
HOUSE BILL 2466

State of Washington

68th Legislature

2024 Regular Session

By Representatives Fosse, Bronoske, and Bateman

Read first time 01/23/24. Referred to Committee on Health Care & Wellness.

1 AN ACT Relating to addressing ambulance wait times for patient
2 transfer from emergency medical services to hospital staff; amending
3 RCW 70.168.020; and adding a new section to chapter 70.41 RCW.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 70.41
6 RCW to read as follows:

7 (1)(a) Beginning December 1, 2025, a hospital with an emergency
8 department shall accept care for a patient that has been transported
9 to the hospital in an ambulance within 30 minutes of the ambulance
10 arriving at the hospital, unless an exception applies.

11 (b) If the hospital does not accept care for a patient in 30
12 minutes or less, and an exception does not apply, the hospital shall
13 reimburse the ambulance service for the ambulance's additional
14 waiting time in accordance with reimbursement rates set by the
15 department based on the Washington state wage and equipment rate
16 guide.

17 (c) Exceptions to the requirements included in (a) and (b) of
18 this subsection do not include reduced emergency department capacity
19 due to hospital staffing, but do include:

20 (i) Periods of patient surge due to the activation of a disaster
21 medical control center; and

1 (ii) Periods of reduced emergency department capacity due to
2 temporary, unforeseen damage or disruptions to the emergency
3 department, such as water damage or system outages.

4 (2) By December 1, 2025, the department, in consultation with the
5 emergency medical services and trauma care steering committee, shall
6 establish requirements regarding:

7 (a) Protocols to be implemented by hospitals and ambulance
8 services for recording the time of the ambulance's arrival at the
9 hospital and the time that the transfer of care to the hospital
10 occurs;

11 (b) Exceptions for when ambulance waiting time may exceed 30
12 minutes without requiring reimbursement by the hospital; and

13 (c) Reimbursement rates for ambulance waiting time exceeding 30
14 minutes, based on the Washington state wage and equipment rate guide.

15 (3) Nothing in this section prohibits a hospital that does not
16 have the capability to treat a specific medical condition from
17 transferring a patient to a hospital with specialized capabilities in
18 accordance with state and federal law.

19 (4) The department may adopt rules to implement this section.

20 (5) For the purposes of this section, "ambulance service" means
21 an organization that operates one or more ambulances.

22 **Sec. 2.** RCW 70.168.020 and 2011 1st sp.s. c 21 s 28 are each
23 amended to read as follows:

24 (1) There is hereby created an emergency medical services and
25 trauma care steering committee composed of representatives of
26 individuals knowledgeable in emergency medical services and trauma
27 care, including emergency medical providers such as physicians,
28 nurses, hospital personnel, emergency medical technicians,
29 paramedics, ambulance services, a member of the emergency medical
30 services licensing and certification advisory committee, local
31 government officials, state officials, consumers, and persons
32 affiliated professionally with health science schools. The secretary
33 shall appoint members of the steering committee. Members shall be
34 appointed for a period of three years. The department shall provide
35 administrative support to the committee. All appointive members of
36 the committee, in the performance of their duties, may be entitled to
37 receive travel expenses as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060.
38 The secretary may remove members from the committee who have three
39 unexcused absences from committee meetings. The secretary shall fill

1 any vacancies of the committee in a timely manner. The terms of those
2 members representing the same field shall not expire at the same
3 time.

4 The committee shall elect a chair and a vice chair whose terms of
5 office shall be for one year each. The chair shall be ineligible for
6 reelection after serving four consecutive terms.

7 The committee shall meet on call by the secretary or the chair.

8 (2) The emergency medical services and trauma care steering
9 committee shall:

10 (a) Advise the department regarding emergency medical services
11 and trauma care needs throughout the state.

12 (b) Review the regional emergency medical services and trauma
13 care plans and recommend changes to the department before the
14 department adopts the plans.

15 (c) Review proposed departmental rules for emergency medical
16 services and trauma care.

17 (d) Recommend modifications in rules regarding emergency medical
18 services and trauma care.

19 (e) Consult with the department regarding requirements for
20 recording and reimbursing ambulance waiting time in accordance with
21 section 1 of this act.

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