



Overview of Transport Fees

VALLEY REGIONAL FIRE AUTHORITY

Our Policy

The VRFA uses either VRFA aid units or private ambulances to transport **basic life support (BLS) patients** from the emergency scene to area hospitals.

The decision to transport, and the mode of transport - VRFA or private ambulance - is made by on-scene personnel and is guided by VRFA policy and King County EMS protocols. In either case, there will be a fee for this BLS transport. There is no fee for transports provided by King County Medic One.

It is the policy of the VRFA that no person shall be denied needed emergency medical transport because of an inability to pay for such services.

To be **eligible for waived or reduced transport charges**, total family income must be equal to or less than the family income levels as found within the City of Auburn's Fee Schedule below. These family income levels are tied to the *US Department of Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines* for the 48 contiguous states and are as follows:

- A 100% reduction of the billed transport fee shall be tied to a total annual family income equal to 100% of the Guidelines, rounded to the nearest \$10.
- A 50% reduction of the billed transport fee shall be tied to a total annual family income equal to 130% of the Guidelines, rounded to the nearest \$10.
- A 25% reduction of the billed transport fee shall be tied to a total annual family income equal to 150% of the Guidelines, rounded to the nearest \$10.

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SERVES THE COMMUNITIES
OF ALOGNA, AUBURN,
AND PACIFIC

vrfa.org

Transport FAQs



Why charge for VRFA Basic Life Support Transport services?

Since 2005, the VRFA has worked with a private basic life support (BLS) transport contractor to ensure citizens receive timely and professional transport to the hospital when they need it. Both the VRFA and the private contractor charge the same fee for their services and will continue working together to provide transport services. This working relationship allows firefighters to be more readily available for that next 911 call and provides the opportunity for the private sector to share in the transport of non-life threatening cases. Furthermore, because of changes in the law, this is required to make sure the VRFA is not in violation of State regulations. Initial rapid response to 911 calls is still the first priority of the VRFA.

How much does it cost?

The effective rate charged by both the VRFA and the private ambulance contractor can be found on our **Current Fee Schedule** on the vrfa.org documents page. The VRFA transport fee is only applicable if a patient is transported by a VRFA ambulance to the hospital or a medical facility.

There is no fee for calling 911.

If the VRFA Firefighter/Emergency Medical Technician determines the medical condition is an Advanced Life Support (ALS) situation, requiring KC Medic One Paramedic services, and the Paramedics transport the patient, there is no transport fee.

The ALS services provided by KC Medic One are fully funded by the citizen approved King County EMS levy. The VRFA and the citizens we serve are owners in Valley Communications: the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) for your 911 system.

How will the billing process work if I am a VRFA service area resident?

With Insurance: Your insurance company will be billed. Even if insurance only pays a portion, it will be considered payment in full. The patient will not be billed for any remaining balance.

Without Insurance: Billing will be sent directly to the patient.

If I am a non-VRFA service area resident receiving transport in the service area:

With Insurance: Your insurance company will be billed.

Without Insurance:
Billing will be sent directly to the patient.





Transport FAQs

Will the VRFA ambulance or the private contractor still transport me if I can't pay the fee?

Patients will not be refused service by the VRFA or the private transport contractor based on their ability to pay the transport fee. In most cases, the billing information will not be gathered until the patient has already been designated for transport by the firefighter/EMT. **The patient's immediate health needs are the number one priority of the VRFA and the contractor.** However, all transported patients will receive a bill for the transport service. Patients will be billed either through their insurance or directly if they do not have insurance. Patients will not be asked to pay the fee at the time of transport.

BILLING QUESTIONS?

The VRFA uses a third-party company, **Systems Design West**, to facilitate billing for transports.

For billing questions, contact Systems Design at **(800) 585-5242** or visit their website:

<https://systemsdesignems.com/contact-us/>



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