

JLBC Fiscal Note

BILL # HB 2404

SPONSOR: Willoughby

PREPARED BY: Destin Moss

TITLE: ~~authorized transporters~~ S/E: transportation;
mental health; patients

STATUS: As Amended by House HHS

Description

The bill prohibits peace officers from conducting inter-facility transports of behavioral health patients unless emergency assistance is requested via 911 or a similar emergency number. It also requires these transports to be conducted by health care institutions, behavioral health facilities, or other authorized transporters. Inter-facility transport is defined as the transportation of a proposed patient between licensed health care or behavioral health facilities.

Estimated Impact

We estimate the bill will result in increased General Fund costs to the state employee health plan operated by Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA) and the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) due to higher costs for interfacility transports, but we are unable to determine the magnitude of these impacts in advance. We have reached out to AHCCCS and ADOA to request their perspective on the bill's cost but have not yet received a response from either agency.

Analysis

Our estimate assumes the following:

- 1) Current law allows peace officers to conduct interfacility transports. We understand that police departments do not typically bill facilities to conduct such transports.
- 2) The bill would instead require transports to be conducted by health care institutions, behavioral health facilities, or other authorized transporters, and the cost of these private transport options would likely need to be paid by an individual or their insurance provider.
- 3) To the extent that interfacility transportation of individuals insured by AHCCCS or the state employee health plan shifts from peace officers to private transporters, the state will become responsible for reimbursing the cost of that transportation rather than local governments.
- 4) Based on testimony from the City of Phoenix at the House Health and Human Services Committee, the police departments for the cities of Phoenix, Tucson, and Mesa currently conduct an estimated 3,000 interfacility transports for behavioral health patients.
- 5) We do not know what share of such transports would be provided via ambulance versus a behavioral health transportation provider under the bill and therefore what the typical cost per transport would be. We also do not know the share of such transports are attributable to members of AHCCCS or state employees and their dependents. As a result, we are unable to provide a plausible cost estimate for the bill.
- 6) The bill specifically targets inter-facility transports and does not impact the initial transport of an individual from the community to a health facility.

2/24/26