



Medicare Ground Ambulance Data Collection Instrument: Volunteer Organization Requirements

Lisa Sontag-Padilla (RAND)

Sara Heins (RAND)

Andrew Mulcahy (RAND)

October 14, 2021

Agenda

- Today's session covers data collection and data reporting for organizations with volunteer labor.
- Instrument Sections Related to Volunteers
 - Section 2: Organizational Characteristics
 - Section 7: Labor Costs
 - Section 11: Other Costs
- More information is available from the Ambulances Services Center website (<https://www.cms.gov/Center/Provider-Type/Ambulances-Services-Center.html>), including:
 - A printable version of the entire instrument that you can use to follow along with the presentation today
 - A Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document
 - Slides and recordings from prior presentations
 - A Quick Reference Guide

Section 2: Organizational Characteristics

- This section asks about your organization's characteristics, including information about whether you use volunteer labor.
- **Section 2, Question 6** will trigger follow-up questions in Section 7 regarding volunteer labor. If you do NOT see any questions about volunteer labor in this section, go back to verify you answered "yes" to Section 2, Question 6.

Section 2, Question 6. Did your organization use volunteer labor for any positions related to your ground ambulance service during the data collection period

- Include volunteers even if they receive small stipends, allowances, or other incentives from your organization.
- Do not include staff who are paid on an hourly or salary basis even if they performed some activities (e.g., responding as an EMT) on a volunteer basis.

Sections 3 through 6

- These sections ask about Service Area, Emergency Response Time, Service Volume, and Service Mix.
- The questions in these sections are identical for organizations with and without volunteer labor, so we will not be discussing these sections on today's call.

Section 7: Overview for Organizations with Volunteer Staff

- Volunteers are vital to many organizations providing ground ambulance services.
- Organizations may have:
 - Only paid staff
 - A mix of volunteer and paid staff
 - Only volunteer staff
- The questions in Section 7 will adjust based on your responses to earlier questions, including Section 2, Question 6 on volunteers.

Section 7: Required Information for Reporting

- You will collect and report the following by labor category:
 - Number of individual volunteers
 - Total hours worked by volunteers
 - If fire/police/public safety operations:
 - Total hours worked related to fire/police/public safety operations
 - Total hours worked related to all other responsibilities
- You must also report total compensation of any type to volunteers (e.g., stipends, allowances, benefits, etc.).
- You will not collect or report any imputed valuation of volunteer labor.

CY 2022 PFS Proposed Rule: CMS proposed separate reporting of hours worked related to ground ambulance operations, public safety operations, and other activities. Only public safety organizations would be asked to report hours associated with public safety activities.

Section 7: Labor Costs Summary

Question 1: Which staff categories are relevant to your ground ambulance organization?

To respond to Question 1, you must categorize each staff member into a category following the instructions in the instrument.

Sections 7.1 and 7.2: If you have any *paid* staff, report the following by category:

- Total annual compensation and total hours worked annually
- Total hours worked annually related to ground ambulance operations
- Total hours worked annually related to fire/police/public safety
- Hours worked annually related to all other responsibilities

Section 7.3: If you have any *volunteer* staff, report the following by category:

- Total number of volunteers and hours worked annually
- Total hours worked annually related to ground ambulance
- Total hours worked annually related to fire/police/public safety
- Total hours worked annually related to all other responsibilities
- Total costs associated with volunteers

