

# **INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF LINDENHURST (VOL)**

**&**

## **LINDENHURST FIRE DEPARTMENT (LFD)**

### **EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE AMBULANCE COST RECOVERY PROGRAM**

#### **How many calls does the Lindenhurst Fire Department respond to annually?**

In the past few years, the LFD EMS/Rescue has responded to an ever-increasing number of ambulance calls – 2,078 in 2020, 2,247 in 2021, and 2,318 in 2022.

#### **Is the LFD ALL volunteer?**

The VOL-LFD Rescue Department is comprised of 30 dedicated volunteer members who selflessly spend thousands of hours each year serving and protecting the Village of Lindenhurst.

#### **How can an ALL-volunteer force handle the large volume of Ambulance Calls?**

The VOL-LFD currently employs 4 full-time and 30 part-time EMS employees. The paid crew is the primary EMS response Monday-Friday, 6:00AM-6:00PM. The crew consists of 1 EMT & 1 ALS provider. The VOL-LFD goal is to have an ALS provider available 24/7 to the residents. The added staff is to supplement the volunteers, in order to maintain the ability to staff the ambulances around the clock.

#### **How much does it cost to supplement the volunteers?**

In 2023 the VOL-LFD expects to expend \$360,000.00 on salaries to supplement the volunteers.

#### **Why is the VOL-LFD enacting “Cost Recovery?”**

On April 9, 2022, Governor Kathy Hochul signed into law the 2022-2023 NYS Budget. Part KK of this legislation amended Section 209-b of the General Municipal Law to allow fire departments previously not permitted to bill for ambulance services to begin doing so for a four-year period, beginning July 8, 2022.

This legislation provides fire departments access to revenue through the billing of insurance companies for some services and thereby provides taxpayers with some relief from increasing fire departments budgets caused by ever-increasing call volumes, as well as ever-increasing costs for supplies, equipment, state-mandated training and overhead.

The VOL-LFD has contracted Quick Med Claims (QMC) to be their ambulance transport billing administrator. Based in Pennsylvania, QMC has 30-years of experience providing ambulance transport billing services for ground and air medical transport providers through the US.

#### **Does the law expire?**

Yes. As presently written, the ability for fire departments and fire companies to recover costs expires on April 9, 2026. Absent some further extension, or a permanent enactment of the law, fire departments and fire companies will not be able to bill after this date.

**Are there any restrictions on the use of monies received from ambulance billing?**

Yes. Monies received from cost recovery must be used to offset the costs of providing ambulance services to the areas serviced by the Fire Department.

**Is a separate account required for EMS Cost Recovery funds, or can the funds be placed in general operating accounts maintained by the VOL-LFD?**

The new law does not require that a separate account be formed. However, the VOL-LFD WILL be segregating ALL funds recovered.

**Will the residents of the Village of Lindenhurst feel a financial burden as a result of the Fire Department enacting a Cost Recovery Program?**

No. Cost recovery for Emergency Medical Service transports relieves financial hardship on the VOL-LFD by recovering health insurance monies for which residents already pay for in their insurance premiums. Choosing to not bill would leave dollars on the table which citizens would have to make up for through increased taxes and donations. As the VOL-LFD faces increased costs for EMS supplies and personnel costs, as well as an aging ambulance fleet, choosing to bill will assist us in continuing to provide dependable, top-quality, 24/7 EMS services, while keeping taxes low.

**Will uninsured persons be expected to pay out-of-pocket for emergency medical services provided by the Lindenhurst Fire Department?**

NO. By law an uninsured sick or injured person that is transported to a hospital can NOT be “billed” for service.

**How does gathering a patient’s insurance information work?**

At the time of transport, a significant amount of information is recorded at the scene from every patient on the Patient Care Report (PCR). The gathering of insurance information will be attempted. If it is not recovered, it is the responsibility of QMC to locate the proper information.

**NO ADDITIONAL TIME WILL BE TAKEN AND NO DELAYS IN PATIENT TRANSPORT WILL OCCUR FOR THE GATHERING OF INSURANCE INFORMATION.**

Since 9/1/2023, the VOL-LFD has been informing patients about ambulance billing and gathering patient insurance information as part of our on-boarding process with QMC. On 12/1/2023, our system will “go live” and patient insurance companies will start being billed.

**Where will the patient’s insurance information be recorded?**

The patient’s insurance information will either be written down on the PCR or insurance cards may be photographed/scanned with the VOL-LFD PCR tablet and uploaded into the system. EMS Personnel (paid and volunteer) phones are strictly prohibited from being used. ALL information is then uploaded and double-encrypted when transmitted to QMC.

