



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

SAN JUAN COUNTY PUBLIC HOSPITAL DISTRICT NO. 1 EMS LEVY RENEWAL - FEB 8, 2022

Q: Is the hospital district proposing a new EMS levy?

No. Voters are being asked to renew an existing EMS levy, which is under the hospital district.

Q: When do we vote?

Voters will be asked to approve the ballot item at the February 8, 2022, election. Ballots are typically mailed about three weeks in advance of election day and can be filled out and returned to the Elections Office immediately.

Q: When would the renewal take effect?

If the levy is approved by the voters it will take effect January 1, 2023. As a six-year levy, it would be in effect until December 31, 2028.

Q: What services does San Juan Island EMS provide and where do they operate?

EMS provides Basic Life Support (BLS) and is the only provider of Advanced Life Support (ALS) services on San Juan Island and nearby islands. This includes ambulance services.

Q: Tell us something about Advanced Life Support (ALS). How is it “advanced”?

ALS service includes more technical medical equipment such as ventilators and ultrasound. It provides advanced medications, including for pain management, and treatment. ALS service can intubate a patient. With its rigorous training standards and high-quality equipment, ALS service fills the urgent need here for complete prehospital patient care.



The Paramedics of San Juan Island: LtR Noah Waldron, Kyle Davies, Weyshawn Koons, Ryan Nelson

Q: Is there a system to measure the effectiveness of these services and if so where does San Juan Island rank?

San Juan Island EMS contracts with a third party to survey all recipients of care. EMS routinely ranks 7th of all 179 transport services that participate in these surveys, and 5th among comparably sized services. Our patients rank our EMS services as responsive, timely, skilled, with EMS personnel genuinely interested in the welfare of patients. We also report data about service to Washington state and are recognized both statewide and nationwide as providing excellent service. Our cardiac save rates are consistently among the best in the nation.

Q: What does this service cost citizens who receive care?

The hospital district does not charge coinsurance or copays to patients who live in the District or pay taxes here. While your insurance will be billed, you will not be billed any remainder. This means that no resident or taxpayer in our District pays anything out of pocket for EMS services.



Q: Back to the levy: Is there a plan for using the money in this levy?

We're glad you asked! Yes. A detailed six-year budget is posted to our website at www.sjcphd.org/ems. Included on the site is a narrative introduction to the six-year plan. The excel spreadsheet itself is generously annotated.

Q: At one point, San Juan Island EMS was considering joining San Juan Island Fire and Rescue. What happened?

The fall 2021 election included (with EMS support) a proposal that San Juan Island Fire and Rescue take over EMS services from the hospital district. That ballot measure failed and as a result the two organizations remain separate.

Q: Why is the EMS levy renewal proposal on the ballot labelled “San Juan County Public Hospital District No. 1”?

San Juan County Public Hospital District No. 1 operates and administers San Juan Island EMS. The EMS levy up for renewal is administered by the hospital district and used exclusively for EMS services. The hospital district has a separate levy, that helps fund PeaceHealth, and in 2022 will begin building long-term care services.

Q: Why is it called a “hospital district” if it’s not a hospital?

Washington state uses the term “hospital district to identify special purpose districts like ours that use property taxes to provide healthcare services of all kinds. While we do not provide hospital services directly, our contract with PeaceHealth does ensure that those services are provided to our community. We do not operate PeaceHealth.

Q: What will the new EMS levy rate be?

When the EMS levy was passed six years ago the rate was \$0.50 per \$1,000 in assessed value. It is being renewed at \$0.45 per \$1,000 of assessed value. The cost for a resident with a \$500,000 property will be \$225 annually.

Q: How do I comment on the direction of the hospital district or San Juan Island EMS?

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the hospital district Board of Commissioners, generally held on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 5:30 pm. In the COVID environment these meetings are held through MS Teams and have a call-in option. A portion of the meeting is set aside for public comment. Agendas and call-in information can be found at sjcphd.org.

Q: What happens if this levy is not renewed?

The district will try again later this year to renew it. If it is not passed by the end of 2022, then San Juan Island EMS will be shut down and EMS services offered will no longer be offered on San Juan Island.

More information at www.sjcphd.org/ems

Or www.sanjuanems.org

The District also offers CPR, First Aid, and other classes at nominal cost to District residents. This is a renewal for the existing EMS services on San Juan Island, not a new service. This also includes EMS coverage for Pearl, Brown, Johns, Stuart, Henry, and Spieden islands.