



City of San Antonio

Agenda Memorandum

File Number:20-3135

Agenda Item Number: 10.

Agenda Date: 5/14/2020

In Control: City Council A Session

DEPARTMENT: SAFD

DEPARTMENT HEAD: Charles N. Hood

COUNCIL DISTRICTS IMPACTED: Citywide

SUBJECT:

FY2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) Grant

SUMMARY:

An ordinance accepting grant funds received of \$393,483.90 for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to support healthcare-related expenses or lost revenue attributable to COVID-19 related transports. The City automatically received these grant funds on April 17, 2020, and the City has 30 days to accept or reject the funds.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The CARES Act provides \$100 billion in relief funds to hospitals and other healthcare providers on the front lines of the coronavirus response. This funding is to support healthcare-related expenses or lost revenue attributable to COVID-19 and to ensure uninsured Americans can get testing and treatment for COVID-19.

\$50 billion of the Provider Relief fund is for general distribution to Medicare facilities and providers impacted by COVID-19, based on eligible providers' net patient revenues. To expedite providers receiving the money as quickly as possible, HHS distributed the funds immediately, proportionate to the City's share of Medicare reimbursements in 2019.

Since 1974, the San Antonio Fire Department (SAFD) Emergency Medical Services (EMS) division has provided advanced life support ambulance service to patients requiring medical treatment and transport to local

hospitals. The City of San Antonio contracts with B&P to collect various payment types, which include Medicaid, Medicare, Commercial Insurance as well as direct payments from patients. To be eligible for this grant, the City of San Antonio must have billed Medicare in 2019; be in good standing with Medicare/Medicaid and other Federal health care programs, and does not currently have Medicare billing privileges revoked. The SAFD meets those requirements and therefore qualifies for this grant.

The CARES grant is in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, only used to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus and health care related expenses or lost revenues that are attributable to coronavirus. This is a payment to healthcare providers, not a loan, and the City of San Antonio does not need to repay this.

ISSUE:

This grant provides supplemental funds for patients that are transported by the City's EMS as a result of the COVID-19 related symptoms. Under normal circumstances, when a patient is transported by EMS, B&P will collect various types of payments on behalf of the City to include direct payments from patients. As a condition of this grant, the City, would not seek out-of-pocket payments from a COVID-19 patients. Therefore, once a COVID-19 patient is transported by EMS, the City would not charge the remaining balance after insurance has paid their allowable amount. Currently we are not allowed to balance bill for Medicaid and Medicare patients so this will only affect patients with Commercial/Private Insurance.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council could elect not to accept the funds, however, choosing not to will result in the City losing \$393,483.90 to address the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

FISCAL IMPACT:

An ordinance accepting grant funds received of \$393,483.90 for the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to support healthcare-related expenses or lost revenue attributable to COVID-19 related transports. The City automatically received these grant funds on April 17, 2020, and the City has 30 days to accept or reject the funds.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that City Council approve the acceptance of the grant award.