



The City of Highland Park Highland Park Fire Department

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS Ambulance Billing and Collection Services

Issue Date:
December 13, 2022

Due Date:
January 23, 2023 at 12:00 PM CST*

*Proposals received after the due date will not be opened.

Questions?
Contact in writing: mhernandez@cityhpi.com by December 20, 2022



1. OBJECTIVES

Through this Request for Proposals ("RFP"), the City of Highland Park (hereinafter referred to as "City") is seeking proposals from HIPAA-certified, Medicare- and Medicaid-compliant firms to provide ambulance/paramedic billing and collection services. The primary objective of requesting proposals is for the City to determine which company can offer the highest quality of service at the most reasonable cost. This process also provides the City the opportunity to explore alternative procedural methods that could improve its EMS billing and reporting capabilities.

Proposals must be complete and address all elements of the RFP. The selected Proposer will be invited to enter into a professional services agreement with the City of Highland Park for a three-year term, with mutual optional one-year extensions. The Highland Park City Council has the ultimate authority to approve any proposal and to authorize the execution of an agreement.

Firms with an intent to respond to this RFP must submit an email with all contact information by December 20, 2022 to mhernandez@cityhpil.com. Failure to submit the intent to respond by this date will not preclude any potential proposer from responding to the RFP.

2. KEY DATES

City Issues RFP:	December 13, 2022
Questions Due By:	December 20, 2022
Q&A Posted to City Website:	December 27, 2022
Proposals Due:	January 23, 2023
Notification of Finalists/Interviews:	February 6, 2023
Contract Award:	February 27, 2023
Contract Effective Date:	March 26, 2023

3. BACKGROUND

The City was founded in 1869 with a population of 500. Today, the City is a thriving community of more than [30,177](#) people who enjoy nearly five miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. The City is a full-service community that provides police, fire, emergency medical, public works, and water purification services for the safety and enjoyment of residents and visitors. Additionally, Highland Park offers a myriad of exciting special events, including the nationally-recognized Port Clinton Art Festival and new in 2022 "The Lot," an ongoing series of special events in the Central Business District throughout the year.

The City encompasses an area of 12.4 square miles and is located in the heart of the North Shore along Lake Michigan. The City is located 26 miles north of Chicago's central business district and neighbors Lake Forest and Highwood to the north; Deerfield and Bannockburn to the west; and Northbrook and Glencoe to the south. The City's southern boundary is also the Lake County-Cook County boundary. Its geographic features include a 100 foot (30 m) high bluff running along 6 miles

of Lake Michigan shoreline and deep, wooded ravines.

The Highland Park Fire Department serves the cities of Highland Park and Highwood with 53 sworn and two civilian personnel committed to protecting the people, property, and environment. Efforts are dedicated to safety and welfare by providing the highest quality of services that are responsive to the needs of the Highland Park and Highwood communities. 53 sworn personnel are cross-trained as Firefighter/Paramedics. Some personnel have additional training in areas such as hazardous materials, technical rescue, and dive rescue.

The City provides Advanced Life Support Level 1, Advanced Life Support Level 2, and Basic Life Support services to residents and non-residents of Highland Park. Accordingly, the City bills for BLS and ALS Level 1 and Level 2 transports, including mileage. The City also provides the same services within the City of Highwood through an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) with Highwood. The billing rates are the same as Highland Park residents. For residents, the City accepts what the private insurer, Medicaid, Medicare, or Public pays, and writes off the remainder. Non-residents are required to pay the entire amount. No write offs are given.

The fee schedule for ambulance transport services provided by the City are as follow:

City Code Section	Description	FY2022 Fee	FY2023 Fee
Chapter 101-1: Ambulance Transport Fees			
101-1.003(A)	Basic Life Support - Resident	\$450.00	\$495.00
101-1.003(A)	Advanced Life Support Level 1 - Resident	\$535.00	\$588.50
101-1.003(A)	Advanced Life Support Level 2 - Resident	\$770.00	\$847.00
101-1.003(A)	Basic Life Support - Non Resident	\$865.00	\$951.50
101-1.003(A)	Advanced Life Support Level 1 - Non Resident	\$1,005.00	\$1,105.50
101-1.003(A)	Advanced Life Support Level 2 - Non Resident	\$1,115.00	\$1,226.50
101-1.003(A)	Mileage Fee - Resident and Non-Resident	\$8.60 per mile	\$9.46 per mile

Source: cityhpil.com

All rates are subject to change per the City’s fee schedule and established IGAs.

Collection information from 2021 from current provider:

1. Annual gross billed: \$1,227,085.33
2. Annual adjustments: \$125,134.12
3. Annual contractual allowance write-offs: \$157,121.23
4. Annual net billed: \$1,024,805.87
5. Annual amount collected: \$974,654.39
6. Amount collected by %: 95.11
7. Average income per call: \$472.45 (\$974,654.39 amount collected / 2,063 calls)

Payer mix expressed as percentages of 100% billed from 2021 transports.

