

Tuolumne County
Emergency Medical Services Agency

Title: Ambulance Billing

Medical Director Signature: on file

EMS Coordinator Signature: on file

EMS Policy No. 141.00

Creation Date: 8/24/2022

Revision Date:

Review Date: 8/2026

I) Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish definitions to be used to determine the appropriate billing of patients/guarantors for ambulance services provided by ground ambulance services with a current Ambulance Permit issued by the County of Tuolumne.

II) Authority

Division 2.5, California Health and Safety Code, Section 1797.222, Tuolumne County Ordinance Chapter 5 Section 16.125.

III) Definitions

- A) "BLS, Non-Emergency Base Rate": May be charged when the request for ambulance service is prescheduled and not placed through the 9-1-1 system; no medications or medical devices that are not included in the EMT scope of practice are being used, monitored or administered. The ambulance must be staffed by an individual who is qualified in accordance with State law and Tuolumne County EMS Agency Policy as an EMT, AEMT or Paramedic.
- B) "BLS, Emergency Base Rate": May be charged when the request for ambulance service is not prescheduled and/or placed through the 9-1-1 system; no ALS procedures and/or medications are administered. The ambulance must be staffed by an individual who is qualified in accordance with State law and Tuolumne County EMS Agency Policy as an EMT, AEMT or Paramedic.
- C) "ALS, Non-Emergency Base Rate": May be charged when the request for ambulance service is prescheduled and not placed through the 9-1-1 system; ALS procedures, including assessment adjuncts (such as EKG), and/or medications are administered; medications or medical devices that are not included in the EMT, but included in the Tuolumne County Paramedic scope of practice are being used, monitored or administered. The ambulance must be staffed by an individual who is qualified in accordance with State law and Tuolumne County EMS Agency Policy as a Paramedic.
- D) "ALS, Emergency Base Rate": May be charged when the request for ambulance service is not prescheduled and/or placed through the 9-1-1 system; ALS procedures, including assessment adjuncts (such as EKG), and/or medications are administered; medications or medical devices that are not included in EMT, but included in the Tuolumne County Paramedic scope of practice are being used, monitored or administered. The ambulance must be staffed by an individual who is qualified in accordance with State law and Tuolumne County EMS Agency Policy as a Paramedic.
- E) "Paramedic Critical Care Base Rate": May be charged when an interfacility transportation of a critically injured or ill patient in which a procedure, medication and/or medical device not included in the California Basic Paramedic scope of practice is being used and the patient's condition requires ongoing care that must be furnished by one or

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more health professionals in an appropriate specialty area, for example, emergency or critical care, respiratory care, cardiovascular care, or a paramedic with additional training.

- F) "Paramedic with additional training": is a person who is not only licensed and accredited as a Paramedic, but who also has successfully completed additional education as determined by the California EMS Authority and the Tuolumne County EMS Agency in furnishing higher-level medical services required by critically ill or critically injured patients, to furnish a level of service that otherwise would require a health professional in an appropriate specialty care area (for example, a nurse) to provide.
- G) "Additional training": means the specific additional training that the California EMS Authority and the Tuolumne County EMS Agency requires a paramedic to complete in order to qualify to furnish specialty care to a critically ill or injured patient during a Paramedic Critical Care Transfer.
- H) "Treat, Non-Transport": May be charged when the request for ambulance service is not prescheduled and/or placed through the 9-1-1 system; a patient is identified; the patient called or requested someone to call for ambulance service or, in severe distress due to medical or traumatic conditions; Patient receives a treatment; and the patient refuses to allow transportation.
- I) "Dry Run, Non-Billable": No fees may be charged when the request for ambulance service is not prescheduled and/or placed through the 9-1-1 system; the request is cancelled prior to the ambulance arriving on scene; or upon arrival there is no patient located; or the person did not call for ambulance service or did not request someone to call for ambulance service; is not experiencing an Altered Level of Consciousness nor in severe distress due to medical or traumatic conditions. The person does not receive a medical assessment and/or treatment.
- J) "Oxygen Charge": May be charged when oxygen is administered to a patient via nasal cannula, mask, non-rebreather mask, nebulizer, bag-valve resuscitator, oxygen powered resuscitator and/or any device approved by the Tuolumne County EMS Agency.
- K) "Night Call Charge": May be charged when a patient is being transported between the hours of 7pm and 7am.
- L) "ECG Charge": May be charged when ECG is obtained, and a patient is transported to an approved receiving facility. ECG is considered a diagnostic tool and not a treatment.
- M) "Safety Car Base Rate": May be charged when a client is transported via a vehicle that has been modified to prevent the client from exiting the vehicle without assistance from the driver and does not allow the client to come into physical contact with the driver

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during transport. The Safety Car is to be used when a patient does not meet the medical necessity requirements for ambulance transport but cannot be safely transported by a personal vehicle.

- N) "Safety Car Driver Charge" An hourly rate may be charged from the time the driver is enroute to pick-up the client until the time the driver has returned to the ambulance station.
- O) "Mileage Charge": May be charged only for the miles and parts of miles that the patient/client is actually transported in the vehicle. Different mileage rates may be set for different levels of service, i.e., Safety Car, BLS, ALS, and Paramedic Critical Care.
- P) "Wait Time Charge": May be charged in fifteen (15) minute increments when an ambulance or safety car are required to wait with a patient or client to be accepted at a facility and the crew is unavailable for another call.
- Q) "Special Event Fee": An hourly rate may be charged from the time the ambulance is enroute to special event until the time the ambulance has returned to the ambulance station.

IV) Policy

- A) Only the fees/charges defined within this policy may be charged by any ground ambulance service with a current Ambulance Permit issued by the County of Tuolumne.
- B) This policy does not apply to ambulance services providing automatic aid or mutual aid within the boundaries of Tuolumne.
- C) No fees/charges shall be in excess of the amount set by the Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors.