



## **SOUTHEASTERN MINNESOTA EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

**1130 ½ SEVENTH STREET NW | SUITE 201 | ROCHESTER, MN 55901  
OFFICE: 507-536-9333 | FAX: 507-536-9337 | WWW.SEEMS.COM**

June 1, 2026

### **SUBJECT: FY 2027 REQUEST FOR COUNTY FUNDING ASSISTANCE**

Since 1984, the Southeastern Minnesota Emergency Medical Services (SEEMS) Regional System has been dedicated to providing high-quality education, operational support, and medical oversight to emergency responders and the communities they serve. The Southeastern Minnesota EMS Regional System serves the counties of Freeborn, Mower, Fillmore, Houston, Winona, Olmsted, Dodge, Steele, Rice, Wabasha, and Goodhue.

Our program is governed by a Joint Powers Board consisting of one County Commissioner from each of the eleven counties within our region. This collaborative governance structure ensures that regional priorities and local needs remain at the forefront of our mission.

While EMS education remains a core function of our organization, our focus extends far beyond ambulance services. We provide continuing education, operational support, and physician-led medical direction to more than 60 EMS agencies, fire departments, law enforcement agencies, communication centers, corrections organizations, and other public safety partners throughout southeastern Minnesota. Through this support, first responders are better prepared to effectively manage medical emergencies, traumatic incidents, disasters, and other critical events within their communities.

In addition to supporting public safety professionals, our regional program provides educational resources and outreach to the public on important safety initiatives, including:

- Seat belt safety and occupant protection
- Distracted driving prevention
- Local, county, and state public safety campaigns
- Opioid awareness, prevention, and response education
- Community CPR and emergency preparedness initiatives

Historically, these efforts have been funded through Minnesota's seat belt fine revenue. Over the past decade, Minnesota's seat belt compliance rate has steadily improved, resulting in a significant reduction in available funding. While this increase in compliance represents a major public safety success, it has also created a funding challenge for regional EMS programs. Funding for the Southeastern Minnesota EMS Regional System has decreased from approximately \$175,000 in 2012 to just \$30,000 in 2026.

To maintain a sustainable funding model and ensure continued support for emergency responders throughout our region, the Southeastern Minnesota EMS Joint Powers Board respectfully requests an annual appropriation of \$5,000 from each of the eleven counties we serve.

This investment directly supports:

- Continuing education for EMS, Fire, Law Enforcement, Communications, and Corrections personnel
- Regional operational and system support
- Physician-led Medical Direction Consortium activities



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- Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) and responder wellness programs
- Recruitment and retention initiatives for volunteer and career emergency responders
- Public safety education and community outreach programs

Emergency responders are essential to the health, safety, and resilience of our communities. The Southeastern Minnesota EMS Regional System remains committed to supporting these professionals by providing the training, resources, and leadership necessary to meet the growing challenges facing emergency services today.

We respectfully request a **\$5,000 appropriation for Fiscal Year 2027** from your County Board of Commissioners. Your investment will help ensure a highly trained and prepared emergency services workforce, improve patient care outcomes, strengthen responder wellness, and enhance the long-term sustainability of emergency services throughout Southeastern Minnesota.

We value our continued partnership with your county and appreciate your consideration of this request. Together, we can continue to support the dedicated first responders who protect and serve our communities every day.

*Thank you for your continued commitment to public safety.*

The point of contact for this request is the Alex Catevenis, Executive Director, at (507) 536-9333 or [alex.catevenis@seems.com](mailto:alex.catevenis@seems.com)

Professionally,

**Alexander C. Catevenis, BA, NRP**

Executive Director  
Southeastern MN EMS

Sent on behalf of the Southeastern Minnesota Emergency Medical Services Joint Powers Board:

**Mitch Lentz- Chair, Commissioner, Fillmore County**

**Cheryl Key- Vice Chair, Commissioner, Wabasha County**

Dave Kenworthy, Commissioner, Dodge County

Dawn Kaasa, Commissioner, Freeborn County

Bill Mueller, Commissioner, Olmsted County

Marcia Ward, Commissioner, Winona County

Todd Greseth, Commissioner, Goodhue County

Polly Glynn, Commissioner, Mower County

Josh Prokopec, Commissioner, Steele County

Bob Schuldt, Commissioner, Houston County

Steve Underdahl, Commissioner, Rice County