



## South County Emergency Medical Services

### Report to the Board of Oversight

September 15, 2023

#### Operations:

In August we made 118 calls for service, and we requested mutual aid 8 times. Of those 118 calls 22 were mutual aid calls to other towns and 16 of those were to Greenfield. 80 calls required ALS treatment, 5 BLS and 21 were refusals. The rest of the calls were 3 intercepts, 6 canceled responses, 2 deceased persons and 1 single provider A2 response. Morgan has been cleared to work and is now on her regular schedule. Two of our three new per diem employees have also been cleared to work and are picking up shifts.

Lower road is now open for vehicle traffic. I thanked Greenfield and AMR for their assistance during the road closure. As far as I am aware there were no calls for service in the effected area of lower road during the closure.

Treehouse is hosting their half marathon on Sunday. This is a large event, and we have one fully staffed dedicated ambulance and one dedicated paramedic at the event. We will also have one fully staffed non dedicated ambulance at the event that will be able to respond to calls in our community as well as emergencies at the marathon. In addition to the resources that we are supplying Northampton fire is sending up one of their paramedic trucks and Hatfield Fire is sending two of their EMTs.

Between August 1<sup>st</sup> and September 9<sup>th</sup> we had 146.5 hours of overtime. 92 of those hours were for primary ambulance coverage. 22 hours were additional duties that needed to be performed outside of a normal shift. 6 hours were off duty responses to medical calls. 7 hours were for details and 19.5 hours were for late calls. I would like to point out that due to an employee being out on injury and Morgan finishing up her training we had 80 hours a week of A1 shifts that needed to be covered. Members of the department have been very flexible with moving their schedule around to avoid overtime. Now that Morgan is cleared, two of our per diems are cleared and our injured employee should be returning later this month the anticipated overtime for the future is significantly lower.

#### Admin:

We have been awarded a grant from AFG to purchase a new monitor. Laurie is working with AFG, the town administrator and accountant, and Stryker to get the grant implemented.

Laurie and I are also working on the ambulance CPE program. This program reimburses the town based on the number of Mass Health patients that the services treats. This process is very time consuming, and they only give us a small window of time to submit and collect the data. I anticipate that we will have this process completed by October. We should also have a ballpark idea in October as to how much money we will get.

Comstar is still working on getting all the information necessary to write off the old debt on the account. I have been asking them for updates weekly and they continue to inform me that it is taking longer than anticipated.

Attached below is our fee table from Comstar. We should discuss setting a time once a year when we update our rates. Currently we charge very similarly to other services that Comstar works with. We charge less than average when compared to other ambulance services in Franklin County.

I have received July's disposition report from Comstar. The report lists people who can either be sent to collections, written off, or reported to credit bureaus. There is \$252.21 in charges that I feel we should write off. These two individuals are on Medicare supplemental insurance. The additional \$8692.76 I feel we should send to collections. These are all individuals who have not responded with a hardship request and have not acknowledged the bill. We should have a discussion as to if there is a minimum amount that we will send to collections. There are quite a few bills on the report that owe less than \$200.00.

I have received August's disposition report from Comstar. There is \$27,328.78 on this report. I recommend that we write off \$783.98 as these individuals are on Medicare. I have received no hardship or payment plan requests for any of the individuals on the account. I recommend that we send the other \$26,544.80 to collections.

Attached below is the SDFD and SoCEMS MOA for the board to review. Matt from Community 911 has run this agreement by OEMS and they have no concerns.

After completing my designated infection control officer course, I learned that there are some additional annual requirements that we need to complete for OSHA. I am working with the town of Deerfield's OSHA officer to ensure that these get done.

### **Equipment:**

The new lucas devices have been placed in service. There is now a lucas on all three ambulances.

Our new LifePaks have also arrived and have been placed in service. We have submitted the purchase order for the third Lifepak that we have received grant funding for.

Now that we have the pumps in service, we have rolled out the first of two new medications, levophed. The second new medication IV Nitroglycerin we are unable to roll out due to a national back order. I hope to put it on the trucks as soon as it is available.

