

PALM BEACH COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

Meeting Date:	May 19, 2026	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regular
		<input type="checkbox"/> Workshop	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing
Department:	Fire-Rescue		

I. EXECUTIVE BRIEF

Motion and Title: Staff requests board direction: regarding current and future fire rescue emergency medical transport uncollectible procedures.

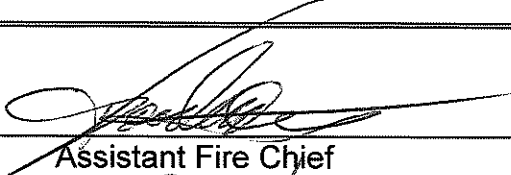
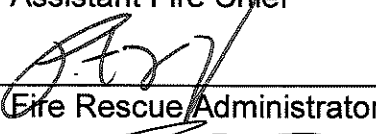
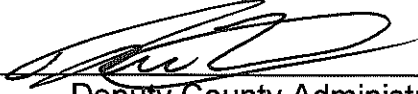
Summary: On October 7, 2025 (5C1) staff requested direction from the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) regarding current and future emergency medical transport collection procedures. BCC provided direction to gather additional data about who is being transported, including those whose information is missing, data regarding collection rates since 2021, and a provision for reduced payments for those who can't afford to pay. On October 23, 2025, Request for Information (RFI) No. 2026-001 for Transport Collection was advertised and closed on November 10, 2025. Fire Rescue is bringing this back to the BCC to seek direction for current and future emergency medical transport uncollectible procedures. Countywide (SB)

Background and Policy Issues: In December 1994, the BCC authorized Fire Rescue to transport critically ill/injured patients and bill for those services. The County contracts with a private company for these billing and collection services. The County pays the private company 3.5% of Non-Medicaid gross collections for their services. The County does not refer outstanding emergency medical transport debt to a collection agency or report the same to a credit agency. Since 1998 the BCC has approved the balance to be deemed uncollectable and to be written-off the County's general ledger.

In March 1995, Fire Rescue began transporting patients and charging fees for this service. The law requires that the County make reasonably diligent efforts to collect monies from all patients regardless of the availability of insurance, to the maximum allowed under Federal and State guidelines and does not allow for the routine waiver of unpaid co-payments or deductibles, unless certain requirements are met. In April 2000, the BCC reviewed Palm Beach County Fire Rescue's collection efforts; at which time, the BCC was satisfied with the collection procedures and did not support a more aggressive collection.

In June 2002, the County's Internal Auditor recommended the County Administrator and the Fire Rescue Administrator reassess Fire Rescue's procedures for collection of outstanding emergency medical transport debt and the potential for increased revenues resulting from additional collection efforts. In the event no change was required, the Internal Audit further suggested the Countywide Policy (CW-F-048) be updated to exempt emergency medical transport revenues. The County Administrator deemed Fire Rescue's efforts adequate and therefore, the exemption was made to the Countywide PPM. The Department has received no direction from the BCC to pursue outstanding balances.

- Attachments:**
- 1. Presentation

Recommended by:		4-14-2026
	Assistant Fire Chief	Date
Approved by:		4/13/2026
	Fire Rescue Administrator	Date
Approved by:		4/27/26
	Deputy County Administrator	Date

II. FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

A. Five Year Summary of Fiscal Impact:

Fiscal Years	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030
Capital Expenditures	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Operating Costs	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
External Revenues	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Program Income (County)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
In-Kind Match (County)	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
NET FISCAL IMPACT	<u>*0</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____
# ADDITIONAL FTE POSITIONS (Cumulative)	<u>0</u>	_____	_____	_____	_____

Is Item Included in Current Budget? Yes X No _____
 Does this item include the use of Federal Funds? Yes _____ No X
 Does this item include the use of State Funds? Yes _____ No X

Budget Account No.: Fund 1300 Dept 440 Unit 4210 Rev Source 4260

B. Recommended Sources of Funds/Summary of Fiscal Impact:

*There is no fiscal impact associated with this item.

