



NEWS FROM **ULSTER COUNTY** County Executive Jen Metzger

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Ulster County EMS Plan Gets Green Light from Legislature

\$4.7 MILLION INVESTMENT TO STRENGTHEN EMS SERVICE COUNTYWIDE

KINGSTON, NY - The EMS Stabilization and Enhancement Plan developed by the Ulster County Department of Emergency Services at the direction of County Executive Jen Metzger was approved by the Ulster County Legislature during Tuesday's session in a bipartisan vote of 21 to 0.

The plan provides targeted financial support, performance-based incentives, and new oversight measures to strengthen emergency medical services (EMS) delivery in communities across the County, and marks a critical step in ensuring high-quality EMS for all County residents.

The plan includes two key funding allocations: \$2 million to support existing EMS services in municipalities that meet performance standards, and \$2.7 million to contract with Advanced Life Support (ALS) anchor agencies, utilizing the County's recently approved Municipal Ambulance Service Operating Certificate (Muni-CON) to strengthen EMS delivery where resources are strained. The County will partner with local EMS agencies and municipalities to provide emergency response by entering into contracts with ALS providers and oversee billing and EMS provider service. In addition to closing service gaps, this approach helps local governments streamline EMS contract administration, reducing the burden on municipal staff and ensuring more efficient emergency services for residents.

The \$2 million appropriation will provide financial assistance to municipalities with existing EMS contracts or operating certificates, supporting efforts to improve response reliability and system performance. Funding eligibility is tied to a performance-based model requiring a 95% response rate, but agencies below that threshold may still qualify by meeting phased benchmarks over 12 months. This approach ensures communities can steadily build capacity

while remaining eligible for support. Funds may be used to improve staffing, enhance response times, and invest in priority upgrades such as equipment, station expenses, transport vehicles, and financial education for EMS providers.

The \$2.7 million appropriation will strengthen Advanced Life Support (ALS) response across Ulster County by partnering with designated anchor agencies under the County's Ambulance Service Operating Certificate, to ensure consistent, reliable coverage wherever service gaps or increased demand arise. This model includes both readiness funding and performance-based incentives tied to response reliability standards.

The plan also introduces new compliance measures, including eligibility criteria, financial disclosure requirements, and performance-based funding mechanisms (such as Critical Response Incentive payments). EMS agencies will be required to demonstrate effectiveness in emergency response while adhering to County oversight and accountability standards.

"This plan is a result of a lot of hard work and negotiations and represents the most comprehensive path toward fully responsive EMS services in Ulster County," **said Ulster County Executive Jen Metzger**. "By investing in existing EMS providers, we can ensure faster response times, better-equipped agencies, and a stronger safety net for all residents. I want to thank Ulster County Emergency Services Director Everett Erichsen, Deputy County Executive Jamie Capuano, and the Emergency Services team for their work on this Plan, and I also want to thank Legislator Jason Kovacs and the entire Legislature for recognizing the urgent need to strengthen our EMS system."

"This plan is about action, about making sure that when someone calls for help, trained EMS providers arrive quickly and fully prepared," **said Everett Erichsen, Director of the Ulster County Department of Emergency Services**. "The demand on our EMS system is growing, and lives depend on our ability to respond. This funding model strengthens day-to-day operations, supports the agencies doing the work, and builds the accountability we need to protect every resident who relies on emergency medical care."

"The passage of Resolution 102.2 represents a major milestone for public safety in Ulster County," **said Legislator Jason J. Kovacs, Esq.** "As the sole sponsor of this resolution, I am proud to have led the effort to deliver more than \$4.7 million in targeted support to strengthen EMS coverage, expand Advanced Life Support to communities in need, and ensure taxpayer funds are tied to performance and accountability. Our first responders deserve more than praise — they deserve real, structural support. I thank my colleagues for recognizing the urgency and stepping up to meet the moment."

“After much time, work, and collaboration, Ulster County is moving forward with a plan to fill in the gaps with regards to EMS. Times have changed and what used to work and be sufficient for ambulance service is no longer,” **said Gina Hansut, Ulster County Legislator and Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee Chair.** “Taking many factors into account for the framework of municipalities’ needs, we can now better provide ALS and BLS services across our county. I feel we will be a model for the state, and I’m proud of the work many have done to keep our residents safe and get them services in a more timely manner.”

"Legislator Jason Kovacs and Director Everett Erichsen worked tirelessly to address long-standing challenges within our county’s EMS system, creating partnerships across multiple agencies and departments to develop a forward-thinking solution. Their efforts — alongside the leadership and guidance of the County Executive’s team — have resulted in a resolution and funding that demonstrate our county’s commitment to reaching across the aisle and engaging in meaningful collaboration to improve emergency medical services for all residents,” **said Chris Hewitt, Ulster County Legislator and Law Enforcement and Public Safety Committee Deputy Chair.** “This milestone reflects our shared dedication to finding sustainable solutions that strengthen the EMS districts that serve our communities."

The Ulster County Department of Emergency Services will oversee the implementation of the plan, working closely with local EMS providers, municipalities, and community partners to ensure its success.

As part of this effort, the Ulster County Legislature also voted Tuesday to approve a contract with New Paltz Rescue Squad to begin providing supplemental EMS service. Additionally, Ulster County has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Town of Gardiner to begin providing this municipal service starting June 1.

For more information on Ulster County’s EMS initiatives, visit <https://participate.ulstercountyny.gov/ems-plan>.

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