

**Emergency Medical Services Ambulances and Equipment  
Statewide – Match for Code Blue Project**

**FY2009 Request: \$425,000  
Reference No: 42837**

**AP/AL:** Appropriation

**Project Type:** Equipment

**Category:** Health/Human Services

**Location:** Statewide

**Contact:** Arnold Liebelt

**House District:** Statewide (HD 1-40)

**Contact Phone:** (907)465-1870

**Estimated Project Dates:** 07/01/2008 - 06/30/2013

**Brief Summary and Statement of Need:**

Funds are needed to continue the work of the Code Blue Steering committee. This committee was formed to identify and purchase critical EMS equipment and ambulances for EMS agencies around the state, particularly in rural locations. Through several sources of funding much of the need has been satisfied, but funds are still required to continue the work. This year a total of \$425,000 is required to match federal, local and private funds to be allocated for all seven EMS regional offices for such needs as ambulances, heart monitors, training equipment, and communications equipment. One dollar in state general funds leverages more than four additional dollars in other funds.

<b>Funding:</b>	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014	Total
G/F Match	\$425,000	\$425,000	\$425,000	\$425,000	\$425,000		\$2,125,000
<b>Total:</b>	\$425,000	\$425,000	\$425,000	\$425,000	\$425,000	\$0	\$2,125,000

State Match Required   
  One-Time Project   
  Phased - new   
  Phased - underway   
  On-Going  
 0% = Minimum State Match % Required   
  Amendment   
  Mental Health Bill

**Operating & Maintenance Costs:**

	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Staff</u>
Project Development:	0	0
Ongoing Operating:	0	0
One-Time Startup:	0	0
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

**Additional Information / Prior Funding History:**

CH30/SLA07/P94/L32 \$425.0 GF/Match  
 CH82/SLA06/P73/L5 \$425.0 GF/Match  
 CH3/SLA05/P56/L22 - \$425.0 GF/Match  
 CH159/SLA04/P26/L24 - \$325.0 ASLC Dividends  
 CH82/SLA03/P28/L21 - \$425.0 GF/Match  
 CH1/SSSLA02/P40/L18 - \$425.0 GF/Match  
 CH61/SLA01/Pgs19 and 119/Lns20 and 9 - \$533.0GF/Match (\$333.3 operating)

**Project Description/Justification:**

There are agencies in seven regions of the state that work with Code Blue:

- Interior Region EMS Council, Inc.
- Maniilaq Association
- North Slope Borough
- Norton Sound Health Corporation
- Southeast Region EMS Council, Inc.
- Southern Region EMS Council, Inc.
- Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation

To provide effective life-saving services, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) ambulance and first responder personnel need adequate, reliable emergency medical equipment and ambulance vehicles. The Department of Health and Social Services, in cooperation with regional EMS programs throughout the state, has documented a critical need for new EMS equipment and

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ambulances, particularly in rural communities. Many old ambulances and EMS equipment were purchased with federal grants in the late 1970s and early 1980s. These vehicles and equipment must be replaced to ensure the continued viability of a statewide, comprehensive, life-saving EMS system. Most of the communities with old, failing equipment are staffed with volunteer EMTs who do not have access to the funding necessary to purchase new ambulances and equipment.

The process for dispersing Code Blue funds is as follows:

- Regions annually solicit items for inclusion on the Code Blue Database.
- The requests must be accompanied by a strong justification.
- Requests and justifications are reviewed by the medical directors for appropriateness and by the regional boards.
- The regional boards will either forward to the Code Blue Steering Committee, deny the request, or seek further justification and explanation to make a sound judgment.
- The requests go from the regions to the Steering Committee.
- Costs of individual items range from \$300 to over \$200,000 for a fully equipped ambulance.

This process ensures that the need is real, that the request is appropriate and reasonable, and that a priority is assigned to each request for funding.

These capital requests can be expected to continue. The small communities do not have the ability to meet these needs, but they must maintain an EMS capability to ensure a comprehensive response to emergencies. Although most items, especially the vehicles, will have a very long life expectancy, throughout the state there will always be a community that needs to replace a vehicle or other essential equipment.

In 2007, critical equipment needs identified in the Code Blue Database total over \$2.6 million. Through a collaborative effort of various funding agencies such as the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Rasmusson Foundation, and the Denali Commission, approximately \$14 million of new equipment has been purchased so far. Key to this success is the local match pledged by communities, leveraging of other funding sources, and the considered use of the capital funds made available annually for Code Blue matching funds. Requests continue to come in each year to replace broken and outdated items ensuring the system remains healthy.

The USDA's Rural Development Office has a community grant program that can fund up to 75% of the cost of an ambulance and medical equipment for communities that meet certain eligibility criteria. The remaining 25% must be provided as matching funds. Funds received through this appropriation will be used to match funds from the USDA and other sources, and will help purchase equipment for communities which are ineligible for other funding but have critical equipment needs.

Continuing capital appropriations each year help keep up with on-going needs for EMS equipment and ambulances for rural, volunteer EMS ambulance and first responder squads throughout the state, particularly those which are ineligible for funding from other sources such as the USDA.

The federal USDA Rural Development Office community grant program is an on-going program that Alaska could presumably continue to access on an annual basis to continue to support replacement of outdated EMS equipment and ambulances. We anticipate a continuing annual need of approximately \$2.2 million for replacement and upgrade of EMS equipment and ambulances for communities across Alaska. The ongoing capital appropriation demonstrates to other funding agencies that the state is committed to the Code Blue program.

Department's Mission: *To promote and protect the health and well being of Alaskans.* The Code Blue project contributes to the Department's mission by providing EMS equipment throughout Alaska that is essential to maintaining the health of Alaskans.

This project contributes to the goal of having "healthy people in healthy communities."