



# Marion County

## Fire Rescue and EMS Advisory Board

### Meeting Agenda

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**Wednesday, August 20, 2025      4:00 PM      Fire Rescue Headquarters, 2631  
SE Third St., Ocala, FL 34471**

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1. **Call to Order**
2. **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Roll Call & Quorum Determination**
4. **Approval of Minutes**
  - 4.1. [Fire Rescue and EMS Advisory Board Minutes - May 21, 2025](#)
5. **Department Updates**
  - 5.1. [Budget Update](#)
  - 5.2. [Hospital Inter-Facility Update](#)
6. **Board Items**
  - 6.1. [FY 24/25 Quarter 3 Report](#)
7. **Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, November 19, 2025**
8. **Adjournment**



# Marion County

## Fire Rescue and EMS Advisory Board

### Agenda Item

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**File No.:** 2025-20277

**Agenda Date:** 8/20/2025

**Agenda No.:** 4.1.

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**SUBJECT:**

**Fire Rescue and EMS Advisory Board Minutes - May 21, 2025**

**DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND:**

See attached

**Marion County Fire Rescue and EMS Advisory Board  
May, 21, 2025 Minutes - DRAFT**

1. **Call to Order** – The Marion County Fire Rescue and EMS Advisory Board met in the Training Room at Marion County Fire Rescue Headquarters, 2631 SE Third Street, Ocala, FL 34471 on May 21, 2025. Pat Gabriel called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.
2. **Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance**
3. **Roll Call and Quorum Determination** – Roll call was taken and a quorum was met.

Members Present:

Patricia Gabriel, Chair  
Erin Jones, Healthcare Development Director, Ocala/Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership  
Alan Keesee, CEO, HCA Florida Ocala Hospital  
Floyd Magwood  
Erika Skula, President and CEO, AdventHealth Ocala (arrived at 4:13 p.m.)  
Clint Welborn, Fire Chief, Ocala Fire Rescue  
Dr. Frank Fraunfelter, Medical Director, Marion County Fire Rescue

Members Absent:

Adam Woods

Others in Attendance:

James Banta, Fire Chief, Marion County Fire Rescue  
Robert Graff, Deputy Chief of Operations, Marion County Fire Rescue  
Robert Kruger, Deputy Chief of EMS, Marion County Fire Rescue  
Chad Belger, Division Chief, Marion County Fire Rescue  
Brad Olmsted, Division Chief, Marion County Fire Rescue  
Wanda Bowlin, AdventHealth Ocala, EMS Relations and Emergency Management Specialist  
Pam Doherty, Administrative Staff Assistant, Marion County Fire Rescue  
John Gabriel

4. **Approval of Minutes** – The February 19, 2025 Marion County Fire Rescue and EMS Advisory Board minutes were submitted for approval. Dr. Fraunfelter made a motion to approve the minutes and Floyd Magwood seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously 5-0.
5. **Marion County Fire Rescue Updates**

Chief Banta opened the meeting with budget highlights. Marion County Fire Rescue (MCFR) met with Mounir Bouyounes, County Administrator, Marion County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) to start preparing for the budget workshops in July, 2025 and public hearings in September, 2025. Operationally, there are minimal increases, with the highest priority being additional resources, specifically ambulances. MCFR will propose adding two additional transport units, the personnel needed for these units, a Training Lieutenant, a Quality Improvement Technician and a Staff Assistant III position. Chief Graff is looking at where resources are positioned and once we get these two transport units approved in the budget, MCFR will look at moving ambulance locations around. The transport units may be slightly overstaffed in the city limits and the department may move some further out in the county. This will help keep units inside the city. Everything looks positive from the BCC, and almost all these additions impact the general fund. There may be

discussions with the BCC on roll back rates. Chief Banta is pretty confident MCFR will get the funding from the BCC.

MCFR has some significant projects moving forward. This year, the fire assessment, which is typically kept on a 5-year cycle, will be updated. MCFR has gone through the initial workshops with the BCC and conducted different analyses. The BCC had concerns about raising the fire assessment again this year. The BCC is looking at an initial rate resolution on June 3, 2025 to set the rate at \$283 from the current \$199 for residential rates. This is a proposed increase of \$84. This proposed increase would be presented in a public hearing on September 10, 2025.

(Ed. Note: The public hearing is scheduled for September 10, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.)