We have heard back from all the ambulance vendors. The quotes are as follows.

PL Custom 419,347

LifeLine 434,975

Horton 462,500

These numbers are significantly higher than what was expected. All those numbers include roughly \$60,000 to replace an aging stretcher and autoloader. If we placed the order without the stretcher / autoloader we could allocate money down the road for their replacement prior to the new truck arriving.

**Facility / Maintenance:**

Our garage door needed to be repaired again due to an error by the company. It is now functioning normally. We have also added a new dryer outlet in the garage. Previously we had a heavy-duty extension cord going across the floor which posed a possible shock risk.

We are looking into the Plymovent system and hopefully should be able to get some cost information by October. Plymovent helps to filter the harmful exhaust from the ambulances when we enter and exit the station.

**Personnel:**

Attached below is the proposal for additional compensation for the employees who are doing a significant amount of additional work.

Scheduled 2023 Board of Oversight meetings:

Jan 17 - Feb 21 - Mar 21 – April 18 – June 20 – July 6 – July 18 – Aug 17 -- Sept 19 - Nov 21

Respectfully,

Interim Chief,

Tim Drumgool

Agreement for Interagency EMT Services between  
South County EMS and South Deerfield Fire Department

Effective Date: [Date]

This Agreement ("Agreement") is entered into by and between South County EMS, hereinafter referred to as the "Ambulance Service," and South Deerfield Fire Department, hereinafter referred to as the "Fire Department." Recitals:

Whereas, the Ambulance Service is a licensed ambulance service provider engaged in providing emergency medical services;

Whereas, the Fire Department is a recognized and duly constituted public safety agency responsible for emergency response, and has Massachusetts Certified EMT's on staff.

Whereas, the Fire Department wishes to temporarily second its qualified EMTs to the Ambulance Service for the purpose of rendering medical services using the resources and vehicles of the Ambulance Service, while remaining employees of the Fire Department;

Whereas, the Ambulance Service and the Fire Department agree to define their respective roles, responsibilities, and liabilities during the period of secondment of the EMTs; Agreement:

1. Scope of Services:

The Fire Department will second qualified EMTs to the Ambulance Service to provide medical services using the Ambulance Service's vehicles and equipment. The Ambulance Service will allow these EMTs to work as a second EMS provider with an Ambulance Service employee during this period.

2. Employee Status:

During the term of this Agreement, the EMTs seconded from the Fire Department will remain employees of the Fire Department. The Fire Department will continue to provide compensation, benefits, and supervision to these EMTs.

3. Liability and Insurance:

The Fire Department agrees to maintain liability for its seconded EMTs during the execution of their duties while working with the Ambulance Service. The Ambulance Service shall not be held liable for any actions, omissions, or claims arising from the provision of medical services by the seconded EMTs.

4. Training and Qualifications:

The Fire Department shall ensure that all EMTs seconded to the Ambulance Service possess the necessary qualifications, certifications, and training required by local, state, and federal regulations to provide emergency medical services. All Fire Department EMT's shall complete the Ambulance Service's

Orientation program as outlined in their Affiliate Hospital Medical Control Agreement and maintain all required training and certifications as required by the Ambulance Service.

5. Indemnification:

The Fire Department agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Ambulance Service, its officers, employees, and agents, from any and all claims, liabilities, losses, damages, and expenses arising from the acts or omissions of the seconded EMTs.

6. Confidentiality:

Both parties acknowledge and agree that any confidential information shared during the course of this Agreement shall be kept confidential and shall not be disclosed to third parties without the express written consent of the disclosing party.

7. Duration and Termination:

This Agreement shall commence on the Effective Date and shall remain in effect until [Termination Date] unless terminated earlier by mutual written agreement or due to unforeseen circumstances.

8. Governing Law:

This Agreement shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of [Jurisdiction], without regard to its conflict of laws principles.

9. Entire Agreement:

This Agreement constitutes the entire understanding between the parties and supersedes all prior agreements, understandings, or representations, whether written or oral.

In witness whereof, the parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed as of the

Effective Date.

