



**ACCESS  
HEALTH NYC**  
COMMUNITY IS THE KEY

**cphs\***  
\*putting the public back in public health

**Guide to your Health Care  
Rights & Options  
Emergency Medical Services**

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# What to Know about Emergency Medical Services

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The New York City Emergency Medical Service (NYC EMS) is the emergency medical response system activated through 9-1-1 telephone system.



In order to provide the most appropriate response, **incoming calls to 9-1-1 are medically screened to determine the seriousness of the problem.**

## How are calls dispatched?

When calling 9-1-1, you will first speak to a police operator who then connect you to an EMS operator.

The EMS operator records all the information concerning your medical problem on a computer screen.

**The dispatcher sends the closes EMS team having the necessary training to treat the emergency.**

The order of the calls depends on the seriousness of the problem.

During times of high demand, less serious calls are often placed on hold until life-threatening ones are assigned. **BUT** EMS operators are also responsible for providing important medical standby information to the hospital Emergency room, so there is preparation for the needs of the patient can be addressed prior to EMS unit arriving.

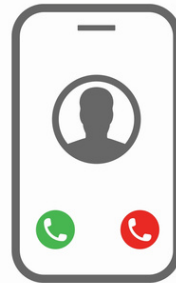


# What to Know about Emergency Medical Services

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## How Can I help?

Instructions on first aid are given by the EMS operator, who is a trained EMT or paramedic. A nurse may further get involved to ask you about the problem and provide instructions.



## Don't Hang Up!

Tip: Many people falsely believe that while they are on the phone the EMS crew cannot be notified of the emergency. Information can be passed on by computer, the ambulance can be on its way while you are still on the phone.

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**You can help** by providing the right information to get the quickest response. You may be nervous but 9-1-1 call operator can help make you feel less nervous. You can also cut down delays by opening doors and meeting the EMS crew to lead to the patient, or calling back to provide more information.



# What to Know about Emergency Medical Services

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## EMS responds in team of two

### Basic Life Support

Trained to assist with childbirth, splint fractures, control bleeding, stabilize back injuries, give oxygen, and treat shock.



### Advanced Life Support

Trained to check and treat the seriously hurt and ill with advanced skills. They have:

- Medications
- Advanced devices to help with breathing and/or with serious heart issues
- Various fluids to help pass vital nutrients to the body

## How will I know what type of team will respond?

Depend on your answers to the questions given by the EMS operator. If condition of the patient should change, you should immediately call back 9-1-1 to make sure the operator and EMS team are made aware of the change. In event of multiple people are hurt or ill, EMS supervisors direct the flow, and coordinate with other agencies at the scene.



# What to Know about Emergency Medical Services

## Hospital Choice

EMS requires that ambulances be available in a timely manner. NYC EMS tries to honor patient requests for the hospital of his, her or they choice whenever possible.

**Tip: EMS has a “Ten Minute Rule.”**

**You can ask to be taken to a hospital if it is not more than ten minutes past where you would have been taken to.**



## Decisions must take into consideration

Medical condition of the patient

Travel distance to hospital of choice

Bad weather conditions

Current demand for services on the hospitals and EMS system

# What to Know about Emergency Medical Services



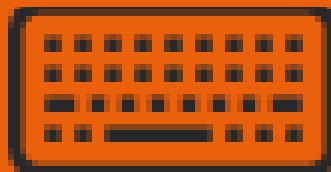
How can I find someone who has been brought to the hospital?

- 1 You can find out which hospital an ambulance took a patient to if the ambulance was requested by calling 911 or you know where the patient was picked up.**

**Call 311 for assistance.**



- 2 NYC Emergency Patient Search (NYCEPS) Portal can assist the public in city- and state-wide emergencies to help families find their relatives and loved ones**



**877-695-4749 | [healthix.org](http://healthix.org)**



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# What to Know about Emergency Medical Services: Your Rights Part I

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Respectful and professional prehospital emergency care and transportation services.



Be informed about the nature of the condition for which you are being treated, the purpose of the treatment, and the need to be transported to the most appropriate hospital based on your medical condition.



Request transportation to the hospital of your choice within the NYC EMS guidelines, or the names of those hospitals that fall within the guidelines.

