by the call dispatch time, unless otherwise prohibited or excluded by the Chargemaster.

Dispatch Fee should be charged for all patient encounters, unless otherwise prohibited or excluded by the Chargemaster.

Routine Disposable Supplies should be charged for all patient encounters, unless otherwise prohibited or excluded by the Chargemaster.

The BLS Emergency Base Rate shall be applied to all accounts where the patient has been legally pronounced Dead on Scene after the dispatch but before the patient has been loaded onboard the ambulance. No mileage will be charged in that case. If the patient is legally pronounced dead after pickup but prior to arrival at the receiving facility, the medically necessary level of service will be billed. In that case, it would be at least ALS-1 Emergency if a paramedic assessment was performed, or other ALS interventions where provided. Loaded mileage may also be billed in accordance with Federal and State law and applicable payment policy.

Unless determined Dead on Scene, patients that are not transported are only billed the Treatment / No Transport fee if an Advanced Life Support level intervention is performed, unless otherwise prohibited or excluded by the Chargemaster.

Supply and procedure charges should be billed for attempted procedures (IV, intubation, bone needles), even if the attempt is not successful, unless otherwise prohibited or excluded by the Chargemaster.

The Emergency Rate should be applied to all accounts, when transport to the destination facility is deemed an emergency by the reporting medic, unless otherwise prohibited or excluded by the Chargemaster.