



GOLDER RANCH FIRE DISTRICT

Fire ♦ Rescue ♦ Medical
3885 E. Golder Ranch Drive
Tucson Arizona 85739
(520) 825-9001 / FAX (520) 825-8043

Chief Randy Karrer



April 17, 2014 (UPDATE)

Golder Ranch Fire District EMS Ambulance Transport Services & Billing FAQ Sheet

Golder Ranch Fire District (GRFD) is proud to serve the communities of Oro Valley, Catalina and Saddlebrooke with state of the art emergency medical services. This FAQ sheet provides answers to frequently asked questions about these services and associated billing.

- 1. Q: What type of EMS ambulance transport service does Golder Ranch Fire District provide?**
A: GRFD provides Advanced Life Support (ALS), Basic Life Support (BLS), and Inter-facility transports. ALS and Inter-facility transports usually require a higher level of medical care done by a Paramedic. BLS transports are usually provided by EMT level.
- 2. Q: Will I get a bill if I am transported?**
A: Regardless of what type of transport is done by GRFD, you may get a bill. GRFD makes every effort to seek reimbursement, first, from the patient's insurance carrier. Balances not covered by insurance are billed to the patient.
- 3. Q: Who sets the rates for ambulance transports?**
A: Ambulance transport rates in Arizona are established and regulated by the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS). GRFD does *not* establish the rates.
- 4. Q: What is the average bill for a transport?**
A: The average bill for an ambulance service is approximately \$1,200. However, many insurance plans cover a significant portion of this cost. Most of this bill comes from the ambulance transport base rate. The remainder consists of mileage.
- 5. Q: Why didn't the paramedic / EMT tell me that I was going to be charged?**
A: The paramedic's or EMT's role at an emergency scene is to care for the patient, not negotiate medical billing.
- 6. Q: Do patients sign a document acknowledging financial responsibility for any unpaid balances?**
A: GRFD attempts to get signatures from patients, if it is possible. If the patient is not able to sign, because of their condition, the paramedic or EMT notes this in the medical report.
- 7. Q: Who do I call if I have a question about a bill received by GRFD?**
A: Billing Department office (520) 825-5902.

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8. **Q: Why does the Fire District charge for ambulance services?**

A: Ambulance fees reduce the tax burden of emergency medical services for GRFD residents by shifting a portion of the cost to users of the service or their medical insurance carrier. Currently, these fees help recover the cost of providing Emergency Medical Services.

9. **Q: Why don't my property taxes cover this service?**

A: Arizona state law (ASRS §48-805(E)) does not permit property taxes to be used to pay for or otherwise subsidize ambulance transport costs. Property taxes cover fire or non-transport medical services and GRFD does not charge any extra for these services.

10. **Q: What are my options if I do not want to be billed for the balance of ambulance services?**

A: GRFD has recently received authorization from Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) to establish a Membership program for GRFD residents. GRFD residents now have an option to join our annual Membership program, to cover any out of pocket expenses for medically necessary transports within the District. If you choose to join before your transport, you will not owe any amount beyond what your insurance pays (see EMS Membership Plan FAQ for more information).