



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
230 NE Second Street, McMinnville, Oregon 97128
www.mcminnvilleoregon.gov

February 4, 2021

To: Chair Williams, Member of the House Human Services Committee

Re: HB 2397

The City of McMinnville has reviewed drafts prepared by Oregon Lithoprint, The City of McMinnville recently went through an extensive ordinance process regarding the Care Home industry impacts on the City Fire Departments services. The Ordinance passed and there was an immediate reduction in the misuse of the services. Subsequently the OHCA sponsored a charter amendment for the City of McMinnville that is very similar to HB 2397. The Charter amendment passed in McMinnville and now we are under severe restriction regardless of the impacts this industry has on the City funded services. The Care home industry will tell you that the City did not address concerns with the industry. Staff met routinely with Directors of facilities to address these misuses of services since 2011. The challenges that the City faced are explained below.

There are 17 Licensed Care Facilities operating within the City of McMinnville with space for 1093 residents, or approximately 3% of the City's residents. These facilities include Residential Care Facilities, Assisted Living Facilities, Nursing Facilities or Memory Care Facilities (collectively referred to as "Care Facilities"), which are licensed and certified by the State of Oregon.

This segment of the City's population is among the most vulnerable of our citizens, requiring dedicated medical and related support services. Due to the vulnerable nature of their residents, and the number of serious life safety violations that we observed in these facilities, we felt required a heightened level of inspection and oversight by the City was necessary to ensure that the operation and maintenance of

such facilities meets the City's building code, fire code and public safety requirements for the protection of care facility residents.

In 2017, calls for emergency medical services (EMS) to Care Facilities accounted for approximately 37% of all EMS system calls for service to the City; a call rate that is substantially higher than the EMS call rate for the general senior population. The misuse of EMS services by Care Facilities create overall service delays and EMS system overloads.

The calls that misused EMS services to Care Facilities were for non-emergency medical services or other nonessential services that Care Facilities are required by their state licensing to provide with their own staff and resources. Some examples of these types of calls include:

- a. Requests for EMS to assist and evaluate residents who have fallen and are not injured;
- b. Request for EMS to evaluate a resident who experiences a significant change of condition;
- c. Requests for an EMS transport when the resident was competent, requested that EMS not be called, and indicated that they did not wish to be transported;
- d. Request for EMS transport to hospital because Care Facility did not renew prescription;
- e. Request for EMS to start a patient IV because care facility staff cannot get IV started;
- f. Requests for EMS assistances for the convenience of the Care Facility staff or management;
- g. Request for EMS assistance with routine wound care.
- h. Request for lift assists due to staffing shortages

In 2017 alone, the City responded to over 500 EMS calls of the type listed above. These types of non-emergency and nonessential misuses of the City's EMS system have negatively impacted the City's overall ability to provide emergency medical services. The EMS services are not the only services impacted by these businesses.

The City Fire Department responded to calls that created significant life safety concerns within these facilities. The results are significant increase in prevention staff for life safety inspections, training and education well above other businesses.

- a. Fire in the Kitchen of care facility

- 1) Kitchen staff leave facility without using hood system to extinguish the fire.
- 2) Kitchen staff evacuate without activating alarm to alert residents
- b. Care Home with non-permitted alarm system for 18 months
- c. Care Home with non-permitted alarm system and no smoke detectors in living quarters
- d. Fire in laundry room at care facility
 - 1) Numerous violations including blocking open fire doors
 - 2) Patients required to evacuate
- e. Second fire in same location in same facility with same violations
 - 1) One resident injured

The City did attempted to be proactive in educating Care Facility management and staff regarding the proper uses of the City's EMS system and Fire safety issues. The challenge is that Care Facilities in the City experience high levels of turnover among management staff. As a result, the City has been required to dedicate additional resources to these facilities for inspection, enforcement and education activities in order to ensure that Care Facilities operate in a manner that meets the medical and fire safety needs of their residents while not improperly utilizing the City's resources.



Jeff Towery
City Manager
City of McMinnville



Rich Leipfert
Fire Chief
City of McMinnville