**EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

Analyst: Wendy K. Soo Hoo

|  |  | **Expenditures** |  | **Revenues** |  | **FTEs** |  | **TLTs** | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2021-2022 Revised Budget |  | $211,076,742 |  | $205,017,780 |  | 137.3 |  | 0.0 | |
| 2023-2024 Base Budget Adjust. |  | $7,390,733 |  | ($1,825,788) |  | 0.3 |  | 0.0 | |
| 2023-2024 Decision Packages |  | $41,167,377 |  | $34,621,018 |  | 7.0 |  | 0.0 | |
| **2023-2024 Proposed Budget** |  | **$259,635,000** |  | **$237,813,010** |  | **144.6** |  | **0.0** | |
| % Change from prior biennium |  | 23.0% |  |  |  |  |  |  | |
| Dec. Pkg. as % of prior biennium |  | 19.5% |  |  |  |  |  |  | |
| **Major Revenue Sources:** Emergency Medical Services levy | | | | | | | | |
| **Base Budget Assumptions:** Updated personnel costs and removal of one-time, grant-backed supplementals | | | | | | | | |

**Description**

EMS, a division of Public Health – Seattle & King County (PHSKC), operates a coordinated regional partnership providing a continuum of care for people in need of emergency medical care services (Medic One) and oversees a tiered regional model for emergency medical care and training throughout the county. EMS is primarily funded by a countywide, voter-approved six-year EMS levy which will expire at the end of 2025. The EMS levy funds supporting this budget are restricted by state law and can only be spent on EMS-related activities.

The tiered system model is built on partnerships rooted in regional, collaborative, and cross jurisdictional coordination. This system operates in a coordinated partnership with five dispatch centers, five paramedic providers, and 28 fire departments. This partnership also requires collaboration with local hospital emergency departments, private ambulance companies, and other organizations.

**Summary of Proposed Budget and Changes**

The EMS budget is proposed to increase by 23 percent from $211 million in 2021-2022 to $260 million in 2023-2024. The proposed changes are largely driven by technical adjustments to allocations to EMS regional partners ($21.5 million), strategic initiatives ($4.1 million), and King County Medic One ($5.2 million), as provided for in the Medic One/EMS 2020-2025 Strategic Plan.

In addition, several smaller requests include:

* $1.6 million for increased regional emergency medical technician (EMT) and paramedic training. A significant portion of the EMT and paramedic workforce is eligible for retirement. This decision package focuses on training for new EMTs and paramedics.
* $2.1 million[[1]](#footnote-1) and 6 FTE for increased King County Medic One staffing. This decision package addresses King County Medic One's operational needs from having a less experienced workforce.
  + One position is added to augment recruitment, training, mentoring and quality improvement activities;
  + Two additional paramedic FTEs are proposed to better support 24-hour service provided by 9 paramedic units in south King County; and
  + The remaining positions would support additional paramedic intern FTEs.
* $1.1 million to replace a 22-year old training and recertification learning platform that supports training of EMS system partners, including EMTs and paramedics employed by fire agencies and cities. This amount represents about half of the overall $2.2 million budgeted for this project[[2]](#footnote-2) in the capital improvement program.
* $378,000 for an Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Manager to support the regional EMS system, including working with external partners and Public Health and King County staff. According to Executive staff, this position would provide a leadership role to work to enhance EMS's approach to equity and social justice. This position would partner with the Fire Chiefs Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Subcommittee and work on internal recruitment strategies for the future EMS workforce. The position would also support planning for the next levy period.

**Key Issues**

Council staff has not identified any issues.

1. Approximately $600,000 of this amount is associated with retirement payouts. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Project 1143729 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)