

Sec. 130.914. RURAL AMBULANCE SERVICE GRANT PROGRAM. (a) In this section:

- (1) "Ambulance" means a vehicle registered with the Department of State Health Services as an emergency medical service provider vehicle.
- (2) "Grant program" means the rural ambulance service grant program established by this section.
- (3) "Qualified county" is a county that has a population of 68,750 or less.
- (4) "Qualified rural ambulance service provider" means a private safety entity or public agency as those terms are defined by Section 772.001, Health and Safety Code, licensed by the Department of State Health Services to provide emergency medical services and operating predominantly in a qualified county.
- (b) The comptroller shall establish and administer the rural ambulance service grant program to support the state purpose of ensuring adequate ground ambulance services by providing financial assistance to qualified rural ambulance service providers in qualified counties.
- (c) Not later than the 30th day after the first day of a qualified county's fiscal year, the county, on behalf of a qualified rural ambulance service provider, may submit a grant application to the comptroller. A county may submit only one application each fiscal year. If a county is awarded a grant under the grant program for a qualified rural ambulance service provider, the qualified rural ambulance service provider is ineligible to receive additional grant funds under the grant program from another qualified county in the same fiscal year.
- (d) The comptroller may award a grant to a qualified county using money appropriated to the comptroller for that purpose and only in accordance with a written agreement between the comptroller and the county that includes conditions providing the comptroller with sufficient control to ensure the public purpose of providing adequate ground ambulance services is accomplished. In awarding grants, the comptroller shall consider the county's ability to otherwise obtain the money necessary to provide adequate ground ambulance services, including considering for the county the average:
 - (1) per capita taxable property value;
 - (2) per capita income; and
 - (3) unemployment rate.
- (e) The comptroller may award a grant under this section only in the following applicable amount:
 - (1) for a county with a population of less than 10,000, an amount not to exceed \$500,000; or
 - (2) for a county with a population between 10,000 and 68,750, an amount not to exceed \$350,000.
- (f) A qualified county awarded a grant under this section may use or authorize the use of the grant money only to purchase ambulances, including necessary accessories and modifications, as provided by comptroller rule.
- (g) A qualified county awarded a grant under this section may not reduce the budget of the qualified rural ambulance service provider for the county's next fiscal year following the fiscal year of the grant award.
- (h) The comptroller may disburse a grant award to a qualified county before the county places an order for an ambulance. The county shall purchase and take possession of an ambulance with money awarded under the grant program not later than the fifth anniversary of the date the county receives the money. Until an ambulance becomes available for purchase, the county may deposit the grant funds in an interest bearing account and may treat any resulting proceeds as grant funds under the grant program. The comptroller shall adopt rules necessary to implement this section, including rules to establish:
 - (1) a standardized application process, the form to apply for a grant, and the manner of submitting the form;
 - (2) deadlines for:
 - (A) applying for a grant;
 - (B) disbursing grant money; and
 - (C) spending grant money; and
 - (3) procedures for:
 - (A) monitoring the disbursement of grant money to ensure compliance with this section; and
 - (B) requiring the return of grant money awarded if a county fails to use the money for a purpose authorized by this section.

Added by Acts 2025, 89th Leg., R.S., Ch. 745 (H.B. 3000), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2025.