



OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

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NEWS RELEASE

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Montgomery County OIG Investigation Finds MCVFRA Ineligible for EMST Funds

Rockville, Maryland – Montgomery County Maryland Inspector General Megan Davey Limarzi announced today the release of a new Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Memorandum of Investigations, [*Improper allocation of EMST funds to MCVFRA*](#), detailing the OIG's inquiry into whether the Montgomery County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association (MCVFRA), an organization that represents the County's 19 local fire and rescue departments (LFRD), was legally eligible to receive Emergency Medical Services Transport Insurance Reimbursement Program (EMST) funds.

In May 2012, the County Council enacted Bill 17-12E (effective January 1, 2013) to authorize the County to impose and collect emergency medical service transport fees under the EMST program. The program allows MCFRS to bill insurance providers for emergency medical transportation services, such as transports by ambulance. The County imposes a reimbursement charge for these services and uses it to support fire and rescue operations.

According to Montgomery County Code Section 21-23A, 15% of the net revenue from this program must be allocated for the benefit of local fire and rescue departments (LFRD), following procedures outlined in annual operating budget resolutions. The County Code also imposes restrictions on the use of the funds. Chapter 21 defines a Local Fire and Rescue Department (LFRD) as "any individual fire or rescue squad corporation authorized under Section 21-5 to provide fire and rescue services." Under Section 21-5, an approved LFRD "may provide direct fire suppression, rescue, or emergency medical services" to the County. MCVFRA is a 401(c)(4) organization that is the recognized representative of the County's 19 local volunteer fire departments.

The MCVFRA has been awarded EMST funds since 2014, most recently receiving \$688,711 in FY2021 to FY2025. The OIG's investigation concluded that the MCVFRA, as a representative of LFRD's and not in and of themselves an LFRD, should not have been eligible to receive EMST funds. This determination coincides with findings in a recent OIG audit, *Performance Audit of the Fiscal Management Division, Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service*, OIG Publication # 26-07, that the County needed strengthen oversight of EMST funds distributed to LFRDs.

As a result of the OIG's finding, and as provided for in the EMST agreements, the OIG recommended the County conduct a financial audit of the use of EMST funds, starting with those awarded to the MCVFRA, as soon as possible. The OIG also recommended the County seek recovery of funds as appropriate.

[Read the full report.](#)

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