

WEST VIRGINIA LEGISLATURE

2025 REGULAR SESSION

Committee Substitute

for

Senate Bill 925

By Senator Maynard

[Reported March 27, 2025, from the Committee on
Health and Human Resources]

A BILL to amend the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, by adding a new article, designated §16-4G-1, §16-4G-2, §16-4G-3, §16-4G-4, §16-4G-5, §16-4G-6, §16-4G-7, and §16-4G-8, relating to requiring needs-based assessments of emergency medical services departments so that funding may be distributed according to need and not equally across the board; providing short title; providing legislative findings; providing definitions; providing process for implementation; providing for application of the assessment; providing for reporting and legislative oversight; authorizing rulemaking to the Office of Emergency Medical Services; and establishing an effective date.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of West Virginia:

ARTICLE 4G. EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES NEEDS-BASED ASSESSMENT

<u>AND</u>	<u>FUNDING</u>	<u>ACT.</u>
<u>§16-4G-1.</u>	<u>Short</u>	<u>title.</u>

This article shall be known and may be cited as the "Emergency Medical Services Needs-Based Assessment Act".

<u>§16-4G-2.</u>	<u>Legislative</u>	<u>findings.</u>
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(a) The Legislature finds that emergency medical services (EMS) are a critical component of public health and safety in West Virginia.

(b) Disparities in funding allocation have led to resource shortages in high-need areas, affecting response times and service quality.

(c) A needs-based assessment will provide a data-driven approach to ensuring EMS funding is distributed equitably.

<u>§16-4G-3.</u>	<u>Definitions.</u>
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For the purposes of this act:

(1) "Emergency Medical Services" or "EMS" refers to pre-hospital emergency medical care and transportation services.

(2) "Needs-Based Assessment" refers to a comprehensive evaluation of EMS agencies to determine funding requirements based on factors such as call volume, response times, geographic coverage, and financial sustainability.

(3) "Department" refers to the West Virginia Department of Health, Bureau for Public Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services.

§16-4G-4. Needs-based assessment implementation.

(a) The department shall conduct a statewide EMS needs-based assessment every two years.

(b) The assessment shall evaluate:

(1) Call volume and response times by jurisdiction;

(2) Availability of ambulances and trained personnel;

(3) Financial stability of EMS providers;

(4) Geographic challenges impacting service delivery;

(5) Mutual aid agreements and reliance on volunteer services; and

(6) Equipment and training deficiencies.

(c) The department shall collaborate with local EMS agencies, county commissions, and regional health authorities in conducting the assessment.

(d) The first needs-based assessment shall be conducted within one year of the act's passage.

§16-4G-5. Needs-based funding application.

(a) The department shall establish a funding distribution formula based on the findings of the needs-based assessment.

(b) Funding priority shall be given to EMS agencies demonstrating:

(1) High call volumes and slow response times;

(2) Financial instability that threatens operational viability;

(3) A shortage of certified personnel;

(4) Insufficient medical equipment or vehicles; and

(5) Service coverage gaps in rural and underserved areas.

(c) No EMS provider shall receive reduced funding unless justified by assessment findings and alternative funding availability.

§16-4G-6. Reporting; legislative oversight.

(a) The department shall submit a report to the Legislature every two years detailing:

(1) Assessment results;

(2) Funding allocations and justifications:

(3) Improvements and deficiencies in EMS services; and

(4) Recommendations for legislative or regulatory changes.

(b) The Joint Committee on Government and Finance shall review the report and make recommendations for policy adjustments if necessary.

§16-4G-7. Rulemaking.

Pursuant to §29A-3-1 et seq. of this code, the department shall propose legislative rules to
implement this act.

§16-4G-8. Effective date.

This act shall be effective from passage.

NOTE: The purpose of this bill is to establish the Emergency Medical Services Needs-Based Assessment and Funding Act.

Strike-throughs indicate language that would be stricken from a heading or the present law and underscoring indicates new language that would be added.