



CITY OF HOUSTON - CITY COUNCIL

Meeting Date: 3/24/2020

ALL

Item Creation Date: 2/20/2020

HHD - Total Care EMS

Agenda Item#: 2.

Background:

The Houston Health Department (HHD) requests City Council's approval of a resolution authorizing the issuance of a letter of Approval (LOA) to Total Care EMS pursuant to § 773.0573 of the Texas Health and Safety Code.

During the 83rd Legislative Session, the Texas Legislature and the Governor approved Senate Bill 8 which amended § 773.0573 of the Health and Safety Code to require that a new EMS provider seeking a state EMS license must first obtain a letter of approval from the governing body or commissioners court of the jurisdiction in which the applicant is located and intends to provide EMS services.

Section 773.0573 provides that the governing body or commissioners court may issue an LOA if it is determined that:

(1) the addition of another licensed emergency medical services provider will not interfere with or adversely affect the provision of emergency medical services by the licensed emergency medical services providers operating in the municipality or county;

Determination: The addition of these EMS providers will not adversely affect the provision of EMS services because only HFD is authorized to provide emergency medical services in the City; State licensed EMS providers are not authorized to do so except under certain, limited circumstances after providing notice to HFD. They provide private nonemergency transport services. Therefore, a new private provider would not interfere with emergency medical service providers.

(2) the addition of another licensed emergency medical services provider will remedy an existing provider shortage that cannot be resolved through the use of the licensed emergency medical services providers operating in the municipality or county;

Determination: Citizens, hospitals, and other entities continue contacting HFD for nonemergency medical transports which takes HFD away from providing emergency transport services. In 2019, HFD provided 5070 nonemergency transports to/from dialysis facilities, doctors' offices, clinics and hospitals. There are 89 EMS providers currently licensed in the city. Additional providers will offer the community more EMS service providers for nonemergency transports which should reduce the number of nonemergency calls received by HFD.

(3) the addition of another licensed emergency medical services provider will not cause an oversupply of licensed emergency medical services providers in the municipality or county.

Determination: There are 89 EMS providers licensed by the City and HHD has not received any complaints or concerns from citizens or the stakeholder community regarding an oversupply of providers. This is a relatively low number given the city's population.

Based on the application submitted by Total Care EMS, HHD recommends City council approve the issuance of a letter of approval to Total Care EMS.

DocuSigned by:

Stephen Williams

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Director - Houston Health Department

Prior Council Action:

N/A

Amount of Funding:

N/A

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