

Non-Emergency Ambulance Service

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Governance

- Ambulance Service in Wake County is governed by
 - Wake County Code of Ordinances (111.Emergency Medical Services)
 - North Carolina Administrative Code

- Wake County's Emergency Medical Services and Ambulance Services Ordinance requires non-emergency ambulance providers to hold a franchise to operate in Wake County.

Service Levels and Governance

- Ambulance service in Wake County has traditionally been grouped by North Carolina Administrative Code service level definitions
 - Non-Emergency Ambulance Service (Basic Life Support in Wake County)
 - Emergency Ambulance Service (Advanced Life Support)
 - Interfacility/Critical Care Transport (Specialty Care Transport provided by hospital-based providers)
- Governance of each service level is provided via a different mechanism
 - Non-Emergency Ambulance Service – Wake County franchise
 - Emergency Ambulance Service – Wake County services contract
 - Interfacility/Critical Care Transport – North Carolina EMS System Plan
- Ultimately, Wake County has some level of responsibility for all ambulance providers operating within Wake County based on North Carolina General Statute

Service Levels

- *Non-Emergency Ambulance Service* covers routine patient transport to and from doctor's appointments, discharge from hospitals, and routine transfers of patients who do not require advanced life support services.
- *Emergency Ambulance Service* covers all 911 emergency response and time sensitive advanced life support transfers
- *Interfacility/Critical Care* service covers the transport of patients requiring advanced life support and specialty care services for interfacility transfers.

Non-Emergency Ambulance Service

- Wake County has traditionally:
 - Not directly provided non-emergency ambulance service
 - Franchised a mix of for-profit and not-for-profit providers to cover that service level
- This system design has worked well by
 - Providing multiple options for citizens to choose from with regard to non-emergency transportation
 - Providing redundancy in this service area reducing the opportunity for citizen impact if a provider decides to leave the Wake County service area
 - Decreasing the potential tax payor burden by allowing for profit providers to operate within the service area.

Service Provider Billing and Compensation

- Wake County does not govern the billing rates or the compensation levels for non-emergency ambulance service providers.
- Non-Emergency Ambulance Providers operate in a competitive market for both customers and employees. To maintain market share within the competitive market each provider must:
 - From the citizen perspective: maintain competitive billing rates and service levels
 - From the employee perspective: maintain competitive compensation, benefit packages, and working conditions.
- Other than the franchise application fee, Wake County does not receive any reimbursement/funding from the non-emergency providers.
- Wake County also does not provide funding to non-emergency ambulance providers as part of their ambulance franchise ordinance.

Today's Requests

- Priority Care Ambulance - Franchise Renewal
- Jan-Care Ambulance Service - New Franchise

Recommendation

- Wake County has one of the more stringent ambulance franchise application processes requiring applicants to provide a significant amount of information to county staff prior to the application being submitted to the Board of Commissioners for consideration.
- Both Priority Care Ambulance and Jan-Care Ambulance Service have provided that information and demonstrated their understanding of the requirements to operate in Wake County. In addition, Priority Care Ambulance has also demonstrated throughout their past franchise that they are able to successfully operate in the Wake County service area.
- Staff recommends approval of non-emergency ambulance franchises for Priority Care Ambulance and Jan-Care Ambulance Service.

Questions