



Legislation Text

File #: 20-0710, **Version:** 1

Chief Administrative Office, Emergency Medical Services & Emergency Preparedness and Response Division, recommending the Board consider the following related to the receipt of funding from the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Provider Relief Fund:

- 1) Authorize the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to submit information and accept terms and conditions authorizing an additional distribution of funding from the CARES Act Provider Relief Fund General Distribution;
- 2) Approve and authorize the Chair to sign a budget transfer increasing revenues and appropriations in County Service Areas 3 and 7 by a total of \$112,452 to distribute the estimated funding to the ambulance service contractors in those areas (4/5 vote required);
- 3) Find that providing this funding to ambulance service contractors supports a valuable public benefit by assisting such contractors to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus;
- 4) Authorize the CAO to sign funding agreements, contingent upon County Counsel approval, or claims for direct payments to the California-Tahoe Emergency Services Operations Authority, the El Dorado County Emergency Services Authority, and the North Tahoe Fire Protection District for documented eligible expenses incurred by those agencies;
- 5) Authorize Wittman Enterprises, the County's ambulance billing processor, to register and participate in the CARES Act Uninsured Relief Fund program on behalf of the County to seek reimbursement for services provided to uninsured COVID-19 patients; and
- 6) Authorize the CAO to accept the Uninsured Relief Fund Payment Terms and Conditions.

FUNDING: Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Provider Relief Fund.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

On March 27, 2020, President Trump signed the CARES Act, which includes the \$100 billion Provider Relief Fund for hospitals and other healthcare providers on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) initially distributed \$30 billion to in General Distributions to providers based on their proportional share of Medicare billing. On March 5, the Board accepted the initial distribution of \$168,678 received for ambulance services from the Provider Relief Fund established by the Act (20-0603). The funds will be utilized to reimburse the County's three ambulance service providers for additional costs related to the coronavirus pandemic.

Of the remaining \$70 billion of the Provider Relief Fund, HHS has allocated \$20 billion for additional General Distribution. Staff estimates that the proportional allocation for El Dorado County will be approximately \$112,452. The final amount allocation will be determined by HHS upon confirmation the County's Medicare billing amounts. The Board is asked to authorize the CAO to add the funds received from this additional distribution to the previous funding available to the ambulance service providers for coronavirus pandemic-related expenses.

The actual funding received will be allocated to the three service providers based on their proportional share of Medicare fee-for-service reimbursements. The County's actual allocation amount has not been announced; the totals below are staff estimates:

North Tahoe Fire Protection District	0.41%	\$ 461
California-Tahoe Emergency Svcs Ops Auth	12.87%	\$ 14,473
El Dorado County Emergency Svcs Auth	86.72%	\$ 97,518

The CARES Act, along with other Coronavirus-related legislation, also provides funding for claims reimbursement to health care providers for treatment of uninsured COVID-19 patients. The Board is requested to authorize the County's ambulance billing contractor, Wittman Enterprises, to register and participate in this program on behalf of the County. These funds are intended to protect patients from financial obstacles to COVID-19 treatment, and acceptance of the funds is conditional upon agreeing to not "balance bill" patients for COVID-19 related services.

ALTERNATIVES

The Board could choose not to accept the funding or direct an alternate methodology for distributing the funding. Failure to accept the additional General Distribution may require the return of funds previously received.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

On May 5, 2020 the Board accepted the first General Distribution of CARES Act funding and authorized the Chief Administrative Officer to sign the required attestation.

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

North Tahoe Fire Protection District, California-Tahoe Emergency Services Operations Authority, El Dorado County Emergency Services Authority

CAO RECOMMENDATION / COMMENTS

Approve as recommended.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

No fiscal impact to the County.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

Obtain the Chair's signature on the budget transfer and return to the Chief Administrative Office.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Public Safety

CONTACT

Sue Hennike, Deputy CAO