

**CITY OF EL PASO, TEXAS  
AGENDA ITEM  
DEPARTMENT HEAD'S SUMMARY FORM**

**DEPARTMENT:** Fire  
**AGENDA DATE:** 05/31/2016  
**CONTACT PERSON/PHONE:** SAMUEL PEÑA, FIRE CHIEF, 485-5606

**DISTRICT(S) AFFECTED:** ALL

**STRATEGIC GOAL: NO. 2: Set the Standard for a Safe and Secure City**

**SUBJECT:**

That the City Council adopts the Fire Department Ambulance Billing and Collection Policy, as recommended by the Finance and Audit Oversight Committee.

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION:**

The Ambulance Billing and Collection Policy ensures the collection of ambulance transport account receivables in a timely, fair and cost effective manner for the City of El Paso. It establishes the roles of the Fire Department, RCM Agency and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Party collection agency as well as the billing timeframes a patient can expect. This policy sets the maximum recoverable age for the ambulance transport fees at three (3) years.

**PRIOR COUNCIL ACTION:**

N/A

**AMOUNT AND SOURCE OF FUNDING:**

N/A

**BOARD / COMMISSION ACTION:**

N/A.

---

\*\*\*\*\*AUTHORIZATION\*\*\*\*\*

**DEPARTMENT HEAD:**



# RESOLUTION

## BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF EL PASO:

That the City of El Paso adopts the Fire Department Ambulance Billing and Collection Policy attached hereto as Exhibit "A".

**APPROVED** this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016.

**CITY OF EL PASO**

**ATTEST:**


\_\_\_\_\_  
Oscar Leoser  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richarda Duffy Momsen  
City Clerk

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Josette Flores  
Assistant City Attorney

**APPROVED AS TO CONTENT:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Samuel Peña, Fire Chief  
Fire Department

## **EXHIBIT “A”**

## El Paso Fire Department Ambulance Billing and Collection Policy

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy and procedure is to outline the necessary steps to ensure collection of Ambulance transports accounts receivable in a timely, fair and cost effective manner for the City.
- 1.2. A key assumption is that the longer an account goes unpaid, the more difficult it becomes to collect. The maximum recoverable age for ambulance transport is three (3) years.
- 1.3. The overall billing and collection policy governs the policy and procedure that staff of the El Paso Fire Department and any contractor will follow. The El Paso Fire Department has contracted with an outside agency to assist in Default Management as defined by the City.

For the purpose of this policy all reference from this point forward to "City" shall refer to the City of El Paso Fire / EMS Department, "RCM Agency" shall refer to or Intermedix or the current vendor, "3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collections Agency" shall refer to AMR Collections Agency or the current vendor.

- 1.4. General Procedures: Once a balance is deemed patient responsibility.

1.4.1 The City provides the patient thirty (30) days in which to pay an initial invoice.

1.4.2 After bills have been issued to the patient, the timing of the outstanding bill should be tracked so that the receivable can be aged.

1.4.3 RCM Agency shall match the indigent/charity reduction that the destination hospital has determined to be appropriate. The Patient must provide the formal hospital approval letter to RCM Agency for verification of the reduction percentage.

1.4.4 RCM Agency shall maintain an aging schedule.

- 1.5 31 Days Past Due to 180 Days Past Due

1.5.1 Statements shall be used as follow-up correspondence and will be sent to the patient if payment is not received by RCM Agency on the due date listed on the invoice or statement.

1.5.2 Phone calls can be made in attempt to collect; however, City staff and the RCM Agency shall adhere to the Fair Debt Collections Practices Act and document any contact with the Patient/Customer regarding past due invoices.

1.5.3 If a Patient agrees to pay the debt then the Patient must make good faith consistent monthly payments. If the Patient fails to adhere to consistent payments the account will continue through normal collection processes.

1.5.4 Under no circumstances, will City staff or RCM Agency engage in outside collection efforts by way of personal visits to the patient's location or residence.

1.5.5 If payment is not received as a result of collection letters and phone calls, the account can be assigned by the City of El Paso to a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency.

## 1.6 180 Days Past Due to 24 Months Past Due

1.6.1 Once an account is more than 180 days past due, the account may be turned over to a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency for delinquent account collections.

1.6.2 In general, unless there has been evidence of good faith consistent monthly payments, accounts at least 180 days from the date the account has been identified as self pay and no more than two years of date of service the account will be referred to a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency.

1.6.3 Procurement requirements to establish the contract with a service provider must be followed.

1.6.4 The 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency will follow state and federal laws in their efforts to collect a debt.

1.6.5 The 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency will charge the City a fee based the provisions retained within the City of El Paso and RCM Agency agreement.

1.6.6 Qualified Accounts owed to the City will be reported by the RCM Agency to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency.

1.6.7 All Accounts turned over to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency must have valid and accurate supporting documentation as provided by the RCM Agency.

1.6.8 The 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency will make a series of five (5) contact attempts to the patient through a combination of mail and telephone contacts in an attempt to collect on past due accounts. The collection letters will inform the debtor (patient) that the invoice is past due and of possible consequences.

1.6.9 All payments from patients for past due accounts are submitted directly to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency and are remitted to the RCM Agency. RCM Agency will update the Patients' account and will reflect the payment arrangements or any final payments received.

1.6.10 RCM Agency shall notify the 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency when payments are received and to suspend collection efforts for the paid account.

1.7 For any Accounts that remain uncollected after 36 months of placement with a 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collections Agency, and after all efforts have been exhausted per the City of El Paso Accounts Receivable Manual and the El Paso Fire Department Billing and Collection Policy. These accounts will be considered "inactive accounts" and the RCM agency and 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency will be notified and the accounts will be closed.

Age of Self Pay Accounts	Action
31 Days – 180 Days after determining account is Self Pay	RCM Agency unless otherwise noted will: Mail Patient Statement Make phone contact as appropriate Attempt to receive a promise to pay; documents any agreements made. May consider contracting with a 3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency
180 Days to 2 Years	El Paso Fire Department will approve the referral of an account to the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency. RCM Agency reports patient payments to 3 <sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency. Upon referral to Collection Agency accounts will

	<p>have the additional 21% late fee set forth in City Ordinance assessed to each account.</p> <p>3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collections Agency will report uncollected accounts to a Credit Reporting Bureau and conclude collection efforts and return it to RCM Agency.</p>
Over 36 months from Referral to Collections Agency Date	<p>The 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Collection Agency will confirm a status of "Completed Services" on uncollected accounts and return them to the City.</p> <p>Report negative data to the Credit Bureau about the patient account.</p> <p>Monitor accounts for potential indebtedness to the City.</p>