



Amendment to Riverside Municipal Code Chapter 5.66 - Ambulances

Fire Department

City Council Meeting
June 16, 2026



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1

LEGISLATIVE

- Chapter 5.66 of the Riverside Municipal Code establishes the City's authority to regulate ambulance services operating within the City of Riverside.
- The ordinance ensures ambulance services are provided in a safe, reliable, and fiscally responsible manner.
- Chapter 5.66 governs Ambulance franchises and permits, operational standards and requirements, ambulance rate structures, compliance, and enforcement.



2

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2

BACKGROUND

- Chapter 5.66 is essential to ensure the safety, efficiency, and accountability of emergency and non-emergency medical transport services within the City of Riverside.
- The proposed amendments reflect the need to address evolving operational requirements, incorporate compliance with current state and local EMS standards, and enhance oversight to maintain high-quality ambulance services.



3

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3

DISCUSSION

The key updates in the proposed amendments include:

5.66.020 Franchise / Permits:

- The proposed amendment in 5.66.020 introduces a provision allowing unpermitted ambulances to operate upon approval of the Administrator in situations where significant time delays may adversely impact patient care.

5.66.040 Application for a franchise or extension of a franchise:

- The current ordinance requires applicants for ambulance service permits to verify their current accreditation with the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS).
- The amendment allows the Ambulance Administrator to grant a variance for applicants who demonstrate a commitment to achieving accreditation within six months to 18 months of receiving their permit.



4

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4

DISCUSSION

5.66.050 Processing of application:

- The proposed change increases the timeframe for the Administrator to prepare the report and present to the Safety, Wellness, and Youth Committee, from (14) to (45) days. The increased timeframe will allow sufficient time to complete the report and to allow for changes in the committee schedule, which has been found to be problematic.

5.66.090 Extension of franchises/permits:

- The revised version aligns the ordinance with the rest of the document, allowing the Ambulance Franchise Administrator the authority to extend the franchise/permit holder agreement for up to three years, not to exceed the maximum term limitation of the City Charter.



5

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5

DISCUSSION

5.66.180 Ambulance rates

- The proposal to adjust the percent increase limit from 5% to 10% aligns with Riverside County's policy framework for managing rate changes. This change acknowledges the reality of escalating costs and offers greater flexibility for meeting operational needs while maintaining a structured review process.

5.66.195 Permit for ambulances:

- The revised version would state: "Each permit holder shall annually submit for inspection to the Administrator 50 percent of its fleet of ambulances operating in the City, such that all ambulances of a franchisee operating in the City are inspected on a biennial basis." This change provides clarity, as "biennial" explicitly conveys the intended two-year rotation and avoids misinterpretation that could lead to non-compliance.



6

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6

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the City Council:

- Introduce and subsequently adopt Ordinance amending Chapter 5.66 of the Riverside Municipal Code regarding ambulances, Sections 5.66.020, 5.66.040, 5.66.050, 5.66.090, 5.66.180, and 5.66.195.

