

LEWIS COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT 3

Resolution # 25-12

Adopt Updated Policy and Procedure for Transport Billing

1.0 Purpose

Lewis County Fire District #3 has established a billing program and policies to cover costs associated with providing emergency medical care and patient transport services. These policies are intended to provide transparency for those who receive our services, establish a billing philosophy, provide guidance, as needed, to third party billing agents and ensure that the district meets billing standards established by insurance providers. These policies and programs are specific to emergency service response and do not apply to other programs that the district may authorize or participate in.

These programs and policies shall be periodically reviewed to ensure consistency in fees and processes among similar agencies across the region.

1.1 Services for which Fees Apply

Lewis County Fire District #3 has established a billing schedule for all emergency response services provided by our personnel. The following services, as defined and considered herein, shall be included in our billing schedule. As applicable and when clarity is needed, additional definitions as described by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid may apply to BLS and ALS emergency definitions.

BLS Emergency: Emergency response and transportation by ground ambulance vehicle, with the provision of medically necessary supplies and services, including basic life support ambulance services as defined by the state. BLS ambulance services are staffed by an individual who is qualified in accordance with state and local laws as an emergency medical technician (EMT).

ALS (1) Emergency: Emergency response and transportation by ground ambulance vehicle, with the provision of medically necessary supplies and services, including the provision of an advanced life support assessment or at least one advanced life support intervention. ALS assessment is an assessment performed by an ALS crew (Advanced EMT or Paramedic) as part of an emergency response that was necessary because the patient's reported condition at the time of dispatch was such only an ALS crew was qualified to perform the assessment.

ALS (2) Emergency: Emergency response and transportation by ground ambulance vehicle, with the provision of medically necessary supplies and services including: a) at least three separate administrations of one or more medications by intravenous push/bolus or by continuous infusion (excluding crystalloid fluids); or b) ground ambulance transport and the provision of at least one of the following ALS2 procedures: manual defibrillation/cardioversion; endotracheal intubation; central venous line; cardiac pacing; chest decompression; surgical airway, or intraosseous line.

Mileage: Mileage charges begin at the location of the emergency scene when a patient is loaded into the ambulance for transport and conclude upon arrival of the destination facility where the pt is transferred to the next level of care.

Billing Agents, Process, Credit, Waivers and Collections

2.0 Billing Agent

Lewis County Fire District #3 may elect to use a third-party billing agent to submit claims and process payments on their behalf. Prior to contracting with any billing agent, the district will require that any third-party agent used to process claims and billing statements has procedures in place that will ensure:

1. the agent/agency and their employees are adequately trained in appropriate Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) processes, and;
2. claims issued and payments received are adequately accounted for and remitted to the district in a timely, efficient manner, and;
3. records of all claims processed and payments received, whether through private or public insurance or submitted by the patient individually, are maintained in accordance with state records retention laws.

2.1 Billing Process

At the time of service, or as soon thereafter as feasible, patients or their advocate shall make arrangements to provide insurance information to Lewis County Fire District #3. Alternatively, insurance information may be provided directly to the districts third party billing agent if or when incident reports and billing cycles have been closed.

The district recognizes that a/the third-party billing agent may have established processes in place to efficiently and effectively bill for services. Absent any defined processes that provide greater benefit to the patient or the district, Lewis County Fire District #3 shall endeavor to close medical incident reports (charts) and submit incidents for billing within fifteen (15) calendar days, better defined as no later than fifteen (15) days following the end of the calendar month in which services are provided.

Following submission of medical incident charts, a/the third-party billing agent shall submit claims to insurance providers and remit statements of account to the patient. This process shall occur within thirty (30) calendar days of a/the third-party billing agency having received the medical incident chart. Thereafter, patients shall receive a statement of account no less than once each thirty (30) calendar days.

2.2 Credit

All accounts are due and payable at the time of initial billing. While the district or their third-party billing agent may submit insurance claims on the patient's behalf, the patient is ultimately responsible to pay all fees associated with receipt of services.

Lewis County Fire District #3 authorizes their third-party billing agent to make payment arrangements with any patient who has a balance due following or absent any payments received from insurance. Such payment arrangements shall be limited to a credit period of two years (730 days) from the date of the original invoice. Accounts for which payment arrangements have been made shall not be charged interest.

Should the patient fail to make arranged payments, Lewis County Fire District #3 or their third-party billing agent may immediately submit accounts to collection, as herein described.

2.3 Collections

Accounts will be considered delinquent when the following conditions are met:

1. following one hundred and twenty (120) days of missing or failed payments from insurance providers or patient, except for;
2. when there is communication from a/the insurance provider within the 120-day time period, indicating payment is forthcoming or services are being reviewed, this communication shall be considered to keep the account active, and;
3. if, upon conclusion of any applicable insurance payments, the patient fails to make payment, negotiated or otherwise, within the timeframe allowed.

Lewis County Fire District #3 may use a third-party administrator to process accounts sent to collections. The district retains the right to apply collection charges that are in addition to and separate from the initial fees for service.

2.4 Waivers

Charity Request

Eligible persons or their designated representative may request charity be applied to their fees for services. The patient or persons making this request must fill out the charity form with any supporting documentation within thirty (30) days of the request. Failure to provide appropriate information and documentation may result in the patient being denied charity.

Following review of any such request, Lewis County Fire District #3 Board of Commissioners shall determine the eligibility of the patient to receive charity. If it is deemed that the patient is eligible, notice shall be provided within forty-five (45) calendar days and the balance of their account, or portion thereof shall be adjusted according to the approved charity.

Fee for Returned Checks

Any accounts that pay by check and the payment checks is returned unpayable for any reason; a \$35 NSF fee will be applied to the account balance.

Fees for Service

3.0 Fees for Service

Lewis County Fire District #3 charges an “all inclusive” rate for patients treated *and* transported. Resident fees are reduced in consideration of support provided through tax dollars. Non-residents are assessed fees comparable to similar services provided throughout the region. The district must establish a fee for the provision of services to ensure accuracy when billing applicable insurance providers.

Mileage fees are charged in addition to the “all inclusive” rate and are accounted for beginning at the scene of the emergency and ending at the admitting facility or agency.

<u>Service</u>	<u>Resident Rate</u>	<u>Non-Resident Rate</u>
BLS Emergency	\$1,375	\$1,475
ALS 1 Emergency	\$1,775	\$1,875
ALS 2 Emergency	\$1,975	\$2,075
Mileage	\$25.00/per loaded mile	\$25.00/per loaded mile

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Lewis County Fire District #3 Governance Board authorizes the update of ambulance transport fees and collections process from the aged Resolution 16-9 and 18-4 starting January 1st, 2026 and authorizes Systems Design West to continue as its third-party billing company.

DONE IN OPEN SESSION, moved and passed at an open public meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners for Lewis County Fire District #3 this 23rd day of December, 2025.



Commissioner Doug Houghtelling



Commissioner Scott Spade



Commissioner Curt Spahn



Admin. Assistant Amanda Blankenship