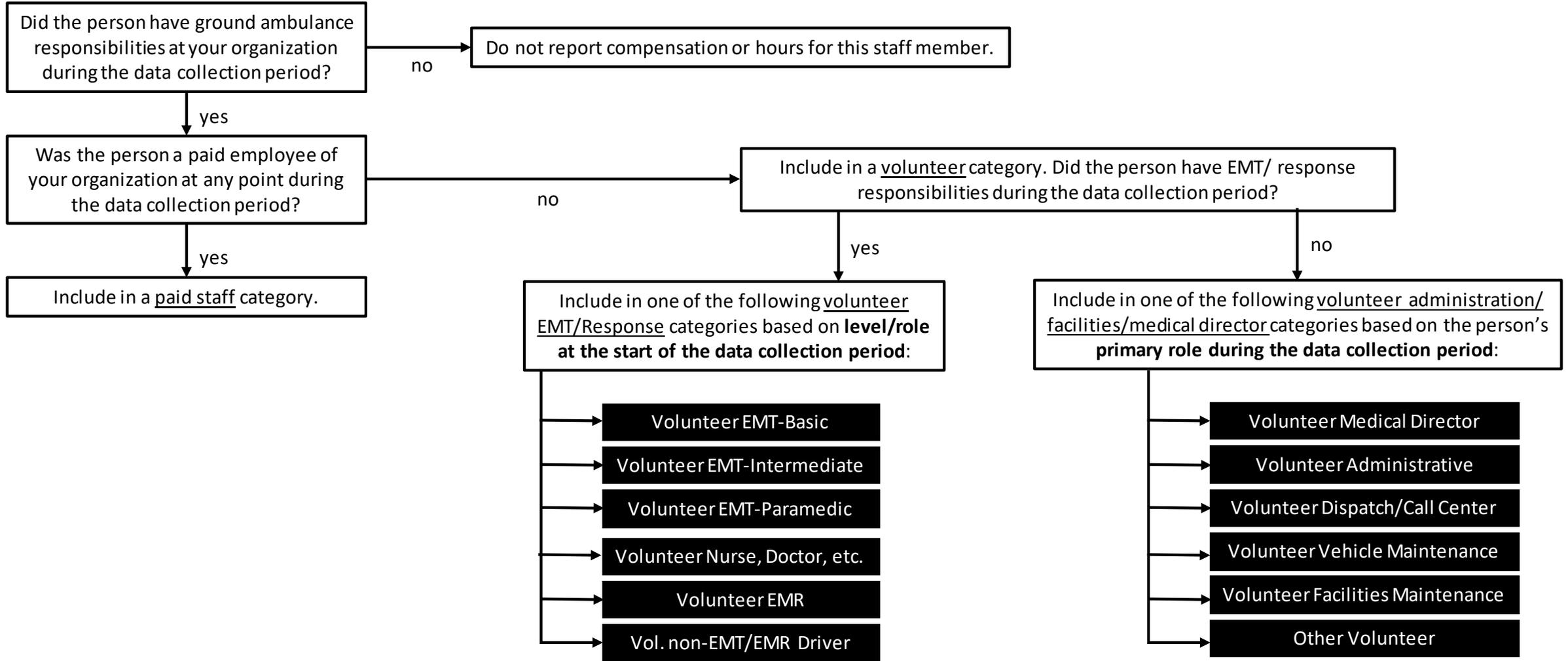
Section 7, Question 1

Please indicate if your organization had paid staff (full and/or part time) and/or used volunteer staff in each of the following categories during the data collection period (check all that apply).

Staff Category	Paid Staff	Volunteer Staff
EMT/Response Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EMT – Basic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EMT – Intermediate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
EMT – Paramedic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nurse, doctor, respiratory therapist, or other medical staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Emergency Medical Responder (EMR)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ambulance Driver (non-EMT/EMR)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical Director	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administration/Facilities Staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Administrative (clerical, human resources [HR], billing, IT support, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Management (executive, public information officer, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dispatch / Call Center	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vehicle Maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Facilities Maintenance (janitorial staff, laundry, repairs, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other not reported above (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Programming Note: If your organization includes fire, police or other public safety responsibilities, your presentation of this table will also break down categories by “with fire/police/public safety roles” vs. not.

Section 7, Question 1: How to Assign Volunteer Staff to Categories



Section 7, Question 1: Staff Assignment Instructions

- Each volunteer should contribute to **only one labor category**, even if they perform multiple roles in your organization.
- Volunteers who get a stipend or other modest amounts are **still volunteers**.
- Staff who volunteer at **other** organizations, but not yours, should not be counted as volunteers.
- Do **not** include volunteers who had only non-ground ambulance responsibilities.
- Include volunteer EMT/response staff in the EMT/response category that matched their level at the start of the data collection period.
- For administration/facilities staff with multiple roles, assign each volunteer to a category indicating their primary activity.
- Anyone who is paid as a salaried/hourly/contracted employee at some point during the data collection period should not be counted as a volunteer.

Section 7, Question 1: Staff Assignment Examples

- Example assignments:

Staff Member	Category for Reporting
A volunteer administrator handling billing and clerical duties and occasional vehicle maintenance	Volunteer administration/facilities staff based on the primary responsibility
A volunteer EMT-Intermediate who became a volunteer EMT-Paramedic during the data collection period	Volunteer EMT-Intermediate
A volunteer EMT-Basic who became a paid EMT-Basic during the data collection period	Paid EMT-Basic
A volunteer EMT-Basic who also performs some clerical work	Volunteer EMT-Basic
A volunteer EMT-Basic with only air ambulance responsibilities	Not reported

- You may select multiple options for each staff category
- Individuals with NO ground ambulance responsibilities should not be listed. These responses will determine which questions you see later in the instrument.

