

City of Snoqualmie Fire Department

Policy & Procedural Guidelines

Chapter: Administration **Accreditation:**

Section: 1015

Subject: BLS Transports – Billing Policy

Effective Date: 06/11/2013

Approved: 
Fire Chief

Revised Date: 09/22/2022

1015.0 PURPOSE

To identify the billing policy and procedures for patients transported by the City of Snoqualmie Basic Life Support (BLS) units.

1015.1 REFERENCES

- 1015.101 Medicare Regulations
- 1015.102 PPG 1016 EMS Transport Third Party Billing Policy
- 1015.103 Snoqualmie BLS Transport Signature Form (Attached)
- 1015.104 Notice of Privacy (Attached)
- 1015.105 Resolution 1572 EMS Transport Fee Adjustment (attached)

1015.2 DEFINITIONS

- 1015.201 Case Manager – Assigned by the third-party billing vendor
- 1015.202 City – City of Snoqualmie
- 1015.203 MIRF – Medical Incident Report Form
- 1015.204 3rd Party Billing Company- SWD (systems Designs West.
PO Box 3510, Silverdale, WA 98383. Phone 1-800-585-5242

1015.3 PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

- 1015.301 The City of Snoqualmie shall make available to all persons, appropriate medical response, care, and transport, regardless of financial status.
- 1015.302 The City of Snoqualmie shall bill for patients transported by the City Basic Life Support (BLS) units.
- 1015.303 For transports outside the City's jurisdiction, the City shall bill only if the outside jurisdiction bills for transport.
- 1015.304 If a City employee or family member is transported, the patient's insurance shall be billed.

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- 1015.305 If two (2) patients are treated, each with their own EHR, and are transported in the same unit, both patients shall be billed.
- 1015.306 BLS crews will make every effort to obtain a signature on the ESO tablet under the signatures section of the EHR authorizing the City to bill the patient's insurance company.
- 1015.306.1 If the patient is unable to sign, efforts will be made to obtain a signature in Section II-Authorized representative section of the EHR
- 1015.306.2 If the patient is unable to sign, and there is no authorized representative or relative, the crew will complete Section III-EMS personnel and facility section of the EHR.
- 1015.307 The BLS Crew will provide a "Notice of Privacy" flyer to the patient, patient's relative or one shall be left behind in their home.
- 1015.308 The City shall only bill if the patient is directly transported to a medical facility.
- 1015.309 A patient face sheet from the hospital shall be forwarded to the Administrative Assistant. The face sheet shall have the call number and resident or non-resident written at the top.
- 1015.310 The Fire Department shall conduct an internal audit to determine if all qualified transports have been processed.
- 1015.311 The Fire Department's Administrative Assistant shall be responsible for ensuring all patient transports are forwarded to the selected billing company.
- 1015.312 The City shall direct the selected billing company to bill at a rate established in SMC 2.32.215 on behalf of the City.
- 1015.313 Any patient or representative may petition the City of Snoqualmie for relief. All HIPAA and Patient Privacy regulations shall be followed.
- 1015.314 All disputes shall be brought to the Fire Department for investigation. If the Fire Chief recommends the bill should be waived, a memo shall be submitted to the City Administrator.
- 1015.317 The billing company shall submit Authorization Waivers to the Fire Department who in turn shall present the amount to be written off to the City Administrator in a memo written by the Fire Chief.
- 1015.318 After the billing company has billed the patient and made three (3) attempts to contact the patient for payment, the billing company shall determine the bill as Uncollectable. These Uncollectable bills shall be sent to the Fire Chief for action.
- 1015.319 Any payments received by the City shall be forwarded to the billing company for processing.

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- 1015.320 The City shall conduct an internal audit of the third-party billing company. Each month, a random number of patients shall be selected and followed until the bill is either paid or determined uncollectable to determine that the correct procedures were followed.
- 1015.321 The City shall be responsible for all medical record requests. If the City receives a request for the billing portion, as well as the medical, the City shall direct the billing company to release the billing information.

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RESOLUTION NO. 1572

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF CITY OF SNOQUALMIE, WASHINGTON AMENDING RATES FOR BASIC LIFE SUPPORT TRANSPORTS

WHEREAS, on June 24, 2013, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 1117, adding Chapter 2.33 - Basic Life Support Transport Fees - to the Snoqualmie Municipal Code, and

WHEREAS, SMC Chapter 2.33 provides that all persons transported for basic life support (BLS) by the City's Fire Department shall be charged and billed BLS transport fees by the City at rates set and adjusted by resolution of the City Council, and

WHEREAS, BLS fees have not been adjusted since they were initially set by City Council on July 8th, 2013 by Resolution No. 1210, and

WHEREAS, during the period between 2014 and 2020 Fire Department expenditures have increased by an average of 7.36% per year, for a total increase of 51.46%, and Fire Department and Emergency Management budget has increased by an average of 7.2% per year, for a total increase of 50.13%, and

WHEREAS, in order to meet the increased Fire Department expenditures, the City Council is proposing to increase the BLS transport fees from the current fee amount of \$700 per transport to \$950 per transport, and

WHEREAS, an annual BLS transport fee rate adjustment based on the Urban Consumer Price Index for Medical Care would ensure against rate erosion overtime, and

WHEREAS, SMC Chapter 2.33.030(A) provides that the City policy is that ability to pay is never a condition of service, and that all aspects of pre-hospital service shall be provided to all patients without discrimination toward those with no ability or inadequate means to pay, and

WHEREAS, SMC Chapter 2.33.010(B) provides that a resident of the City who supplies the City with the medical insurance information and documentation needed to bill his or her insurance provider for the BLS transport fee, and who assigns his or her insurance benefits for the same to the City, shall not be billed for that portion of the fee that is in excess of amounts paid by his or her insurer, and

WHEREAS, SMC Chapter 2.33.010(C) provides that a non-resident of the City who supplies the City with the medical insurance information and documentation needed to bill his or her insurance provider for the BLS transport fee, and who assigns his or her insurance benefits for the same to the City, shall be billed for that portion of the fee that is in excess of amounts paid by his or her insurer, and

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WHEREAS, SMC Chapter 2.33.010(D) provides that a person, regardless of residence, who does not supply the City with the medical insurance information and documentation needed to bill his or her insurance provider or who fails to assign such benefits to the City because he or she is unwilling, or because he or she does not have any type of insurance coverage for such charges, shall be billed for the entire fee, and

WHEREAS, SMC Chapter 2.33.030(A) provides that the City policy is that ability to pay is never a condition of service, and that all aspects of pre-hospital service shall be provided to all patients without discrimination toward those with no ability or inadequate means to pay,

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SNOQUALMIE AS FOLLOWS:

The BLS transport fees are hereby amended as follows:

1. The rate charged in 2021 for BLS transport fees shall be \$950.00 per transport plus \$17 per mile.
2. The rate for BLS transport fees shall be increased annually based on the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: Medical Care (CPI-U Medical), Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue.

PASSED by the City Council of the City of Snoqualmie, Washington, this 8th day of March 2021.

Matthew Larson

Matthew R. Larson, Mayor

Attest:

Jodi Warren

Jodi Warren, MMC City Clerk

Approved as to form:

Bob C. Sterbank

Bob C. Sterbank, City Attorney