Under no circumstances may a hospital emergency department refuse to evaluate or treat a patient. Even if the hospital is on diversion, patients arriving for emergency treatment must be seen. **No** exceptions.

When a hospital and its emergency room are overcrowded to the point that they can no longer safely accommodate another patient. The hospital will declare itself on a "diversion" status, meaning that they cannot accept new ambulance arrivals until they can recover to what they deem is a safer time.

# What to Know about Emergency Medical Services: Your Rights Part II



Say no to emergency medical care and/or transportation services, after being told of possible consequences of refusal.



Say no to cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) when in possession of a non-hospital order to not to resuscitate (DNR).

Be aware that a health proxy or living will is not valid in the out-of-hospital emergency care setting



Be Transported in a clean and properly maintained emergency vehicle which is compliance with all applicable laws and rules.

Don't refuse it if you're really sick. But if you don't really need treatment and are concerned about a big bill, always be willing to stand up for yourself.



# What to Know about Emergency Medical Services: Your Rights Part III



Confidentiality of information given in the course of getting care before arriving to the hospital and transportation based on accepted medical legal practice.



Receive upon you asking, the names and professional status of those individuals providing emergency medical care before arriving to the hospital and transportation services.



Receive upon you asking, what is the cost or an explanation from NYC EMS of any emergency medical care and transport before arriving to the hospital.



A complaint may be made against any New York State certified EMS agency, EMS provider, EMS course sponsor, instructor or group conducting a public function in accordance with New York Sanitary Code Part 18. Important note: The Bureau of Emergency Medical Services does not have jurisdiction over EMS billing practices and therefore does not investigate billing complaints. EMS Complaint form can be downloaded from this link

**[https://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/ems/docs/ems\\_complaint\\_form.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/ems/docs/ems_complaint_form.pdf)**

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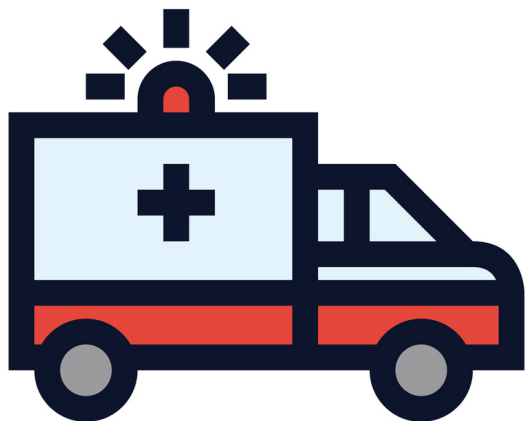
# What to Know about Emergency Medical Services: The Cost Part I

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## Will I receive a bill?

It depends on the ambulance company. Some may not charge you unless they provide transportation. Others may charge for being called to the scene, even if you aren't taken to the hospital.



In an emergency, you probably won't know whether the ambulance is run by the government or a private institution.

**BUT**, public ambulances (run by Fire Department/EMS) vs private ambulances charge differently. **See Part II for charges**

## What if I am uninsured and or can't pay the ambulance bill?

If you are transported by FDNY-EMS and meet FDNY Charity Care Policy Guidelines, based on Federal Poverty Levels ("FPL"), you may be eligible for Charitable Care fee scaling for their ambulance charges.

**Look for the phone number listed on the ambulance bill (844-394-5716) and request a Charitable Care Fee Scaling application.**

# What to Know about Emergency Medical Services: The Cost Part II



Effective January 1, 2021, the charges for Fire Department ambulance treatment and transport services are as follows:

Type of Service Charge	Cost
Basic Life Support Ambulance	\$ 900.00
Basic Life Support Ambulance Facilitation of Treatment in Place	\$ 630.00
Advanced Life Support Ambulance	\$ 1,525.00
Service Level 1 (ALS1)	
Advanced Life Support Ambulance	\$ 1,625.00
Service Level 2 (ALS2)	
Advanced Life Support Ambulance	\$ 1,050.00
Facilitation of Treatment in Place	

## Additional Charges:

- Mileage (distance traveled to hospital or medical facility with patient) \$ 15.00/mile
- Provision of Oxygen (as applicable) \$ 66.00



## Tip

Charges for Ambulances run by Private Companies may differ with what they charge.