

Whatcom County Emergency Medical Services  
800 E. Chestnut St. Suite 3C  
Bellingham, WA 98225



**To:** Satpal Sidhu, County Executive

**From:** Mike Hilley, Whatcom County EMS Manager

July 22, 2024

**Subject:** 2024 to 2029 Interlocal Agreement for First Response Emergency Medical Services

City of Bellingham Fire Department  
City of Lynden Fire Department  
Whatcom Fire Protection District 1  
Whatcom Fire Protection District 4  
Whatcom County Fire Protection District 7  
Whatcom Fire Protection District 8  
Whatcom Fire Protection District 11  
Whatcom Fire Protection District 14  
Whatcom Fire Protection District 16  
Whatcom Fire Protection District 17  
Whatcom Fire Protection District 18  
Whatcom Fire Protection District 19  
Whatcom Fire Protection District 21 (dba North Whatcom Fire and Rescue)  
South Whatcom Fire Authority

### Background and Purpose

The county-wide Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Levy and Ordinance (2023 to 2028) was passed in November 2022 that provides funding for EMS services in Whatcom County. This agreement is aligned with the Advanced Life Support Agreement for the length of the current EMS Levy and contains elements of the Whatcom County EMS Levy Plan and Ordinance that supports Basic Life Support (BLS) Operations in three service areas for a Total Amount of **\$25,035,000**.

1. Pays Prospect Dispatch Fees for all agencies. Approximately **\$2.4 mil per year**. With annual inflation applied from the previous year CPI-W rates. **(Six Year Approximate Total = \$14.4 mil)**
2. Funds and maintains Centralized EMS Electronic Patient Care Records System. (Image Trend) at **\$272.500 per year**. with annual established inflation rates of 5% in January of each year. **(Six Year Approximate Total = \$ 1.635 mil)**
3. Provides for an annual allocation of **\$1.5 mil** to offset agencies cost for operations. This allocation is equitably distributed among the 15 departments/districts. **(Six Year Total = \$9.0 mil)**

While the Whatcom County Executive supports this contract, it is understood that both the EMS Oversight Board (EOB) and the Finance Sub-Committee recognize these budgets will have an effect to the end fund balance over the next years. As required by the EMS levy ordinance, the EOB and EMS administration will report and update the county council on the health of the end fund balance which may require budget adjustments that maintains an end fund balance to meet the operational reserves policy.

As related to the BLS Allocation (3.) This allocation is meant to off-set costs as a reimbursement for departments/district BLS operations as per RCW 84.52.069 (5) for EMS eligible and qualified expenses.

The 2024 to 2029 Interlocal Agreements are presented to the county council for approval after months of work between Whatcom County EMS office and the Whatcom Fire Chiefs Association representing all of the Whatcom County Fire Departments/Districts.

**6-Year Budget Table for First Response Contract**

**Service Provided                      Annual Amount                      6-Year Total Amount**

<b>Service Provided</b>	<b>Annual Amount</b>	<b>6-Year Total Amount</b>	
Prospect Dispatch Fees	\$2.4 Mil Annually	\$14.4 Mil Total	CPI-W Inflation Annually
EPCR System	\$272,500 Annually	\$1.635 Mil Total	5% Inflation Annually
BLS Allocation	\$1.5 Mil Annually	\$9.0 Mil Total	No Inflation Annually

**Total Funding Amount = \$25,035,000. (Six Year Total per the WCEMS Levy Plan)**

**Funding Source:** Whatcom County EMS Levy

Submitted by Mike Hilley, Whatcom County EMS Manager; [mhilley@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:mhilley@co.whatcom.wa.us) 360-927-1155