C. Departmental Fiscal Review: *Green*

III. REVIEW COMMENTS

A. OFMB Fiscal and/or Contract Development and Control Comments:

Tom Mento 4/16/26
 OFMB *JA 4/16*
 MD 4/16

Brenda Zuck 4/14/26
 Contract Development and Control 26 4.16.26

B. Legal Sufficiency

Joe Bur 4/21/26
 Assistant County Attorney

C. Other Department Review:

 Department Director

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PALM BEACH COUNTY EMERGENCY TRANSPORT COLLECTION PROCEDURES









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May 19, 2026

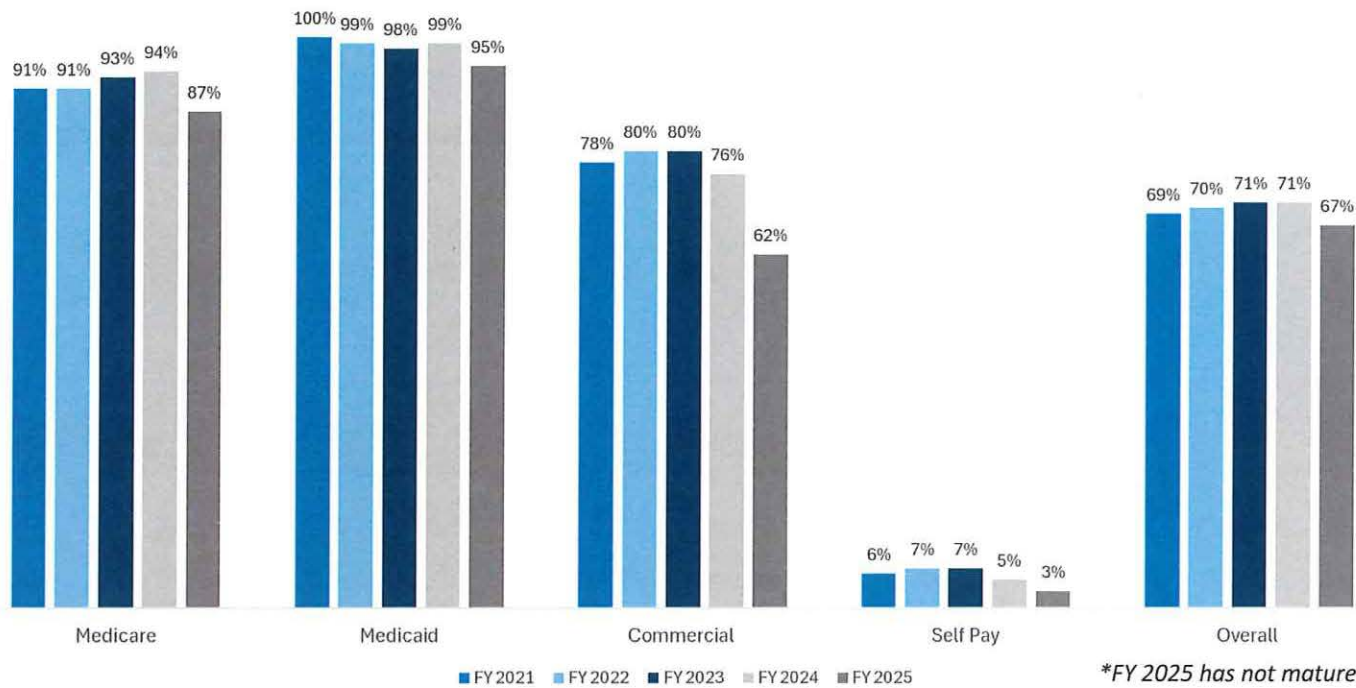
Overview

October 7, 2025

-  **Sought Board direction on 2021 Emergency Transport Collections**
Write-off of \$12.1M dollars
-  **Board directed staff to return with more data and information:**
 -  **Historical collection rates comparison**
 -  **Patient data capture at point of service and hospital partnerships**
 -  **Customer analysis**
 -  **Policy options for collections and hardship program**