Section 7, Question 2

If you did not select any of the categories in Section 7, Question 1, you will be asked to report reasons why:

- a. This labor category is part of our ground ambulance operation but is paid for or provided at no cost by another entity.
- b. One or more staff do perform these functions, but we assigned these staff to another category per the instructions.
- c. We do not have staff in this labor category related to our ground ambulance operation and/or we contract with another organization for this role.
- d. Other (please specify:)

Section 7.1 Paid EMT/Response Staff Compensation and Hours Worked

Section 7.2 Paid Administration, Facilities Staff, and Medical Director Compensation and Hours Worked

Only volunteer labor will be covered in this call. For a detailed overview of how to complete Section 7.1 and 7.2 for paid staff, refer to the October 7, 2021 Staffing and Labor Costs slide presentation available on the Ambulances Services Center website.

Section 7.3: Volunteer Labor

- In this section you will report on volunteers:
 - Number of individuals who were volunteers during the data collection period, by labor category.
 - Hours worked for volunteer staff, by category.
 - Total costs related to volunteers, e.g., stipends, allowances, honoraria, etc.

Section 7.3, Question 1: Number of EMT/Response Volunteers

- In this question, you will report the number of **individuals who** were EMT/response volunteers during the reporting period, no matter the number of hours they work annually.
- Do not include an individual if they:
 - Did not contribute to ground ambulance operations.
 - Were a paid employee at any point during the reporting period. This means they received a salary or paid wages. Stipends or paid benefits alone do not qualify staff as paid.

Example: An organization has 12 volunteer staff members

- 7 volunteers who only have EMT duties
- 3 volunteers who have EMT and administrative duties
- 2 volunteers performing only administrative duties
- 1 volunteer who became a paid employee in the last month of the data collection period.

This organization would report “10” for Section 7.3, Question 1.

Section 7.3, Question 2: Hours Worked Annually for Volunteer EMT/Response Staff

EMT/Response Staff Category [Note: The number and type of staff categories displayed will depend on your organization's answers to previous questions]	Total hours for all volunteer EMT/ response staff	Hours worked annually unrelated to ground ambulance duties	(If applicable) Total hours worked annually related to fire, police, and/or other public safety operations	Total hours worked related to all other responsibilities
EMT Staff Category 1	hours	hours	hours	hours
EMT Staff Category 2	hours	hours	hours	hours
EMT Staff Category 3	hours	hours	hours	hours

- Include hours worked by volunteer EMT/response staff (including full- and part-time staff) in each category
- For all responses, do **not** include (1) time on call and (2) time spent fundraising

CY 2022 PFS Proposed Rule: CMS proposed modifying categories of hours worked annually to include report total hours worked annually, hours worked annually related to ground ambulance, (if applicable) total hours worked annually to fire, police, or other public safety duties, and total hours worked related to all other responsibilities.

Section 7.3, Question 2: Details of Activities Included in Hours Worked Annually for Volunteer EMT/Response Staff

Total Hours Worked Annually

- All hours worked related to ground ambulance activities;
- All hours worked related to fire, police, or other public safety, if applicable;
- Most other duties at your organization, including those listed at right.

Hours Worked Annually Related to All Other Responsibilities

- Air ambulance operations
- Healthcare delivery unrelated to ground ambulance, such as work in a clinic
- Public health responsibilities
- Community education and outreach
- Community paramedicine
- Any other responsibility unrelated to ground ambulance activities, excluding fundraising and time on call

Not Included in Either Response:

- Time on call
- Time spent fundraising

Sections 7.3, Question 2: Volunteer EMT/Response Labor Example

Ground ambulance organization with volunteer staff

- See the first table for details on each staff member.
- The second table illustrates the completed columns from Section 7.3, Question 2

Volunteer 1: EMT-Basic

- Spent 500 hours responding to ground ambulance calls, 20 hours on public health outreach, and 10 hours fundraising

Volunteer 2: EMT-Basic

- Spent 200 hours responding to ground ambulance calls

Staff Category	Total hours for all volunteer EMT/response staff	Hours worked annually related to ground ambulance duties	Total hours worked related to all other responsibilities
EMT-Basic	$500+20+200=720$	$500+200=700$	<i>20</i>

Section 7.3, Question 3: Administration/Facility Volunteers

- **Question 3:** You will report the number of **individuals** who were administration/facility volunteers during the reporting period, no matter the number of hours they worked annually.
- Do not include an individual if they:
 - Did NOT contribute to ground ambulance operations.
 - Were a paid employee at any point during the reporting period. This means they received a salary or paid wages. Stipends or paid benefits do not count.
 - Had any EMT/Response responsibilities for ground ambulance operations.

