



Wapello County Board of Supervisors
215 N. Court St.
Ottumwa, IA 52501

February 26, 2025

Dear local elected officials and community stakeholders,

The delivery of Emergency Medical Services is a complicated and delicate enterprise, one which Iowa Code does NOT require. Most are unaware there is no requirement for an ambulance to answer your call for help. However, we have enjoyed this service for several decades and have come to depend on it as a critical part of our public safety service suite. As reimbursements shrink, staffing becomes harder to find and equipment becomes more expensive, the delivery of EMS is at a critical crossroads.

Our county's EMS services have had challenges with staffing and equipment in the past few years while the demand for service has not slowed. There have been discussions and meetings recently to address these issues by local leadership and EMS services, however, the fact remains, that we still have work to do to develop a comprehensive and quality EMS system.

A conversation has been started by Wapello County Emergency Management with the Board of Supervisors on behalf of the Wapello County Emergency Medical Services Association regarding making EMS a recognized Essential Service in Wapello County. Chapter 422D of the Iowa Code and a draft EMS Essential Service Resolution (enclosed) were introduced to the Board of Supervisors on January 14th.

Chapter 422D allows counties to adopt a resolution declaring emergency medical services an Essential Service. This Resolution was discussed at the Board meeting on January 28th and the vote was passed to move forward with the Resolution process. Upon adoption of this Resolution, an EMS Advisory Council will be appointed by the Board of Supervisors to study the EMS delivery in Wapello County and make recommendations to the Board on how the delivery model may be modified and strengthened. These changes may require funding and may result in a ballot question being presented to the voters.

The Board of Supervisors is hosting a public meeting with all elected officials in Wapello County on **Tuesday, April 29th at 6:00 pm at Bridge View Center**. You are invited to attend to learn more about EMS in Wapello County and learn the details of the EMS Essential Service work that is currently underway.

We ask that you RSVP so that we may have adequate print materials by calling 641-814-8333 and leaving a message OR emailing ema@wapellocounty.org by April 14th. Officials, please post a public notice of your elected body's attendance at this meeting. We look forward to your questions and feedback at this meeting.

Wapello County Board of Supervisors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darren Batterson".

Darren Batterson, Chair

Wapello County Emergency Management Agency

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Richmond".

Tim Richmond, Director