Improving Collection Percentages

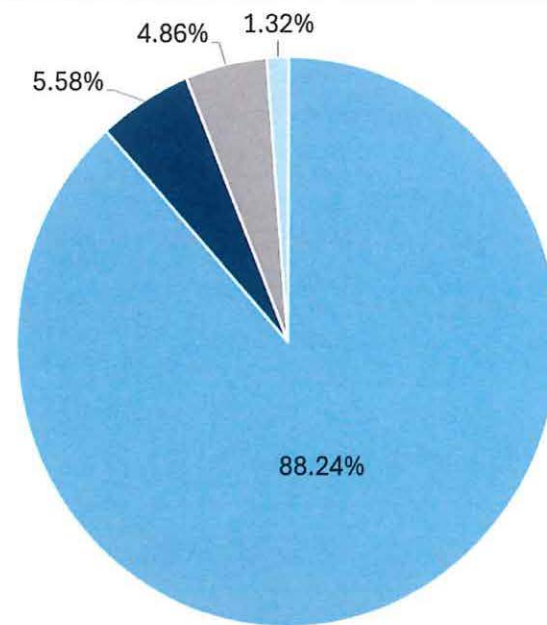
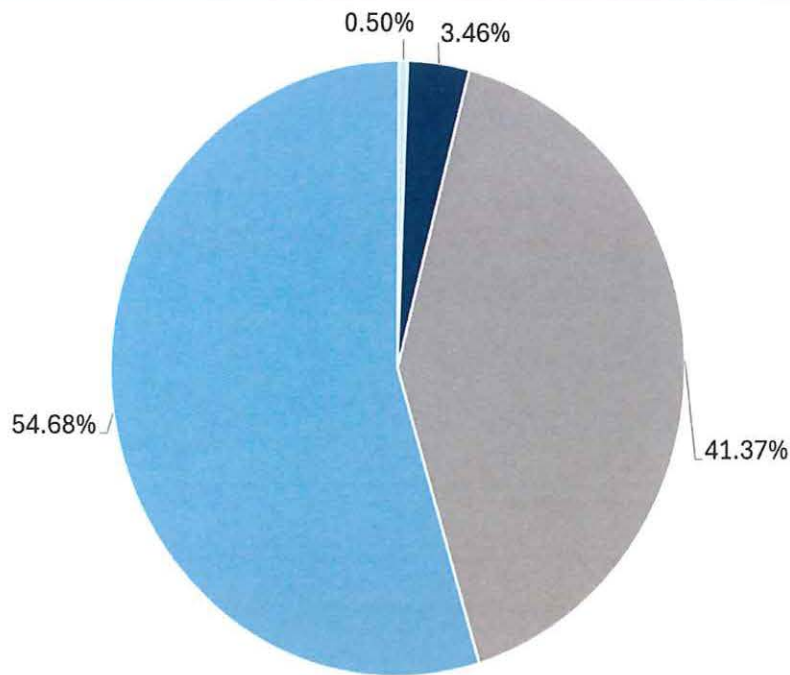
Net Collection Percentage by Financial Class



Customer Analysis

Financial Class	FY 2021 Receivable	Percentage
Medicare	\$1.76 M	14.6%
Medicaid	\$1,460	0.0%
Insurance	\$1.9 M	15.7%
Patient	\$8.42 M	69.7%

Customer Analysis by Age and Residency



Age - Unknown 0 to 17 18 to 64 65+



Palm Beach County FL State, Not Palm Beach County
Out of State Unknown

Patient Data Collection

Social Security Number Collection

-  **83% collection rate in 2021 – 75,159 Billable Transports**
-  **82% collection rate in 2024 – 84,818 Billable Transports**



Fire Rescue Plan of Action

-  **Additional staff training in importance of social security, signature, and DOB collection**
-  **Exploring an Investigation Solution currently used by the Tax Collectors Office**
-  **Hospital Partnerships: Closing the 2% gap in hospital electronic data sharing for transports.**

Collections Vendor

- **November 2025 – Request for information (RFI) completed**
- **February 2026 – Vendor meetings**
- **Current County Vendor:**
 - **Valley Collections – Rate of 11%**
 - **20+ Years of transport collection experience**

Staff Recommendations

-  **Implement Transport Billing Collection Policy with Valley Collections**
-  **Follow County settlement process**

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