Section 7.3, Question 4: Administration/Facility Volunteers

- **Question 4:** You will report the labor hours for **administration/facility** volunteers during the data collection period in a similar manner to EMT/Response volunteers:
 - Total number of hours worked annually
 - Total number of hours worked related to ground ambulance operations
 - If fire/police/other public safety responsibilities:
 - Total number of hours related to fire/police/other public safety activities for administration/facilities staff with fire/police/other public safety roles
 - Total number of hours related to all other responsibilities for administration/facilities

Section 7.3, Question 5: Medical Director Volunteers

- **Question 5:** You will report the labor hours for **medical director** volunteers during the data collection period:
 - Total number of hours worked annually
 - Number of hours unrelated to ground ambulance activities

CY 2022 PFS Proposed Rule: CMS proposed adding a clarification that medical director volunteer hours do not contribute to the answer in Question 4 and a reminder that they are reported separately Question 5.

Section 7.3, Question 6: Volunteers Costs

- In this question you will report total costs for all volunteer compensation, including stipends, honoraria, benefits, and/or other compensation for ground ambulance volunteer labor.
 - Do not include estimated market value of labor.
 - If costs (e.g., benefits or stipends) are paid for by other entities (e.g., your local municipality), you must collect and include the dollar amount in your response to this item.
 - If staff were considered paid staff at any point during data collection, report any stipends or benefits received while volunteer in section 7.2 for paid staff compensation.

Sections 8-10

- These sections ask about Facilities Costs, Vehicle Costs, and Equipment, Consumables, and Supplies Costs.
- The questions in these sections are identical for organizations with and without volunteer labor, so we will not be discussing these sections on today's call.

Section 11, Other Costs

- It is important that all costs related to your ground ambulance organization are reported in the instrument.
- Most costs associated with volunteers will be reported in Section 7.
- You can report any other costs associated with volunteers in **Section 11, Question 3.**

Summary of Requirements for Volunteer Organizations, Part I

- Do not count any employee twice—An employee should not be counted as both paid and volunteer
 - If an employee transitioned from volunteer to paid, count them as paid and only count compensation for when they were paid.
 - If a volunteer receives benefits or a nominal stipend (e.g., \$500/year), they may still be considered a volunteer and associated hours worked and costs are reported in the volunteer section.
- Report all costs associated with volunteers (e.g., stipends, health insurance, training) that are NOT reported elsewhere in the instrument in Section 7.3. Do not double count costs (e.g., uniforms for volunteers) in multiple sections of the instrument.

Summary of Requirements for Volunteer Organizations, Part II

- When possible, collect and report the specific hours worked by volunteers.
 - Some organizations may not track volunteer hours (e.g., instead track number of responses/runs and completed training tasks).
 - There will not be an alternative approach to reporting hours.
 - Some organizations may have to start tracking volunteer hours.

Section 7.3 Illustrative Example

Introduction to Illustrative Example

- This section walks through a completed volunteer labor section for a hypothetical government ground ambulance organization.
- All answers are hypothetical and are not intended to provide benchmarks for typical costs or other volumes.
- Certain items will be marked [Not shown] if not applicable to the organization based on previous responses.

Note: This example illustrates scenarios that may be less complex than those faced by your organization. We will address issues that may be more relevant to your organization in separate sessions on public safety (e.g., fire-based, police-based) and provider organizations.

Hypothetical Organization Background

The organization serves a small city and performs around 2,000 transports each year. The organization's primary revenue stream is for paid emergency transports from a variety of payers (Medicare, Medicaid, etc.), but occasionally performs scheduled transports and receives some funding and resources from the city they serve. The organization has a mix of paid and volunteer staff. The organization's 12-month data collection period began January 1, 2022.

Organization's Labor Structure and Contracted Services

Response Staff

EMT-Basic

- 8 volunteers that work part-time, 15-20 hrs/week
- Each receives small stipend (\$500/year) plus health insurance benefits
- Primary duties are responses and transports, but occasionally do public health outreach (10 hours each/year)
- One EMT occasionally performs basic vehicle maintenance (15 hours)

EMT-Paramedic

- 5 full-time paid employees
- Receives annual salary of \$35,000-\$40,000/year plus benefits
- Primary duties are BLS/ALS responses and transports, and occasional public health outreach (10 hours each/year)

Other Staff

Manager

- One administrator who works full time and receives \$70,000/year with benefits

Administrative Staff

- Two part-time volunteer administrative staff, each receiving a small stipend (\$500/year)

Medical Director

- One part-time medical director who works approximately 10/hours per week
- Receives \$50,000/year in salary and no benefits

Contracted Services

Contracted Services NOT included in labor section

- Facilities maintenance, janitorial services, advanced vehicle maintenance, call center/dispatch services

Section 7, Question 1 Example Response

Please indicate if your organization had paid staff (full and/or part time) and/or used volunteer staff in each of the following categories during the data collection period (check all that apply).