1. Medicare: 44.1%
2. Medicaid: 23.9%
3. Commercial: 26.8%
4. Private Insurance: 5.1%

Payments made to current provider over the past 5 years:

- 2022: \$37,329.45 as of October 2022
- 2021: \$30,116.39
- 2020: \$25,766.76
- 2019: \$26,292.47

4. REQUESTED INFORMATION

1. Describe process of billing/invoicing patients and insurance entities, including the timeline of the original invoice and typical follow-up communications.
2. Are you able to provide patients with payment plans? If so, describe the process for communicating payment arrangements and follow-up communication to patients. Include examples of typical correspondence and examples of typical payment plan.
3. Explain at what point charges are deemed uncollectible. What are the next steps taken in these cases? Are items turned over to the City for further collection efforts, or directed to collections agency? Other options available?
4. What are your standard hours of operation? For the City and for patients?
5. What is your relationship with the surrounding hospitals? Does your organization have digital access through their software? (Highland Park Hospital, Lake Forest Hospital, Evanston Hospital)
6. Explain your method(s) in obtaining insurance or other third-party payer information.
7. Demonstrate how you bill Medicare, private insurance carriers, and public aid electronically, in a HIPAA-compliant manner.
8. Demonstrate and explain how your organization is compliant and stays up to date with Center of Medicare and Medicaid Services fee schedule, rules and regulations, and documentation guidelines.
9. Do you have a HIPAA Compliance Officer on staff?
10. What controls do you utilize to insure the proper posting of payments?
11. Describe how your company can enhance the revenue collected by the City.
12. Process in handling hardship letters?
13. How are refunds documented and processed?
14. Provide a breakdown of the team and each role that will be assigned to the City if both parties were to enter into an agreement.
15. Provide a brief explanation of your organization's experience with GEMT process and how your organization can assist in the process of this reporting.
16. Provide a breakdown of any additional fees charged by your organization, if any, relating to GEMT?

17. Provide a brief explanation of your organization's experience with CMS data collection process and how your organization can assist in the process of this reporting.
18. Provide a breakdown of any additional fees charged by your organization, if any, relating to CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services) data collection?
19. Considering our IGA with Highwood, is your organization able to classify these specific calls differently (i.e., mutual aid buckets) and bill at their specified rates? If so, please explain.
20. How are subpoenas and request for medical records handled if received by your organization?
21. Are any of your services (not limited to ambulance billing/collection services) contracted out?
22. Please explain how your organization would work with our current billing service provider to ensure a smooth transition.
23. Provide a brief explanation of your records management system, secured patient portal, and billing platform. List software used.
24. Does your organization routinely check exclusion lists to ensure that new hires, current employees, vendors, and subcontractors are not Excluded Persons that may impact the Medicare/Medicaid or other government healthcare claim development and submission process and other processes affecting compliance with federal or state healthcare law?

5. PROPOSAL FORMAT

1. **Letter of Transmittal** – must include the point of contact person regarding the proposals and a brief explanation of why your organization will be a good fit.
2. **Organizational Overview** – Statement of qualifications and capability to perform duties, including your organizations commitment and approach to the City.
3. **Sample Documents** – must include samples of the following
 - a. Patient invoices and communication
 - b. Standard reports provided to the City (i.e., list of trips, missing patient information, financial reports, etc.)
 - c. Chart identifying patient contact process
 - d. Billing payment processes
 - e. Automated claims submission to third-parties (e.g., insurance providers, CMS, etc.)
4. **Response to Requested Information** – Include your organization's response to each item listed in *Section 3 – Requested Information*
5. **Compliance** – Include information relating to all compliance efforts and processes and provide most recent internal and external audit programs and results.
6. **Fee Proposal** – provide an explanation of fees charged based on amount collected by your organization. Include collection percentage your organization proposes.
7. **References** – provide a list of references of five (5) current Illinois clients similar in size and scope. Reference should include contact information and average dollar collected per trip.
8. **Additional Services** – list and explain any additional services, if any, your organization is currently capable of providing related to EMS and fire services. Please also list any additional services anticipated to be implemented within the next three years by your organization, if any.

6. PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL

All questions regarding this Request for Proposals should be directed in writing to:

Meriyen Hernandez, Executive Assistant
Highland Park Fire Station 33
1130 Central Avenue, Highland Park, Illinois 60035
847.433.3110
mhernandez@cityhpil.com

Questions will be accepted until December 20, 2022. All questions and responses will be compiled and posted on the City's website posting of this RFP in one general response memorandum by December 27, 2022. In order to enable the City to equitably respond to proposer questions, the City requests that prospective proposers submit their questions to the City via e-mail at mhernandez@cityhpil.com.

Please deliver one digital copy of the proposal via email to mhernandez@cityhpil.com, with "Ambulance Billing and Collection Services RFP – Proposal" in the subject line of the email. Proposals must be received no later than January 23, 2023 at 12:00 PM CST ("Deadline"). Proposals will not be opened publically. Proposals submitted after the Deadline will not be opened. No oral, telephone, or facsimile proposals will be considered.

During the evaluation process, the City reserves the right, where it may serve the City's best interests, to request additional information or clarification from the Proposer, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions. At its discretion, the City may request any or all agencies to meet with the committee as needed.

7. STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Proposals submitted are offers only, and the decision to accept or reject is a function of the quality, reliability, capability, reputation, and expertise of the firms submitting proposals. Issuance of this RFP does not obligate the City to pay any costs incurred by a proposer in its submission of a proposal, conducting any necessary studies or creating any designs needed for the preparation of that proposal, or for procuring or contracting for the services to be furnished under this RFP.

A proposer may withdraw its proposal, either personally or by written request, at any time before the submittal deadline. No proposal may be withdrawn for 60 days after the date set for opening proposals. Submissions will be subject to acceptance during this period.

The City reserves the right to accept the proposal that is, in its judgment, the best and most favorable to the interests of the City and the public; to reject the proposal with the lowest cost to the City; to accept any item of any proposal; to reject any and all proposals, and; to waive irregularities and informalities in any proposal submitted or in the RFP process; provided, however, that the waiver of any prior defect or informality will not be considered a waiver of any future or similar defect or informality. Firms should not rely upon or anticipate such waivers in submitting their proposal.