South County EMS

South Deerfield Fire Department

By: \_\_\_\_\_ By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

July 2023 Call Totals		
Town Name	Number of Calls	Mutual Aid Received
Ashfield	1	
Deerfield	13	5
Greenfield	11	
Leverett	1	
Montague	1	
South Deerfield	35	
Sunderland	27	1
Turners Falls	1	
Whately	18	2
Totals	108	8
Mutual Aid Received	5	
Call Totals August 2023	Number of Calls	Mutual Aid Received
Conway	4	
Deerfield	63	6
Greenfield	16	
Leverett	1	
Sunderland	20	1
Turners Falls	1	
Whately	13	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>8</b>
Call Disposition		
Canceled	6	
Deceased Person	2	
Refusals	21	
A2 Response with Mutual Aid	1	
ALS	80	
BLS	5	
Intercepts (Given)	3	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>118</b>	

## **Proposal for additional compensation**

Currently, we have three providers who consistently undertake significant additional duties beyond their job descriptions. While I agree that finding a permanent solution for compensating these employees should be deferred to the next chief, it is essential to address the matter in the interim. All three individuals play a vital role in our organization, and without their contributions, the workload would increase significantly. My proposal does not entail a permanent solution, and I suggest that after hiring a new chief, these compensations should be reassessed.

In the meantime, the most suitable approach to compensate these employees is through a stipend. Allow me to elaborate on the contributions and fair compensation for each individual:

Zach Battistoni serves as our logistics coordinator, handling vehicle maintenance, repairs, and IT services. He also takes care of warrant and billing matters while serving as our records custodian. Due to the nature of his work and our rotating schedule, Zach accrues the most overtime for his additional duties, averaging 2-10 hours per week. I believe a stipend of \$300/month would be fair compensation for him, covering his administrative responsibilities and substituting overtime pay until he reaches the appropriate compensation threshold. This stipend would also acknowledge the 10-20 hours of extra work he performs while on shift. I think that if we work with Zach, we can also minimize the amount of overtime accrued.

Alicia Toia, our operations coordinator, plays a crucial role in managing schedules, callouts, standby events, and supplies. She also assists in policy creation and compliance. Though Alicia rarely needs to work overtime, there are occasional instances when she does, particularly for ordering additional supplies or managing the schedule during my absence. I propose a stipend of \$200/month to compensate her for the extra 5-10 hours of work she puts in during her shifts.

Laurie McComb is responsible for grant writing and serves as our community liaison. Grant writing is instrumental in acquiring equipment and resources that would otherwise be financially challenging to obtain. Additionally, this role and her role as a community liaison involves off-duty tasks such as phone calls and emails. Laurie has also been doing a significant amount of work on the ambulance CPE program. This program has the potential to generate a significant amount of revenue for the department. A stipend of \$150/month would be appropriate to acknowledge the extra work Laurie performs in these areas.

Overall, I am requesting a total of \$650 per month in additional compensation for these deserving employees. It's important to note that currently, our organization saves approximately \$8000 per month by not having a full-time chief. \$1250 of that goes towards my stipend but we have an additional \$6750 a month that we are currently not spending. While I anticipate the possibility of redistributing some responsibilities in the future, it remains crucial to offer our non-management employee's additional duties to foster greater involvement in the organization.

I feel that implementing these stipends for the interim period would be a fair and practical solution to recognize the valuable contributions of our dedicated staff members.



**South County EMS**

**Stand-by Hourly Rate Fee Schedule**

**Scheduled Dedicated Provider / Dedicated Ambulance**

Single Provider \$140 Standby Fee + \$70 / Hour

BLS Ambulance \$320 Standby Fee + \$160 / Hour

ALS Ambulance \$400 Standby Fee + \$200 / Hour

**Scheduled Non-Dedicated Provider / Non-Dedicated Ambulance**

(Non-dedicated providers and ambulances will post at your event but will still be available for calls within the community)

Single Provider \$130 Standby Fee + \$65 / Hour

BLS Ambulance \$280 Standby Fee + \$140 / Hour

ALS Ambulance \$320 Standby Fee + \$160 / Hour

**Last-Minute (Non-Scheduled) 4 Hour Minimum**

Single Provider \$500.00 + \$110/Hour

BLS Ambulance \$1200.00 + \$280/Hour

ALS Ambulance \$2000.00 + \$200/Hour

South County EMS shall be entitled to all revenue received from patients treated by the department during a detail.

