

SHELBY COUNTY EMS

Ambulance Essential Services

<https://shelbycounty.iowa.gov/departments/ems>



WHEN YOU CALL 911, WHO WILL RESPOND?

When you call the 911 for an ambulance, minutes can make a difference. When a volunteer EMS service is not available or they need advanced care support, an organized guaranteed responses can make all the difference. Shelby County currently benefits from this organized tiered response.

Why are we planning a change?

The owners of Medivac Ambulance, a privately owned critical care paramedic service, has announced plans to retire after providing life saving response to our service area for more than 30 years.



WHAT IS AN ESSENTIAL SERVICE?

Rural communities across Iowa depend on a combination of employed staff and volunteers to provide public safety services.

If EMS becomes an essential service a tax may be levied to support the cost of providing this care. Shelby County residents will have the chance to vote on the EMS Proposition in the November 7, 2023, election.

STAFFING PLAN

1 crew (a paramedic & EMT) on 24/7

1 crew (a paramedic & EMT) on 12/7 and On-Call 12/7





EMS QUICK FACTS



As volunteer numbers decrease, it has become more important than ever to ensure a guaranteed response to all 911 calls.



Transfers to specialty care will continue to be a priority—providing an essential service while providing some revenue to the new service.



Shelby County has approximately 48 EMS volunteers throughout the county. These volunteer services remain a vital part of the EMS plan. Volunteer training and availability varies in all communities.

	2019	2020	2021	2022
HARLAN	135	24	67	123
IRWIN	99	49	67	100
DEFIANCE	103	38	72	79
EARLING	69	40	58	70
PORTSMOUTH	13	25	20	26
ELK HORN	81	66	88	170
SHELBY	113	68	117	172
WESTPHALIA	6	6	16	23
PANAMA	8	18	17	27
KIRKMAN	5	0	14	22
TOTAL CALLS FOR SERVICE	632	334	536	812

This table shows calls responded to, not calls received.

EMS ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Shelby County EMS Advisory Council Mission statement is:

To ensure that all citizens and visitors of Shelby County have access to all emergency medical services meeting the minimum standards set forth by the state of Iowa and/or Shelby County ordinance.

Requirements of the council are:

- Research the needs of Shelby County
- Guide implementation of services in the county within a council structure
- Develop a working budget and present to the Board of Supervisors
- Annually shall assess and review the emergency medical service system within the county
- Provide an annual report to the board of supervisors

This team includes:

- Tim Plumb, Volunteer Rep
- Janice Gaul, City of Earling
- Barry Jacobsen, CEO Myrtue Medical Center
- Bryce Schaben, County Supervisor
- Karen Schlueter, City of Shelby
- Alex Shelby County EMA designee
- Roger Bissen, City of Harlan designee



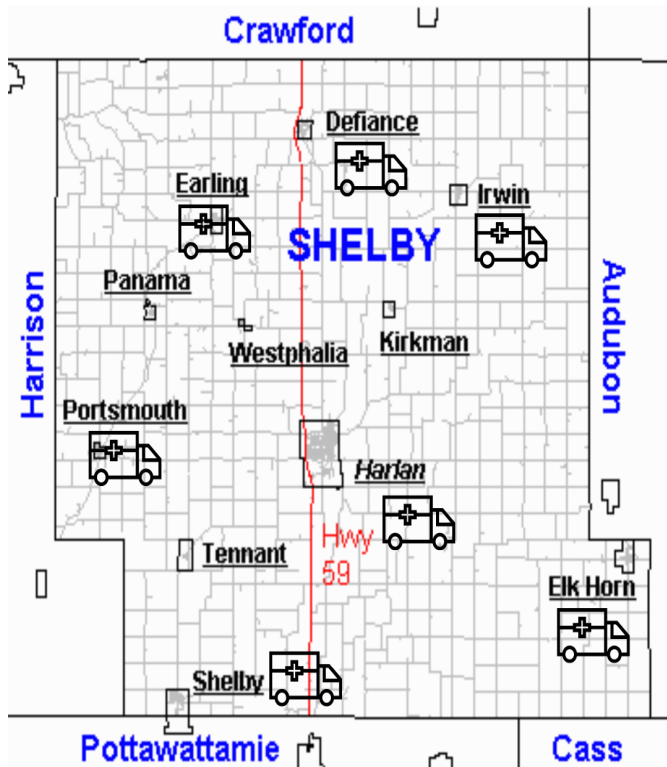
**VOTE
ON THE EMS
PROPOSITION**

All Shelby County residents have the opportunity to vote on the “EMS Public Measure” in this election.

