



House Bill 1496: Maryland Medical Assistance Program Emergency Services Transporters – Reimbursement for Transportation & Medical Services

State of Maryland

Maryland
Institute for
Emergency Medical
Services Systems

653 West Pratt Street
Baltimore, Maryland
21201-1536

Larry Hogan
Governor

Clay B. Stamp, NRP
Chairman
Emergency Medical
Services Board

Theodore R. Delbridge, MD, MPH
Executive Director

410-706-5074
FAX 410-706-4768

MIEMSS Position: Support

Bill Summary: As introduced, HB 1496: (1) requires Medicaid to reimburse an emergency services transporter for mileage accrued at the rate of \$3/ mile in response to a 9-1-1 call related to a program recipient; and (2) requires Medicaid to increase reimbursement for medical transportation / medical services by \$25 for each fiscal year until the reimbursement reaches at least \$300.

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 pays EMS a flat \$100 using a single billing code regardless of the costs to EMS for the care and transport provided to the 9-1-1 patient and regardless of whether the EMS 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 and during transport are not eligible for separate reimbursement outside the \$100 fee.
- Medicaid's \$100 flat fee was established in June 1999 and has not been increased since that time. In the intervening 21 years, due to inflation, the value of the \$100 has diminished to approximately \$64.00. *See Bureau of Labor Statistics <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>.*
- Additionally, unlike other states and payers, Maryland Medicaid does not reimburse EMS for mileage necessitated by transport of the patient from the incident to the receiving facility.
- Operating costs for EMS jurisdictions include personnel salary and benefits, facilities, equipment, and supplies (including pharmaceuticals provided to patients) – all of which continue to increase. In 2019, EMS unit response costs averaged \$640 in Baltimore City; \$500 in Montgomery County; and \$664 in Prince George's County. *See "Coverage & Reimbursement for Emergency Medical Services New Care Delivery Models and Uncompensated Care Costs. Report required under SB 682." January 2019.*
- Medicaid reimbursement to EMS should be increased to more appropriately compensate EMS for care and to account for the costs that EMS incurs in responding to and treating Medicaid enrollees who call 9-1-1 for emergency care.
- HB 1496 will require Medicaid to reimburse EMS for mileage and will incrementally increase the current Medicaid fee level over time to more appropriate reimbursement levels.

MIEMSS Supports HB 1496 and Requests a Favorable Report