



House Bill 1485: Maryland Medical Assistance Program Emergency Services Transporters – Reimbursement

State of Maryland

**Maryland
Institute for
Emergency Medical
Services Systems**

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MIEMSS Position: Support

Bill Summary: HB 1485 modifies existing law to remove the Medicaid requirement that in order for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to be reimbursed by Medicaid for care provided to a 9-1-1 patient who is a Medicaid enrollee, EMS medical services must be provided “while transporting the Program recipient to a facility.”

Rationale:

- The Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS) is an independent state agency statutorily responsible for the coordination of EMS in Maryland. MIEMSS is governed by the State EMS Board comprised of members appointed by the Governor.
- Maryland Medicaid reimbursement for EMS is currently tied to transport of patients to hospital emergency departments. Medicaid reimburses EMS on a fee-for-service basis when an ambulance is dispatched from a 9-1-1 call center, and the ambulance transports a Medicaid enrollee from the site of the incident to the hospital.
- Maryland Medicaid pays EMS a flat \$100 per transport using a single billing code, CPT A0427 (Ambulance service, advanced life support, emergency transport, level 1), regardless of the costs to EMS for the care and transport provided to the 9-1-1 patient. The reimbursement amount to EMS is the same, regardless whether the care provided is at the advanced life support (ALS) or basic life support (BLS) level. Services, medications, and supplies provided by EMS at a scene or during transport are not eligible for separate reimbursement outside the \$100 transport fee. Medicaid currently does not reimburse EMS for mileage.
- EMS providers often encounter patients who call 9-1-1, receive EMS treatment and then refuse transport. EMS treat and release services (including medications and supplies used to care for the patient) are not covered by Medicaid, which means that EMS receives no reimbursement in these instances – a form of uncompensated care. The increase in opioid overdoses has spotlighted this problem over the past two years, as EMS jurisdictions have sought grant funding sources to help cover the unreimbursed cost of medications administered to overdose patients who refuse transport.
- **HB 1485 will permit Medicaid reimbursement for medical services that EMS provides to 9-1-1 patients who are Medicaid enrollees regardless of whether the patient is transported to a facility.**

MIEMSS Supports HB 1485 and Requests a Favorable Report