NOVEMBER 7, 2023

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES IN SHELBY COUNTY

THE PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE



THE PAST: EVERY SERVICE ON ITS OWN

Since the early 70s, all Shelby County citizens have been served by a combination of volunteers and paid EMS providers. The volunteers staff ambulances and provide basic first-response emergency care. The Shelby County Ambulance Commission contracts with Medivac Corp for 24 hours a day – 7 days a week coverage at the Paramedic level. This combination has served the county's citizens well for over 40 years. Medivac additionally provides inter-facility transports to major medical centers in the Omaha metro area with highly specialized critical care equipment and personnel. Each community had volunteer crews with limited staffing, their own training plan, set of medical protocols, and vehicle maintenance plan. Elk Horn and Shelby EMS were the only crews to have paid staff. This led to a review of EMS data and a visit with the Board of Supervisors about issues related to overall ambulance coverage and services.

TODAY: COUNTY WIDE COOPERATION

A collaboration is being discussed throughout the county. The transition of becoming an essential service would increase coverage, provide oversight of countywide EMS operations, and

allow improved coordination of volunteers and paid providers. The essential service would allow Shelby County to tax for EMS within the county. This will be a major funding stream to maintain the EMS budget. A county-wide roster was created so crews could work in communities outside their own, and work more collaboratively. Staff and volunteers are stretched thin, and so is the budget. A tiered response model provides the most effective delivery of emergency care with volunteers supported by a paid EMS service. The communities of Shelby, Portsmouth, Panama, Earling, Westphalia, Defiance, Irwin, Harlan and Elk Horn all provide EMS service within their areas. The new Shelby County EMS Department will tier with these communities and provide Advanced Life Support (ALS) service as needed.

THE FUTURE OF EMS

Our current EMS system is not sustainable. The option of "just keep doing what we do now" is simply not possible. The future of EMS in Shelby County lies in the hands of local voters.

IF THE EMS PROPOSITION PASSES

Shelby County residents would support the cost of having EMS coverage available.

- Response times and reliability will improve.
- Staffing for 24/7 coverage will improve.
- Operational capabilities will improve.
- Training for staff and volunteers will be budgeted for and available.
- The ambulance fleet will be expanded and maintained, with a rotational vehicle plan.



THE VITAL ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS

WHAT IS TIERED CARE?

The EMS system depends on a variety of roles to work effectively. The various “tiers” or levels of care available depend on the training staff and volunteers have to perform their role.

Basic and Advanced Life Saving

Basic Life Saving (BLS) and Advanced Life Saving (ALS) are terms that represent a certain level of care provided by EMS personnel. A person’s training will allow them to do certain tasks. For example, starting an IV or placing an advanced airway (ET tube) is considered an ALS skill. Applying and providing oxygen via a nasal cannula is considered a BLS skill.

Other roles within EMS

- Drivers—must be CPR certified.
- EMR (Emergency Medical Responders) provide life-saving, on-scene treatment to patients using basic interventions and minimal equipment.
- EMT (Emergency Medical Technicians) provide out of hospital emergency medical care and can transport patients. EMTs perform interventions with basic equipment typically found in an ambulance.
- AEMT (Advanced Emergency Medical Technicians) provide basic and limited advanced emergency care and can transport patients. AEMTs utilize basic and advanced equipment typically found on an ambulance.
- Paramedics provide advanced emergency care, offering complex knowledge and skills to provide patient care and transportation. Paramedics perform interventions with basic and advanced equipment typically found on an ambulance.
- Medical professionals—nurses, doctors, P.A.s, nurse practitioners and others can serve with EMS crews.



Volunteers are valuable

EMS volunteers are a valuable resource for rural Iowans. Public safety in rural communities depends on volunteer involvement. Without the support of active, trained volunteers, communities across Shelby County would struggle to provide the coverage needed.



EMS volunteers in Iowa

75% percent of Iowa’s EMS services are entirely volunteer-based. The remainder of the calls are handled by paid staff. (Iowa Hospital Association, www.ihaonline.org).



Working together is essential

Volunteers and full-time staff are both needed to make the future model work. The EMS proposition supports our teams of dedicated volunteers and coordinates their work and schedule with the paid staff serving this area. Thank you to all who serve in these key roles—you are essential and appreciated!