**While walking on Wellwood Avenue I trip and fall and hit my head. A bystander calls 911, and the VOL-LFD ambulance arrives. Other than a small laceration to my head I feel fine and am treated and released at the scene. Will I be charged for this service?**

NO. Due to the fact that the patient was “treated and released” at the scene or “refused medical attention” altogether there will be NO associated cost recovery involved. Cost Recovery is only attempted for sick or injured persons that are transported to a hospital.

**How much will the VOL-LFD be invoicing my insurance for transport to the hospital?**

After considering data from QMC, and rates charged by nearby municipalities, the VOL-LFD has adopted the following fair and reasonable rates:

DESCRIPTION	LINDENHURST	AMITYVILLE	COPIAGUE
BLS Transport	\$1,250.00	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00
ALS, Level 1 Transport	\$1,800.00	\$2,200.00	\$2,200.00
ALS, Level 2 Transport	\$2,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$2,500.00
Loaded Mileage	\$25.00/mile		\$35.00/mile
Treatment-No-Transport	\$300.00	\$300.00	\$300.00

## DEFINITIONS

### BLS Transport

Basic Life Support (BLS) is transportation by ground ambulance and the provision of medically necessary supplies and services by EMS personnel who are certified as Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Basic.

### ALS, Level 1, Transport

Advanced Life Support (ALS), Level 1 is transportation by ground ambulance and the provision of medically necessary supplies and services including the provision of an ALS assessment or at least one ALS intervention by EMS personnel who are certified as Emergency Medical Technician Critical Care (EMT-CC) or Paramedic.

### ALS, Level 2 Transport

Advanced Life Support (ALS), Level 2 is transportation by ground ambulance and the provision of medically necessary supplies and services including (1) at least three separate intravenous administrations of one or more medications (excluding crystalloid fluids) or (2) the provision of at least one of the following procedures:

- Manual defibrillation/cardioversion
- Endotracheal intubation
- Central venous line
- Cardiac pacing
- Chest decompression
- Surgical airway
- Intraosseous line

## Loaded Mileage

Loaded miles is the distance traveled from the site of pickup to hospital or medical facility with patient.

### Who can I call to discuss my ambulance bill?

- You can contact QMC Patient Services toll free at 833-888-2208.
- Billing professionals are available Monday-Friday between the hours of 7:30AM – 4:30PM EST.
- A secure voice mailbox is available after hours. Calls will be returned the next business day.

### Is an interpreter available to answer questions about my ambulance bill?

- QMC utilizes a translation service that provides on-demand access to professional interpreters.
- When a call is received that requires translation assistance, the QMC Patient Service Specialist will live-conference a translator into the call.
- The service we use provides 100% HIPAA compliant services in compliance with all government regulations and standards.

### If my insurance paid, why did I still receive a bill?

- If you have a deductible or copay, you will receive a bill for this amount.
- If you believe you received a bill in error, please contact QMC Patient Services.
  - You can contact Patient Services toll free at 833-888-2208. Billing professionals are available between the hours of 7:30AM – 4:30PM EST Monday – Friday.
  - A secure voice mailbox is available after hours. Calls will be returned the next business day.

### How do I pay my ambulance bill?

#### Online

You have 24/7/365 access to the QMC Patient Access Portal through our website at: <https://www.quickmedclaims.com/patient-access-portal/>.

The Company Code for Village of Lindenhurst is: **LFDNY**

Using our portal, you can:

- Pay by e-check, credit card, Health Savings Account (HSA), and virtual insurance card
- Set-up a recurring payment
- Update insurance information
- Submit an eSignature
- Update contact information

#### By Mail

- Mail your payment to PO Box 18230 Pittsburgh, PA 15236
- Include your invoice and any supporting documentation.

#### By Phone

- You can contact Patient Services toll free at 833-888-2208.
- Billing professionals are available between the hours of 7:30AM – 4:30PM EST Monday – Friday.
- A secure voice mailbox is available after hours. Calls will be returned the next business day

### **Can I update my insurance information online?**

You can update you insurance information online at <https://www.quickmedclaims.com/patient-access-portal/>

- Click the button under *Update Your Insurance Information*.
- Enter your run number, account number, or incident number in the space provided.
- Enter the date you were transported in the *Date of Service* field.
- Enter the *Company Code*. This information is located on the bottom of your invoice.
- Click the “I’m not a robot” check box.
- Click the **Search** button.