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Office of Emergency Medical Services

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AT A GLANCE

- 13% of Minnesota’s population receives emergency medical services annually
- 266 licensed ambulance services operating 804 ground and 34 air ambulances across the state
- 341 ambulance service licenses issued (some ambulance services possess multiple licenses)
- 172 approved emergency medical services education programs
- 30,888 certified and registered emergency medical services personnel
- Nearly 400 applicant disclosures reviewed annually
- 77 investigations completed in response to allegations of misconduct pertaining to individuals and entities subject to the agency’s jurisdiction
- 63% of the 266 licensed ambulance services have either a volunteer or paid / volunteer staffing model
- 64% of the EMS Regulatory Board’s total budget is disbursed to the emergency medical services community (FY24)

PURPOSE

As of January 1, 2025 the Office of Emergency Medical Services will serve as the lead agency in Minnesota responsible for certifying EMS personnel, licensing, and inspecting ambulance services, registering medical response units, and approving and auditing education programs. OEMS will investigate all complaints and allegations of misconduct involving those individuals and entities subject to our jurisdiction. Our services start prior to the 9-1-1 call requesting response to a medical emergency: we safeguard the quality of care delivered by EMS personnel by ensuring the delivery of nationally recognized education and testing standards.

We make certain that ambulance services are safe, reliable, and available around-the-clock in metropolitan areas and in Greater Minnesota. Areas with small population bases often rely on volunteer EMS personnel to cover the cost of providing continuous ambulance service. We work with EMS agencies and communities to implement realistic solutions to these issues thereby improving the timely delivery of quality patient care. We coordinate ambulance and EMS assets and communication as part of our responsibilities during a natural or human-caused disaster or emergency.

Our agency services include distributing state and federal grant funds that support the EMS community with retention and recruitment of EMS personnel, ambulance/hospital communications, education reimbursement, equipment acquisition, and improving the pediatric care infrastructure. Our service delivery continues with assessing and advising rural ambulance services and their managers, and it concludes with reinforcing quality care through inspections and audits, complaint reviews and investigations, and intervention in both a disciplinary and non-disciplinary nature.

BUDGET

For FY25 the initial budget for the newly formed Office of Emergency Medical Services will be funds transferred from the Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board on January 1, 2025. Based on FY25 appropriations to the Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board, an estimated \$3.5 million will transfer to the Office of Emergency Medical Services under the provisions of 2024 Session Law Chapter 122.

STRATEGIES

To accomplish its mission of protecting the public's health and safety, the Office of Emergency Medical Services uses the following strategies:

Regulation

- Establish and enforce standards and requirements for ambulance services, EMS personnel, and education programs.
- License ambulance services, registered medical response units, credential EMS personnel, and approve education programs.

Prevention

- Conduct educational compliance seminars.
- Communicate compliance requirements to medical and ambulance service directors to reduce non-compliance issues.
- Conduct rural ambulance assessments to help those services in Greater Minnesota obtain and maintain operational and organizational success.

Compliance and Discipline

- Conduct on-site inspections of ambulance services and vehicles and education programs.
- Investigate complaints, allegations of misconduct, and self-reported violations in a fair and timely manner, ensuring that the subjects of those investigations receive the necessary due process.
- Collaborate with the Health Professionals Services Program for matters involving EMS providers experiencing mental health or substance abuse issues.

Support of the EMS System

- Educate the public, EMS personnel, ambulance services, and education programs about certification and licensing requirements and responsibilities, ethical standards, and the complaint resolution process.
- Distribute state and federal grant funds that support the EMS community with retention and recruitment of personnel, ambulance/hospital communications, education reimbursement, equipment acquisition, and improving the pediatric care infrastructure.
- Continue to reach out to our wider audience: the public, employers, and ethnically diverse populations.

Maximize Technology and Online Services

- Use technology to maximize efficiencies, improve customer service, increase data security, and decrease costs.
- Provide a 24/7 online application and renewal process, no-cost license and certification look-up, and no-cost access to public data on adverse license and certification actions.

Risk Assessment and Continuous Improvement

- Evaluate performance through customer surveys, research, and data analysis.
- Identify trends in the EMS industry that may need new or improved support, standards, or oversight to ensure the public is protected.
 - Conduct system reviews and audits of fees, expenditures, receipts, and disbursements; improve systems as appropriate.

- Engage the three newly formed advisory councils. Those councils are made up of volunteers representing EMS physicians and personnel, educators, and constituents from public, private, and non-profit organizations. This is important because EMS has touch points in every part of the health care system, and these subject matter experts help identify issues and craft solutions.

RESULTS

The Office of Emergency Medical Services has not yet begun operation. Previous results on measure reporting can be found by referencing the budget book of the Emergency Medical Services Regulatory Board

Effective January 1, 2025 The Office of Emergency Medical Services legal authority comes from Minnesota Statute 144E and Minnesota Rules 4690 (<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/144E> and <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/rules/4690/>).