



MEMORANDUM

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
FROM: Mike Hilley, EMS Manager
RE: Bellingham Fire Department, Fire District 7
DATE: January 6, 2020

Enclosed are two (2) originals of a contract amendment between Bellingham Fire Department, Fire Protection District 7 and Whatcom County for your review and signature.

▪ **Background and Purpose**

In 2015, a statewide legislative effort to bring Federal Medicaid Gap funding known as Ground Emergency Medical Transport (GEMT) reimbursement to Washington State was spearheaded by Central Pierce Fire and Rescue along with seven other fire agencies. This legislative effort proved successful and the work to analyze transport data and develop cost reports for fire agencies throughout the State began. This work again, was led by Central Pierce Fire and Rescue along with seven additional fire agencies, who contracted with consultant, AP Triton to perform the work necessary to implement the processes.

In late 2017, seminars held in Olympia, Everett, and Spokane appealed to all participating fire agencies to share in the \$566k cost incurred by Central Pierce and the other 8 agencies to successfully bring get GEMT reimbursement through the legislature and implement the process for state fire agencies. Participating fire agencies throughout the state have signed letter of agreements to participate in the reimbursement program, including Bellingham Fire Department and Fire District 7. Both Whatcom County participating ALS agency calculated their reimbursement between their ALS and BLS calls, billing only the ALS share to the Countywide EMS Levy Fund.

Additionally, Fire District 7 has an ongoing billing cost of \$30,000 for the cost run reports required by their billing agency, SystemDesign to prepare the necessary reports allowing them to bill for GEMT transports. Again, Fire District 7 splits the cost between ALS and BLS transports. The GEMT annual report for Fire District 7's ALS transports is only \$15,000 and included in this amendment.

Bellingham Fire Department is prepared to perform the billing functions internally and has estimated an additional billing cost of \$1,500 annually.

▪ **Funding Amount and Source**

EMS Levy Fund

- **Differences from Previous Contract** This amendment allows for the expense of the GEMT consultant and transport analysis necessary to receive the annual Ground Emergency Medical Transport reimbursement payments.

Please contact Mike Hilley at (360) 927.1155, if you have any questions or concerns regarding the terms of this agreement.

Encl.