

Proposal:

Countywide EMT Rapid Response Staffing Model and Performance-Based EMS Staffing Grant

Bayfield County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) System Support Initiative

1. Purpose and Overview

Bayfield County continues to face increasing challenges in maintaining reliable Emergency Medical Services (EMS) staffing across its geographically large and predominantly rural service area. Local EMS agencies experience persistent staffing shortages, particularly during daytime hours, periods of call concurrency, and extended response times due to limited availability of qualified personnel.

To address these challenges while preserving the independence and identity of local EMS agencies, Bayfield County proposes a **dual-strategy EMS system support initiative** consisting of:

1. A **County EMT Rapid Response Staffing Model**, and
2. A **Competitive EMS Staffing Grant Fund** for local agencies.

Together, these initiatives are designed to improve system reliability, reduce missed calls, enhance responder safety, and strengthen long-term EMS sustainability countywide.

2. Problem Statement

Bayfield County EMS agencies face: - Inconsistent staffing availability - Increasing reliance on mutual aid - Missed or delayed calls due to inability to assemble a legal crew

These challenges create risks to patient outcomes, responder safety, and public confidence in emergency services. A countywide, collaborative approach is required to stabilize EMS operations while maintaining community-based service delivery.

3. County EMT Rapid Response Staffing Model

3.1 Program Description

Bayfield County will establish a **County EMT Rapid Response Unit** staffed by **two (2) EMTs on duty 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, 365 days per year.**

County EMTs will:

- Operate from a **County-owned Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV)**
- Respond to EMS incidents when local agencies lack adequate staffing
- Combine with local EMS personnel to form a **legal ambulance crew**
- Transport patients in the **host agency's ambulance**

This model supplements local agencies rather than replacing them, ensuring continuity of care while preserving local identity, equipment ownership, and transport billing.

3.2 Dispatch and Response Protocol

1. **Primary Dispatch**

Dispatch will page the local EMS agency first for all EMS calls.

2. **County Supplemental Response**

If the local agency:

- Does not acknowledge the page, or
 - Indicates insufficient staffing to form a legal crew
- Dispatch will activate the County EMT Rapid Response Unit.

3. **On-Scene Integration**

County EMTs will respond to the station or scene as appropriate and integrate into the response under established protocols and medical direction.

3.3 Additional County EMS Function

The countywide EMS agency may be paged first before local EMS jurisdictions for a lift assist without injury. Additionally, Bayfield County EMS may create a community health program that checks on citizens recently discharged from the hospital or nursing home to ensure they are taking proper care of wounds and taking medicine as required.

4. Countywide EMS Operational Scheduling

Bayfield County will implement a **Joint Countywide EMS Availability Schedule**.

- Local EMS agencies will maintain their own internal schedules.
- Agencies will enter anticipated periods of **low or no staffing** into the shared countywide schedule.
- The County EMS team will use this information to proactively supplement coverage and reduce missed calls.

This approach enhances coordination while preserving local control.

5. Competitive EMS Staffing Grant Fund

5.1 Purpose

Bayfield County will allocate **\$200,000 annually** to establish a **Competitive EMS Staffing Grant Fund** for local EMS agencies.

The fund is intended to: - Support direct staffing costs - Improve local staffing availability - Reduce missed EMS calls - Incentivize accountability and performance

5.2 Eligible Uses

Grant funds may be used **only for staffing-related expenses**, including: - Hourly wages for EMTs or paramedics - Overtime tied directly to staffing coverage - Paid-on-call or incentive pay - Recruitment or retention incentives related to staffing

Funds may **not** be used for equipment, vehicles, or non-staffing operational expenses.

5.3 Performance Standards

To be an eligible agency, agencies must:

- Demonstrate funds are used exclusively for staffing
- Clearly demonstrate reduction in missed calls annually.
- Participate in countywide data reporting on staffing and response performance

Agencies will be required to meet a staffing threshold to be eligible to apply for the grant. Agencies who have been approved but have fallen below the requirements may be required to submit corrective action plans or may lose future eligibility.

5.4 Application and Oversight

- Grants will be awarded through a competitive application process
- Applications will be reviewed by a County-designated review body
- Award decisions will consider staffing needs, performance history, service area, and clarity of staffing plans

Grant recipients will submit periodic reports documenting expenditures, staffing coverage, and performance metrics.

6. Staffing and Cost Estimate

6.1 County EMT Staffing Requirements

To provide 24/7 coverage with two EMTs on duty: - Annual EMT hours required: **17,520** - Standard FTE: **2,080 hours/year** - Required staffing with relief factor: **10.0 FTE EMTs**

6.2 Personnel Costs

- Average hourly wage: \$24.97
- Annual wage per EMT: \$51,937.60
- Total wages (10 FTEs): \$519,376.00
- Benefits (actual): \$378,804.50

Total Personnel Cost: \$1,276,985.10

6.3 Operational and Program Costs

- Rapid Response Vehicle operations: **\$80,000**
 - Equipment and supplies: **\$40,000**
 - Training and credentialing: **\$20,000**
 - Administrative and program support: **\$22,000**
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7. Total Annual Budget Summary

Category	Annual Cost
County EMT Rapid Response Program	\$1,438,985
Competitive EMS Staffing Grant Fund	\$200,000

Category	Annual Cost
Total Annual EMS Investment	\$1,638,985

8. Evaluation and Reporting

Program performance will be evaluated using:

- Response times
- Number of supplemented responses
- Reduction in missed calls - Local agency performance metrics
- Cost-benefit analysis
- Patient care and outcome metrics

Results will be reported bi-annually to the Bayfield County Board and EMS stakeholders.

9. Conclusion

This proposal presents a balanced, collaborative, and sustainable approach to strengthening EMS in Bayfield County. By combining guaranteed county EMT coverage with targeted financial support for local agencies, Bayfield County can improve reliability, protect local services, and enhance public safety countywide. Additionally, this proposal introduces the ability for the countywide EMS agency to be paged first for lift assists without injury and establishes a community health program to check on citizens recently discharged from hospitals or nursing homes, ensuring proper wound care and medication adherence.

Approval of this proposal positions Bayfield County as a leader in rural EMS system resilience and innovation.