



Legislation Text

File #: 22-1320, **Version:** 1

Chief Administrative Office, Emergency Medical Services and Emergency Preparedness and Response Division, recommending the Board of Supervisors approve revisions to Board of Supervisors Policy B-4: Collections - Recovery of Public Funds, to allow for the establishment of payment plans for ambulance transport bills.

FUNDING: County Service Areas 3 and 7 Ambulance Service Fees.

DISCUSSION / BACKGROUND

The Emergency Medical Services and Emergency Preparedness and Response Division (EMS & EPR) is responsible for contracting with emergency ambulance transport providers within the County and bills patients, Medicare/Medi-Cal, and private insurance for the services provided. For some patients, an ambulance transport bill may not be covered by insurance or may require a co-pay. These bills are often unexpected and patients may not have the resources to make payment in full at the time it is due. In order to provide such patients with options to avoid delinquency and potential negative impacts to their credit records, EMS & EPR worked with County Counsel and the Treasurer-Tax Collector to revise Policy B-4: Collections - Recovery of Public Funds to allow patients to pay ambulance transport bills over time through payment plans. Payment plans are accepted by most other agencies for the payment of ambulance bills. The Division has also worked with the Treasurer-Tax Collector and Auditor-Controller to obtain approval to accept credit card payments. It is anticipated that adding these options may also reduce the number of accounts that are sent to the collections agency and ultimately deemed uncollectible, having a positive overall impact on revenues into the ambulance system.

ALTERNATIVES

The Board could choose not to approve the revisions and not to provide enhanced payment options, maintaining the status quo.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION

Policy B-4 was first adopted by the Board of Supervisors on December 13, 1988, and was last amended on May 23, 2017, with Legistar item 17-0507, to reflect the transfer of the County collections function from Child Support Services to the Treasurer-Tax Collector.

OTHER DEPARTMENT / AGENCY INVOLVEMENT

The Treasurer-Tax Collector reviewed the policy amendments and County Counsel approved the revised policy.

CAO RECOMMENDATION / COMMENTS

Approve as recommended.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with the adoption of the policy. It is anticipated that use of the payment options provided by the policy will slightly improve ambulance fee collections.

CLERK OF THE BOARD FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

Clerk to post revised policy to the online County Policy Manual.

STRATEGIC PLAN COMPONENT

Good Governance

CONTACT

Sue Hennike, Deputy CAO