Staff Category	Paid Staff	Volunteer Staff
EMT/Response Staff		
EMT – Basic	No	Yes
EMT – Intermediate	No	No
EMT – Paramedic	Yes	No
Nurse, doctor, respiratory therapist, or other medical staff	No	No
Emergency Medical Responder (EMR)	No	No
Ambulance Driver (non-EMT/EMR)	No	No
Medical Director	Yes	No
Administration/Facilities Staff		
Administrative (clerical, human resources [HR], billing, IT support, etc.)	No	Yes
Management (executive, public information officer, etc.)	Yes	No
Dispatch / Call Center	No	No
Vehicle Maintenance	No	No
Facilities Maintenance (janitorial staff, laundry, repairs, etc.)	No	No
Other not reported above (please specify)	No	No

Section 7.3, Questions 1-2: EMT/Response Volunteers

Note: This organization is seeing Question 1 based on their previous response that they had volunteer EMTs and the table in Question 2 has been auto-populated with the EMT/response roles for which the organization previously indicated that they used volunteers.

1. How many **individuals** were EMT/response volunteers in calendar year 2022? (Enter number).

Response: 8

2. This question is about the **hours** of EMT/response volunteers annually during calendar year 2022:

EMT/Response Staff Category	Total hours for all volunteer EMT/response staff	Hours worked annually related to ground ambulance duties	Total hours worked related to all other responsibilities
EMT – Basic	<i>Response: 6,750</i>	<i>Response: 6,670</i>	<i>Response: 80</i>

Note. Questions specific to fire/police/public safety are not presented because this organization is 100% ground ambulance operations

Total hours: 2 volunteers worked 750 hours total in 2022 (15 hrs/wk), 5 volunteers worked 850 hours in total in 2022 (17 hrs/wk), 1 volunteer worked 1000 hours total in 2022 (20 hrs/wk): $(750 \times 2) + (850 \times 5) + 1000 = 6,750$ total volunteer hours
Total hours ground ambulance duties: total hours – all other responsibilities = 6,750 hours – 80 hours = 6,670 ground ambulance hours
Total hours all other responsibilities: 8 volunteers worked 10 hours each on public health outreach, $8 \times 10 = 80$ hours on all other responsibilities

Section 7.3, Questions 3-4: Administration/Facility Volunteers

3. How many **individuals** were administration/facility volunteers in calendar year 2022? (Enter number).

Response: 2

4. What was the total number of administration/facility volunteer labor hours annually in calendar year 2022? (Enter number)

This question is about the **hours** of administration/facility volunteers annually during calendar year 2022

Calculations:

2 volunteers worked 750 hours total in 2022 (15 hrs/wk).

$750 \times 2 = 1,500$ volunteer hours

Response: 1,500 total volunteer hours

Note: This organization will not see Question 5 on volunteer medical director roles, which the organization previously indicated they had as a paid position.

Section 7.3, Question 6

6. Did your organization provide stipends, honoraria, benefits, and/or other compensation for ground ambulance volunteer labor? Yes (1), No (0)

Response: Yes (1)

i. What was the total cost for all volunteer compensation (e.g. stipends and/or benefits) in calendar year 2022? (Enter dollar amount)

Calculations:

8 EMT-Basic volunteers were each given a \$500/year stipend plus benefits. Workers' compensation premiums totaled \$100/year for each volunteer. $(8 \times (\$500 + \$100)) = (8 \times \$600) = \$4,800$

2 administration/facility volunteers were each given a \$500/year stipend. $(2 \times \$500) = \$1,000$

Total dollar amount = $\$4,800 + \$1,000$

Response: \$5,800

Summary

- Examples provided are for illustrative purposes only. Responses will vary dramatically based on organization type, staffing structure, and other factors.
- The questions presented to you will vary depending on how you answer questions about your organization in earlier sections and within Section 7.
- To offer a more in-depth look at some related issues (e.g., paid labor, fire-based organizations), CMS offers additional education seminars.

Resources

- Access the most up-to-date instrument and frequently asked questions document from the Ambulances Services Center website:
 - <https://www.cms.gov/Center/Provider-Type/Ambulances-Services-Center>
- Past slide presentations, webinar recordings, and supplemental documents are also on this site.
- If you have additional questions, please contact:
 - AmbulanceDataCollection@cms.hhs.gov