



Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Levy Lid Lift

Tacoma Fire Department • City of Tacoma • 2023



The Tacoma Fire Department Provides



Fire suppression to protect people, property and the environment



Basic and Advanced Life Support (ALS is highest level of emergency medical care pre-hospital)



Professional and compassionate service to community members and businesses

In 2022, we responded to **49,172** calls. Emergency Medical Service (EMS) accounts for **80%** of all calls.



www.cityoftacoma.org/EMSlevy | Fire Chief Tory Green welcomes your questions at 253-591-5389 or tfdlevyrenewal@cityoftacoma.org

EMS Accounts For 80% Of All Calls

We provide Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Life Support (ALS)

Basic Life Support (BLS)

- Trained emergency medical technicians (EMTs)
- Provide basic, non-invasive care to stabilize a patient – like CPR
- Cannot do any procedure that may break the skin or enter airways
- Cannot give medication (except Narcan for drug overdoses)

Advanced Life Support (ALS)

- Trained paramedics with advanced medical certification
- Start intravenous lines
- Administer lifesaving medication
- Provide advanced airway management
- Interpret EKG readings of heart attack patient

ALS is highest level of emergency care pre-hospital





How We Are Funded

FIRE & RESCUE SERVICES

- Tacoma residents and businesses pay taxes to the city for all services. This includes fire suppression and fire safety.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE (EMS)

- EMS is funded separately by a **voter-approved levy** capped at \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed property value.
- Voters last approved an EMS levy at \$0.50 per \$1,000 in 2006. Since then, the rate has dropped to **\$0.28 per \$1,000**.



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Why Did The Levy Rate Drop?

- **Each year, we are allowed to collect a set amount of revenue based on current assessed property values**
- **State law limits us to that amount plus one percent more per year**
- **Even if property values double, we can only collect one percent more (or any other voter-approved increase)**
- **This means levy collection rates drop as property values rise**

TACOMA



What Is An EMS Lid Lift?

A lid lift is a voter-approved collection rate increase that exceeds the limited 1% and typically returns the collection rate to the previously approved rate.

Lid lifts help us keep up with **higher call volumes** and **costs to provide service**.

2006 was the last time voters approved returning the rate back to \$0.50.

EMS calls increase an average **3.1%** per year - **51%** since the last lid lift.

This would be the first lid lift we have asked for in 17 years. This is not a new tax.

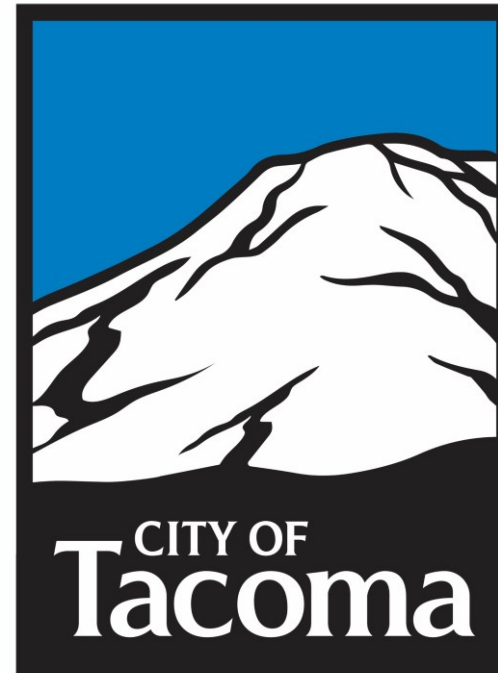


CITY OF TACOMA PROPOSITION NO. 1 EMS PROPERTY TAX LEVY INCREASE

The City of Tacoma Council adopted Resolution No. 41180 concerning the restoration of the City's emergency medical services property tax levy.

- This measure would continue to fund emergency medical services (EMS) by restoring the EMS levy to \$0.50 per \$1,000 of assessed value for collection in 2024.
- Authorize an annual increase of up to 6 percent annually, not to exceed the \$0.50 rate for 2025-2029;
- Authorize the use of the 2029 levy amount as the base for computing levies in future years, per RCW 84.55.

Qualifying seniors, veterans, and others would be exempt, per RCW 84.36.381.



EMS Lid Lift Will Reduce Response Times And Fund Ambulance Transport Costs For Residents

The EMS levy renewal would allow us to:

- Hire additional firefighters to **add three EMS units** to reduce response times and increase capacity citywide
- **Cover ambulance transport costs for BLS** at a savings of almost \$1,000 for transported resident. (ALS costs are already covered.)

How much will this cost?

The average property owner (\$493,000) would pay an additional **\$9.04 per month** in 2024.



WHEN IS THE ELECTION

The fire department is asking voters to consider renewing the EMS levy rate from \$0.28 to \$0.50 per \$1,000 on the

August 1, 2023

primary election ballot



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We Welcome Your Questions

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