

Ordinance 0006-24 – Ambulance Billing and Lift Assist Costs Recovery

An ordinance to amend Chapter 38 – EMERGENCY SERVICES of the Municipal Code of the City of Racine, Wisconsin.

Part 1: Chapter 38, Article II, Section 38-21 of the Municipal Code is amended by deleting the definitions for “assisted living facility” and “nursing care facility.”

Part 2: Chapter 38, Article II, Section 38-21 of the Municipal Code is amended by deleting and recreating the definition of emergency medical treatment to state as follows:

“*Emergency medical treatment* means treatment beyond an initial assessment and that which is in response to a medical emergency, as determined by the Racine Fire Department.”

Part 3: Chapter 38, Article II, Section 38-21 of the Municipal Code is amended by deleting and recreating the definition of lift assist to state as follows:

“*Lift assist* means a response by the Racine Fire Department to assist in physically moving or lifting a person who does not require emergency medical treatment.”

Part 4: Chapter 38, Article II, Section 38-21 of the Municipal Code is amended by deleting and recreating the definition of private ambulance to state as follows:

“*Private ambulance* service means any entity licensed by the State of Wisconsin or other states to provide private (not municipal based) ambulance transport of patients to, from or between a hospital, a residence, or any residential living facility by way of a licensed motor vehicle.

Part 5: Chapter 38, Article II, Section 38-22(a) of the Municipal Code is amended by deleting and recreating subsection (a) to state as follows:

“The billing for emergency and non-emergency responses for medical-related calls for assistance received through the 911 joint dispatch center shall be determined by the fee schedule as established by the common council, categorized as follows:”

and leaving the remainder of subsection (a) unchanged.

Part 6: Chapter 38, Article II, Section 38-22(b) of the Municipal Code is amended by deleting and recreating subsection (b) to state as follows:

- (b) The billing for a lift assist response wherein no transport is required by the fire department ambulance crew, shall be determined by the fee schedule as established by the common council, categorized as follows:

1 to 2 assists to a single address—No fee
3 to 5 assists to a single address
6 to 7 assists to a single address
8 to 9 assists to a single address
Each additional occurrence above 9 assists to a single address

- (1) The city may charge any property owner, facility, entity or private ambulance provider who requests any services provided by the Racine Fire Department in connection with providing a lift assist to any person.
- (2) The fee for providing such lift assist shall be for services accumulated in a single calendar year from January 1 through December 31.
- (3) The fire department shall maintain records in connection with services provided pursuant to this policy, and shall create billing documents, and shall forward records to the fire department's contracted billing agent who will be responsible to invoice affected property owner, facility, entity or private ambulance provider. If fees become delinquent, they will progress through the normal EMS billing cycles, per the current contract with the billing agent. If the billing is not paid within 180 days of invoicing the balance due shall constitute a special charge against the property where the assistance was provided under Section 66.601(16) of the Wisconsin Statutes and shall be placed on the annual tax roll for collection as a special charge. All proceedings related to the collection of real estate taxes shall apply.
- (4) Any property owner, facility, entity or private ambulance provider subject to a fee under this policy may, within 30 days of the date of such bill, appeal to the City of Racine Finance Committee in writing.

Part 7: Chapter 38, Article II, Section 38-22(c) of the Municipal Code is amended by deleting and recreating subsection (c) to state as follows:

- (c) The fire chief in his/her sole discretion, shall have the authority to waive billing fees for any emergency or non-emergency response or transport, upon written request from a patient or a patient's estate based on the totality of the request which must include a declaration of financial hardship.

Part 8: Chapter 38, Article II, Sections 38-22(d) and (e) of the Municipal Code is amended by deleting and recreating subsections (d) and (e) to state as follows:

- (d) A contracted fire and EMS billing agency is hereby directed to issue invoices for such emergency services and to collect such fees on behalf of the City of Racine and to deposit such fees in the city's general fund, which shall be used to purchase fire department equipment, fire department training, EMS training supplies for the City of Racine Fire Department.

- (e) When appropriate, charges not collected shall be turned over to the tax refund intercept program (TRIP) or a collection agency at the discretion of the City of Racine.

Part 9: This ordinance shall take effect upon passage by a majority vote of the members-elect of the City of Racine Common Council and publication or posting as required by law.

Fiscal Note: N/A

Pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes section 62.09(8)(c), the mayor shall have veto power as to all acts of the common council, except such as to which it is expressly or by necessary implication otherwise provided. All such acts shall be submitted to the mayor by the clerk and shall be in force upon approval evidenced by the mayor's signature, or upon failing to approve or disapprove within 5 days, which fact shall be certified thereon by the clerk. If the mayor disapproves, the mayor's objections shall be filed with the clerk, who shall present them to the council at its next meeting. A two-thirds vote of all the members of the council shall then make the act effective, notwithstanding the objections of the mayor.