

SUMMARY and FISCAL NOTE

Department:	Dept. Contact:	CBO Contact:
Seattle Fire Department	Chris Santos	Ramandeep Kaur

1. BILL SUMMARY

Legislation Title: AN ORDINANCE relating to provision of emergency medical services; authorizing transfer fees for basic life support transport services; and adding a new Subchapter VI to Chapter 3.16 of the Seattle Municipal Code.

Summary and Background of the Legislation:

The Seattle Fire Department (SFD) contracts Basic Life Support (BLS) transportation, i.e., non-life-threatening ambulance services, to American Medical Response (AMR), a private contractor. SFD also operates five aid cars 24/7 and two additional aid cars from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. SFD aid cars are not intended primarily for transport. Still, they respond to a high volume of medical calls in dense neighborhoods such as Belltown, Pioneer Square, and Capitol Hill. When AMR cannot provide ambulances, SFD aid cars are used in a backup capacity to transport patients to the emergency room.

There are 22 fire agencies within King County, including the Seattle Fire Department. Eighteen of the 22 public agencies offer some degree of BLS transport to constituents, and the remaining four do not. Seventeen of the 18 agencies bill for the BLS transport services they provide. Seattle Fire is the only agency in King County that provides BLS transport with no associated billing or cost recovery.

AMR response times did not meet their contract requirements from September 2020 to February 2023, a reality that forced SFD to frequently use its aid cars for BLS transport—677 times in 2021 and 558 in 2022. AMR has improved its response times and unit availability in 2023 and continues in 2024, but SFD still averages ten monthly BLS transports to local emergency rooms.

This legislation establishes a fee of \$950 per transport plus \$15 per mile. It is estimated that this legislation will bring in approximately \$314,000 in new revenue.

A one-time allocation of \$5,000 has been included in the 2025 Proposed Budget to cover contracting with a local third-party billing agency. The billing service contract includes assistance with all necessary Medicare, Medicaid, Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT) program, and insurance enrollments. The agency will bill on behalf of SFD and collect a flat rate per transport once billing begins.

2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project?

Yes No

3. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Does this legislation have financial impacts to the City? Yes No

Expenditure Change (\$);	2025 est.	2026 est.	2027 est.	2028 est.	2029 est.
General Fund	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Expenditure Change (\$);	2025 est.	2026 est.	2027 est.	2028 est.	2029 est.
Other Funds	0	0	0	0	0

Revenue Change (\$);	2025 est.	2026 est.	2027 est.	2028 est.	2029 est.
General Fund	\$313,905	\$313,905	\$313,905	\$313,905	\$313,905
Revenue Change (\$);	2025 est.	2026 est.	2027 est.	2028 est.	2029 est.
Other Funds	0	0	0	0	0

Number of Positions	2025 est.	2026 est.	2027 est.	2028 est.	2029 est.
	0	0	0	0	0
Total FTE Change	2025 est.	2026 est.	2027 est.	2028 est.	2029 est.
	0	0	0	0	0

3.a. Appropriations

This legislation adds appropriations.

3.b. Revenues/Reimbursements

This legislation adds revenues or reimbursements.

Anticipated Revenue/Reimbursement Resulting from This Legislation:

Fund Name and Number	Dept	Revenue Source	2025 Estimated Revenue	2025 Estimated Revenue
General Fund 00100	SFD	BLS Transport Billing	\$313,905	\$313,905
TOTAL			\$313,905	\$313,905

Revenue/Reimbursement Notes:

About \$313,905 estimated new revenue will be received from billing for BLS transport services. Payments will be received from Medicare, Medicaid, insurance companies, GEMT, and patients.

3.c. Positions

This legislation adds, changes, or deletes positions.

3.d. Other Impacts

Does the legislation have other financial impacts to The City of Seattle, including direct or indirect, one-time or ongoing costs, that are not included in Sections 3.a through 3.c? If so, please describe these financial impacts.

No.

If the legislation has costs, but they can be absorbed within existing operations, please describe how those costs can be absorbed. The description should clearly describe if the absorbed costs are achievable because the department had excess resources within their existing budget or if by absorbing these costs the department is deprioritizing other work that would have used these resources.

Costs will be supported by new revenues.

Please describe any financial costs or other impacts of *not* implementing the legislation.

If legislation is not implemented, then the current status will continue. This is an opportunity to align our practice with the surrounding fire service agencies and to provide revenue to the City to support emergency medical services.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

a. Please describe how this legislation may affect any departments besides the originating department.

No impacts to other departments.

b. Does this legislation affect a piece of property? If yes, please attach a map and explain any impacts on the property. Please attach any Environmental Impact Statements, Determinations of Non-Significance, or other reports generated for this property.

No.

c. Please describe any perceived implication for the principles of the Race and Social Justice Initiative.

i. How does this legislation impact vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? How did you arrive at this conclusion? In your response please consider impacts within City government (employees, internal programs) as well as in the broader community.

This legislation limits payments received by City residents to their insurer. For non-residents or residents without an insurer, a compassionate care financial assistance program is established to support vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities/patients.

ii. Please attach any Racial Equity Toolkits or other racial equity analyses in the development and/or assessment of the legislation.

Please see attached SFD BLS Transport Financial Assistance Policy.

iii. What is the Language Access Plan for any communications to the public?

A Language Access Plan is being developed.

d. Climate Change Implications

- i. Emissions: How is this legislation likely to increase or decrease carbon emissions in a material way? Please attach any studies or other materials that were used to inform this response.**

N/A

- ii. Resiliency: Will the action(s) proposed by this legislation increase or decrease Seattle's resiliency (or ability to adapt) to climate change in a material way? If so, explain. If it is likely to decrease resiliency in a material way, describe what will or could be done to mitigate the effects.**

N/A

- e. If this legislation includes a new initiative or a major programmatic expansion: What are the specific long-term and measurable goal(s) of the program? How will this legislation help achieve the program's desired goal(s)? What mechanisms will be used to measure progress towards meeting those goals?**

N/A

5. CHECKLIST

- Is a public hearing required?
- Is publication of notice with *The Daily Journal of Commerce* and/or *The Seattle Times* required?
- If this legislation changes spending and/or revenues for a fund, have you reviewed the relevant fund policies and determined that this legislation complies?
- Does this legislation create a non-utility CIP project that involves a shared financial commitment with a non-City partner agency or organization?

6. ATTACHMENTS

Summary Attachments:

Summary Attachment A – SFD BLS Transport Financial Assistance Policy