

SECRETARY'S RECORD, NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

BEFORE THE NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

In the Matter of the Application) APPLICATION NO. LR-345
of Rural/Metro Ambulance Omaha,)
Nebraska, seeking to amend its)
rates and charges subject to the)
Provisions of Neb. Rev. Stat.) GRANTED
(Reissue 2014), Chapter 75,)
Articles 1 and 3.)
) ENTERED: June 16, 2015

BY THE COMMISSION:

OPININON AND FINDINGS

On February 9, 2015, Rural/Metro Ambulance Omaha, Inc., Papillion, Nebraska, filed an application for authority to amend rates for its use in its operations as follows:

Rates	Current	Proposed
One Way	\$34.00	\$38.00
Round Trip	\$68.00	\$76.00
Oxygen	\$30.00	Unchanged
Lift Assist	\$ 8.00	\$25.00
Mileage	\$2.25 over 14 mi.	Unchanged
Waiting Charge:		
First 15 minutes	No charge	Unchanged
Each 15 minutes after	\$9.00	Unchanged
Each 15 after with lift assist	\$12.00	Unchanged
Addition of Multiple Passengers:	\$10.00 per person divided among all passengers	Unchanged

Applicant is a certificated common carrier which holds Certificate Number B-1379. The certificate authorizes the transportation of handicapped or incapacitated passengers and their baggage between points in Nebraska over irregular routes. The Applicant is proposing to amend its rates for use in this certificate. The last time the Applicant received a change in its rates was February 8, 2000. The application was published in the Daily Record on May 12, 2015. The Commission received no protests to the application.

The Applicant is seeking to raise its rates from \$34.00 per trip one way to \$38.00 per trip one way. The round trip charge is proposed to raise from \$68.00 to \$76.00. The mileage charge for trips after the first fourteen (14) miles charge would remain at \$2.25 per mile. The Applicant is proposing that the

lift assist charge be raised from \$8.00 to \$25.00. The charge for oxygen and the Waiting Time charges would remain unchanged.

The primary justification for this increase is that the company has experienced an increase in costs since the granting of the last change in their rates in 2000. Fuel costs, while having receded from much higher prices in the last two years, are still up sixty-three percent over year 2000 prices. The Applicant has also experienced an increase in the costs of health insurance and overall employee compensation.

The proposed rate for service of \$38.00 appears to be reasonable. According to information available to the Commission, the Department of Health and Human Services is currently paying \$39.77 to providers for services such as that performed by the Applicant. The requested increase in the One way and Round Trips charges is eleven percent.

The charge for the lift assist is based upon current market charges for similar services provided by other providers the market. The lift assist charge is for the use of special equipment that the Applicant needs to use for certain passengers. These passengers need this equipment to enter and exit the vehicle. It is not a charge that is based upon whether the individual is in a wheelchair or not, but based upon the need of the passenger. The Commission finds that this charge is reasonable in light of the current market conditions and the length of time since this rate was last addressed.

The Commission finds that the overall rates proposed in the application are reasonable. The eleven percent increase on the trips charges is reasonable, especially in light of the amount of time that has passed since the last rate adjustment.

The Commission requests that the Applicant review its operations and apply for any rate changes as needed rather than waiting for a long period of time between applications. The impact on the general public is more moderate, and the Applicant will be in a better financial position than if it waits an extended period of time to apply for an adjustment.

Upon consideration of the application and being fully advised in the premises, the Commission is of the opinion and finds that the application should be granted effective June 26, 2015.

ORDER

IT IS, THEREFORE, ORDERED by the Nebraska Public Service Commission that effective June 26, 2015, Rural/Metro Ambulance

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Omaha, Inc., Papillion, Nebraska, be, and it is hereby, authorized to amend rates for its use as follows:

Description	Rates
One Way	\$38.00
Round Trip	\$76.00
Oxygen	\$30.00
Lift Assist	\$25.00
Mileage	\$2.25 over 14 mi.
Waiting Charge:	
First 15 minutes	No charge
Each 15 minutes after	\$9.00
Each 15 after with lift assist	\$12.00
Addition of Multiple Passengers:	\$10.00 per person divided among all passengers

MADE AND ENTERED at Lincoln, Nebraska, this 16th day of June, 2015.

NEBRASKA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

COMMISSIONERS CONCURRING:

Tim Schrom

Chairman

Crystal Knader

ATTEST:

Frank E. Landis

//s//Frank E. Landis
//s//Gerald L. Vap

Deputy Director

Gerald L. Vap