A request will be considered an "Emergency Detail" if it is for resources to respond immediately and/or that cannot be reasonably refused by South County EMS, and that it is not associated with a medical patient or isn't in direct service to a specific emergency operation. Emergency details are billed at a 4-hour minimum and to each full hour thereafter, until the resource is released by the requesting agency and the ambulance is back in service inside and for the South County EMS primary coverage area.



**Ambulance Billing Service**

742-3001 FAX:  
978-356-3721

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD 2023 Rate Change Form**

<b>Charges</b>	<b>2023 Medicare Fee Schedule</b>	<b>Avg Bundled Comstar Top 50</b>	<b>Current Rates</b>	<b>New Rates Effective On:</b>
BLS EMERGENCY BASE RATE	\$435.92	\$1,619.00	\$1,477.00	_____
BLS NON-EMERGENCY BASE RATE	\$272.45	\$1,619.00	\$1,477.00	_____
ALS NON-EMERGENCY BASE RATE	\$326.93	\$2,419.00	\$2,329.00	_____
ALS1 EMERGENCY BASE RATE	\$517.65	\$2,419.00	\$2,329.00	_____
ALS2 EMERGENCY BASE RATE	\$749.24	\$3,551.00	\$3,420.00	_____
SPECIALTY CARE TRANSPORT	\$885.46	\$3,999.00	\$3,908.00	_____
MILEAGE	\$8.40	\$38.00	\$36.12	_____
INTERCEPT FEE	\$0.00	N/A	\$275.00	_____
PARAMEDIC INTERCEPT	\$0.00	N/A	\$920.05	_____

<b>Deerfield, MA Rate Comparison Report (Franklin County)</b>				
<b>Client</b>	<b>MLG</b>	<b>BLS Emer BR</b>	<b>ALS1 Emer BR</b>	<b>ALS2 Emer BR</b>
XXXXXXXX	\$48.40	\$1,800.00	\$2,700.00	\$4,000.00
XXXXXXXX	\$37.31	\$1,580.81	\$2,412.45	\$3,543.29
<b>TOWN OF DEERFIELD</b>	<b>\$36.12</b>	<b>\$1,477.00</b>	<b>\$2,329.00</b>	<b>\$3,420.00</b>
XXXXXXXX	\$44.00	\$1,900.00	\$3,000.00	\$4,100.00
XXXXXXXX	\$37.31	\$1,533.00	\$2,420.00	\$3,571.00
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>\$40.63</b>	<b>\$1,658.16</b>	<b>\$2,572.29</b>	<b>\$3,726.86</b>

**What qualifies as ALS**

- Specific services
  - EKG / 12-lead
  - IV or IV attempt.
  - Airway - besides for Endotracheal or Orotracheal intubation
  - Medication given via IM
  - All Oral medication besides Aspirin and Tylenol
- Per dispatch
  - If the narrative states the crew was dispatched for a specific reason
  - Patient cannot have a MA Medicaid or Medicaid HMO plan
  - An AEMT or higher must be on board
    - Severe abdominal pain
    - Allergic reaction
    - Diabetic Problems with Altered Mental status
    - Respiratory Arrest
    - Respiratory distress, Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath
    - Cardiac Arrest – resuscitation in progress
    - Chest pain
    - Chocking Episode (Actively Choking)
    - Convulsions or Seizure
    - Severe bleeding or Hemorrhage
    - Hazmat Exposure or Carbon Monoxide inhalation
    - Stroke symptoms, CVA symptoms, Facial droop, Aphasia, ETC.
    - Overdose or poisons ingested
    - Major trauma, Stab, Gunshot wound, Penetrating trauma
    - Electrocutation or struck by Lightning
    - Drowning or Near drowning with injury
    - Fall > 6 feet
    - Entrapment or structural collapse.

