

HARTSVILLE/TROUSDALE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

RESOLUTION # 2023-27-796

A RESOLUTION TO REVISE THE EMS TRANSPORT BILLING WAIVER POLICY

WHEREAS, there is a need to establish a policy of compassionate billing that allows waiving of ambulance transport fees, for the Hartsville/Trousdale County Ambulance Service based on established Department of Health and Human Service Poverty guidelines, and to abide by decisions made by the Center for Medicare Medicaid Services (CMS) OIG; and .

WHEREAS, the Trousdale County EMS Transport Billing Waiver Policy - Revised February 2023 by Resolution 2023-05-774, outlines a procedure for billing waivers and write-offs; and

WHEREAS, a direction of addressing nursing home residents was omitted and should be extended; and

WHEREAS, a direction of professional courtesy was omitted and should be extended to the employees and active volunteers of Hartsville/Trousdale County Government.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Hartsville/Trousdale County Commission, meeting in regular session, that:

Section 1: The following language is added to the EMS Transport Billing Waiver Policy:

Nursing Home Residents: After insurances and other programs are applied from usage of the Hartsville/Trousdale County Ambulance Services, the remaining balance will be waived for patients that are residents of nursing homes.

Courtesy Write-Offs/No Collection: There are instances when professional courtesy is to be extended.

- Workers Compensation Injury of an On Duty Employee/Volunteer: When an on-duty County employee or Volunteer member is transported due to a worker’s compensation injury, any charges will be waived and neither the County, Employee, nor Volunteer is to be directly charged.
County Employees/Volunteers: As a courtesy to the employees and active volunteers of Hartsville/Trousdale County Government (this includes Elected/Appointed Officials, General Government, Water & Sewer Department, Highway Department, and the Trousdale County School District Employees; as well as the Volunteer Fire Department and the Volunteer Rescue Squad), any remaining charges incurred after insurances are applied from usage of the Hartsville/Trousdale County Ambulance Services will be waived for the employee or volunteer. Documentation may be requested by the billing clerk to qualify for this courtesy.

Section 2: The effective date of the added language be February 27, 2023.

Recommended by the Emergency Services Committee on November 8, 2023

Motion Approve Resolution 2023-27-796 as presented.

Motion to approve: Landon Gulley

Voice Vote

Second motion: Shane Burton

Approved w/ opposition

Absent 4

RESOLVED AND APPROVED NOVEMBER 27, 2023 IN REGULAR SESSION

APPROVED:

Handwritten signature of Jack McCall, Commission Chair

ATTEST:

Handwritten signature of Rita Crowder, County Clerk

HARTSVILLE/TROUSDALE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

**EMS TRANSPORT BILLING WAIVER POLICY**

*Revised November 2023*

**PURPOSE**

To establish a policy of compassionate billing that allows waiving of ambulance transport fees, based on established Department of Health and Human Service Poverty guidelines, and to abide by decisions made by the Center for Medicare Medicaid Services (CMS) OIG

**SCOPE**

This regulation pertains to all individuals that participate in Trousdale County EMS emergency and routine operations.

**PREFACE**

The charges for EMS transport billing may be waived, following approval by the Emergency Services Committee, The EMS Director, and The County Mayor. These procedures are intended to serve as guidelines and to ensure an audit trail.

**PROCEDURES**

Patients who are unable to pay their co-pays, deductibles or who are uninsured and unable to make payments may request a financial hardship review of their transport charge, Patients, or their designee, shall complete the "Hardship Waiver form". The form is available upon request from Trousdale County EMS by calling the billing office at 615-374-2242.

The completed form along with proof of income, which should include a current IRS W2 form, copies of three current pay stubs from head of household, and any other documentation supporting the level of income claim, shall be forwarded to Trousdale County EMS, 95 River Valley Drive, Hartsville, 37074. The EMS Billing Office will review the form to determine if the person meets the income guidelines as set forth in the DHHS Poverty Guidelines. The waiver application will be forwarded to the Emergency Services Committee for review and decision; final decision will be noted on the form. If approved for a waiver, a copy will be made, and the record will be held in the billing department files for a period of five years. The EMS Billing Office will notify the patient in writing as to the final disposition of the Hardship Waiver.

If the insurance company deems transport not medically necessary, the billing office will verify the information that was submitted to the insurance company and resubmit the claim for reconsideration. If the insurance carrier deems the transport not medically necessary, the Patient Hardship Committee will review the individual case for possible waiver of the fees.

Patients will fall into one of the following categories for billing purposes:

Insured through health insurance, Medicare, or Medicaid: The appropriate health insurance carrier or entity will be billed by the billing office.

Nursing Home Residents: After insurances and other programs are applied from usage of the Hartsville/Trousdale County Ambulance Services, the remaining balance will be waived without hardship documentation for patients that are residents of nursing homes.

No insurance: A bill will be sent to the patient transported. If the individual has the ability to pay, when payment is expected in full. If the patient can demonstrate financial hardship, they may request to be considered for a payment plan or a financial hardship waiver. Refer to Trousdale County EMS Hardship Guidelines.

Contractual write offs: The bills that Medicaid, Medicare and insurance companies pay on behalf of an insured individual are sometimes adjusted to pay only a portion of the billed amount. This adjustment referred to here as a "contractual write off" is usually due to laws governing the payment amount through agreements between insurance companies and billing entity. The contractual write-offs are not considered unpaid balances that would require pursuit of the amount from the insured individual. In fact, Medicare and Medicaid prohibit balance billing. Entities that work with insurance providers consider contractual write offs as a cost of doing business. Therefore, our billing office will adjust individual bills for contractual write-offs, The County will not pursue individuals for payment of contractual write-offs. Applicable co-payment and deductibles would still be billed and collected as permitted or required by applicable law.

Courtesy Write-Offs/No Collection: There are instances when professional courtesy is to be extended.

- **Workers Compensation Injury of an On Duty Employee/Volunteer:** When an on-duty County employee or Volunteer member is transported due to a worker's compensation injury, any charges will be waived and neither the County, Employee, nor Volunteer is to be directly charged.
- **County Employees/Volunteers:** As a courtesy to the employees and active volunteers of Hartsville/Trousdale County Government (this includes Elected/Appointed Officials, General Government, Water & Sewer Department, Highway Department, and the Trousdale County School District Employees; as well as the Volunteer Fire Department and the Volunteer Rescue Squad), any remaining charges incurred after insurances are applied from usage of the Hartsville/Trousdale County Ambulance Services will be waived for the employee or volunteer. Documentation may be requested by the billing clerk to qualify for this courtesy.

Balances less than \$25.00 may be written off by billing staff without further action.