

	<i>OPERATING PROCEDURE</i>		610.10	
	Ambulance Transport Billing Waiver Policy			
	Effective Date: February 1, 2008 Revision Date: May 8, 2018	Page 1 of 2 Forms: PDF-600		
	Approved By: John O' Neal, Fire Chief (Signature on file)			

PURPOSE

To establish a policy of compassionate billing that allows the discounting or waiving of ambulance transport fees, based on Unites States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) guidelines.

SCOPE

This regulation pertains to all individuals who participate in City of Fairfax Fire Department or Fairfax Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. emergency and administrative operations.

I. PREFACE

The charges for ambulance transport may be reduced or waived, based upon financial hardship, as determined by this policy and with the approval of the fire chief. These procedures are intended to serve as guidelines and to ensure an audit trail.

II. PROCEDURES

- A. Patients or authorized patient representative, who are requesting a reduction or waiving of their ambulance transport charge shall complete the FDF-600, *Request for Ambulance Transport Fee Hardship Waiver*. The form is available on the City of Fairfax Internet site <http://www.fairfaxva.gov/firerescue/InsuranceBilling.asp> or can be requested by calling fire department EMS billing manager at 703-385-7940.
- B. The completed Hardship Waiver, along with supporting documentation, shall be forwarded to the City of Fairfax Fire Department EMS billing manager located at 4081 University Drive, 4th floor, Fairfax, Virginia 22030. Supporting documentation can include but is not limited to: financial aid approval from the hospital, social security statement, unemployment commission letter, homeless shelter letter, two current pay stubs or first page of previous year's tax return. Once received, EMS billing manager will review the Hardship Waiver and verify completeness.
- C. If the patient or patient representative submits a hardship waiver that is not complete or does not include the proper supporting documentation with the hardship waiver, the waiver will be deemed invalid or denied. The EMS billing manager will notify the patient/patient representative in writing and communicate a 30 day deadline for completion of the hardship waiver and/or the need for inclusion of supporting documentation. Following the 30 day period, if the hardship waiver is still incomplete or the supporting documentation has not been submitted, the patient's account will continue to be processed and any outstanding charges will still be due.

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- D. To ensure consistent alignment with the income threshold at which individuals may qualify for a reduction or waiver of their ambulance transport charge, the EMS billing manager will review the current charity care policies of the regional emergency departments to which it transports patients at the end of each fiscal year. Inova Health System emergency departments have historically been the transport destination for an overwhelmingly majority of the City of Fairfax Fire Department’s patients and will be the primary reference when determining the current charity care level used by the City of Fairfax Fire Department. Based upon, and following the annual review, the City of Fairfax Fire Department will use the income threshold at which individuals may qualify for a hardship reduction or waiver of ambulance transport charges consistent with the charity care level set at the predominant destination for City of Fairfax Fire Department transports.
- E. If the patient meets the income threshold for hardship reduction or waiver of their ambulance transport charges, the fire chief shall approve the hardship waiver and the patient/patient representative and third party transport billing vendor will be notified. The approval, along with final patient charges, will be recorded on the DF-600, *Request for Ambulance Transport Fee Hardship Waiver* and a copy will be sent to three (3) locations:
- The patient or patient representative making the request
 - The third party transport billing vendor for update of and inclusion in the patient’s billing records
 - To the City of Fairfax database used by the EMS billing manager for storing such correspondence
- F. If the patient does not meet the established guidelines but still requests a reduction or waiver of ambulance transport charges, the request shall be forwarded to the fire chief for review and either approval or denial. The fire chief may determine that the request will be approved outside the income threshold and reduce or waive the charges or deny the request. A payment plan may also be setup. Invoices and payments will be set up by the third party transport billing vendor. Regardless of approval or denial of the hardship waiver, the EMS billing manager shall follow the steps outlined in Section “E” above to ensure proper notification to the patient/patient representative, the third party transport billing vendor, and proper record storage in the City of Fairfax database designated for such by the EMS billing manager.
- G. EMS providers in the field who encounter patients concerned about financial obligation as a result of ambulance transport shall advise the patient of this hardship waiver policy. Additionally, EMS providers in the field can refer the patient to the City of Fairfax website or to call the EMS billing manager at 703-385-7940 for more information.