



Nov. 4, 2024

Dear Governor Whitmer,

We write to you on behalf of Michigan's EMS providers who provide essential emergency response to communities across our entire state that is critical to the health and safety of all residents. This summer, we shared with you and legislators that our agencies have not been paid by the Michigan Department of Corrections former healthcare provider Wellpath for emergency services provided in 2023 and 2024. Those bills total nearly \$6 million for EMS agencies across Michigan and we asked for reimbursement from the state for these bills.

Under Michigan law, EMS agencies are required to respond to all 9-1-1 requests, and that includes Michigan's prisons. Wellpath failed its responsibility to care for the health of Michigan prisoners but now it's the other residents in the communities our agencies serve that will suffer if this crisis isn't resolved. Those EMS providers who have not been paid include both public and private, municipal-owned and fire-based agencies. The lack of compensation for the lifesaving work provided by EMS agencies is unacceptable and will impact lifesaving operations quickly.

Now more than two months later, this issue has become a full-blown crisis for our EMS agencies. EMS agencies vary in size, coverage area and ownership type, but they all have one thing in common: they must be paid for their services or they won't have funds to continue to pay employees and keep saving lives. That is the exact situation that Kinross Township EMS in Chippewa County is currently dealing with.

As we write this letter, Kinross EMS is less than a month out from not being able to make payroll due to the nearly \$500,000 this agency alone is owed by Wellpath. The outstanding payments account for 11% of Kinross Township EMS' budget and without immediate action, residents in the 8 townships in the 640-mile area of Chippewa County Kinross serves will be left without emergency services. Additionally, Kinross EMS' 39 hardworking first responders could be left without jobs.

While the financial situation at our other affected EMS agencies isn't quite as dire, the lack of payments has already resulted in agencies cutting back in varying areas. Examples include not hiring new employees, inability to purchase replacement medical equipment, providing cost of living increases to employees and purchasing new ambulances. If this issue isn't resolved soon, the situation will certainly become more dire at all affected agencies.

We urge you to make compensating EMS agencies for work already provided to the State of Michigan on behalf of the Department of Corrections a top priority. The health and safety of our communities is at stake.

Thank you for your consideration. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Angela Madden". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Angela Madden
Executive Director
Michigan Association of Ambulance Services
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