Impact fees were suspended in 2010 during the recession. Chief Banta said MCFR has shown that impact fees will be beneficial to providing the resources needed for the growth in this community. There is a public hearing on May 23, 2025 where the BCC will hopefully approve an ordinance to reimplement Fire Rescue and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) impact fees. MCFR received consensus from the City of Ocala to support the EMS component. There has been some opposition on the impact fees, but Chief Banta is fairly confident the proposal of impact fees should move forward. The discussion may be whether they should be at 100% of the recommended rates or at a reduced rate. Impact fees can only fund capital improvements moving forward like fire stations, EMS stations and the equipment that goes with them. The funds cannot be used for current deficiencies. Alan Keese, CEO, HCA Florida Ocala Hospital, asked if other counties around us have this in place. Chief Banta advised that yes, other counties have Fire and/or EMS impact fees in place, but the rates vary. If an impact fee is currently in place, the fee can only go up so much each year. If it is a new impact fee, then a new rate can be set moving forward. Looking at MCFR's 20-year plan moving forward, MCFR has to be able to fund this. The projected revenue from the 20-year sales tax will not fund all the projects. The impact fees will help bridge that gap, bringing in revenue between approximately \$2,000,000 and \$4,000,000 dollars per year. Fire stations currently cost \$5,000,000 to \$7,000,000 to build.

Construction is currently taking place at Golden Ocala - Station 20 with a remodel that should be complete in August 2025. Beginning in July 2025, Lowell - Station 11 is set to be rebuilt on the Florida State Fire College property. This has been a long process due to partnering with the State of Florida. Orange Springs - Station 13 is being remodeled to house more personnel and is being converted from a volunteer station to a career station. The remodel should be complete in August 2025.

The Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (COPCN) for transports for AdventHealth Ocala Hospital, HCA Florida Ocala Hospital, and UF Health Shands Hospital, have been updated and approved at the last BCC meeting. The COPCN allows for expanded opportunities for all the hospitals to transport out of assisted living facilities and nursing homes. This will require coordination from all parties involved.

MCFR sent letters to all the special event vendors, advising them MCFR is phasing out working special detail at events held in Marion County. Leopard Transport, AdventHealth Ocala Hospital, HCA Florida Ocala Hospital, and UF Health Shands Hospital will begin working special detail to cover these events. Chief Banta said this will generate revenue for these organizations and this leaves MCFR with the non-revenue driving type of calls. Chief Kruger will forward the signed copy of the COPCN change to everyone involved. He has emailed all the contacts an update letting them know the COPCN has been adjusted, with a list of vendors that MCFR has worked with on special events and a rate sheet with what MCFR has charged in the past. The letter sent to the vendors clearly stated that MCFR does not recommend any particular transport company. All four agencies are listed with transport COPCNs. Chief Banta said this will be a partnership with MCFR and MCFR

will help with coverage, if help is needed. Chief Kruger does not anticipate a need for another transport service until we hit the 500,000 or more mark in population.

## 6. Board Items

### 6.1 FY 24/25 Quarter 2 Report

Chief Kruger reviewed the FY 24/25 Quarter 2 Report that was provided to the Advisory Board. This quarter shows MCFR is down about 300 calls since last quarter. The Community Paramedicine program and reduction in traffic accidents and fire alarms impacted the decline in calls. Cardiac arrests show an impressive increase in Return of Spontaneous Circulation (ROSC) from 26% in FY24/25 Quarter 1 to 32% in FY24/25 Quarter 2. This increase can be contributed to the teams and citizens being engaged in CPR, the 911 Tele-CPR through dispatch, and the PulsePoint application alerting people there is a cardiac arrest in their vicinity. HCA Florida Ocala Hospital is now a Florida Resuscitation Center and AdventHealth Ocala is in the process of getting this same certification. MCFR is meeting response times and daily trends have not changed much. The workload concurrency charts are higher than last quarter, but should be trending down in upcoming months. Ambulance Billing has collected more than anticipated and budgeted. Of the revenue that is billed out, almost 75% is collected. The state ambulance fees will be discussed at a conference next month and, due to a legislative change and surveys to surrounding departments, a recommendation to change the ambulance rates will go before the BCC.

Chief Banta explained the Communications Center is stable in staffing and Chief Kruger advised they are meeting or exceeding their metrics.

Chief Graff attended the Fire Department Instructors Conference (FDIC) recently. A big topic for discussion was the “all-hazards approach” model and is it still the model to follow. Most major fire departments in the country are looking at this model and trying to determine what units should be sent to a 911 call. Chief Graff said this is being reviewed as the dispatch matrix is redone and other ways MCFR can provide the best and most cost-effective service.

Dr. Fraunfelter said having hospitals engaging in advanced care in our community is critical. Having an Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO) process at AdventHealth Ocala and HCA Florida Ocala Hospital for cardiac survivors is a big win for our community.

Chief Kruger advised that MCFR took delivery of 100 LIFEPAK 35 monitor/defibrillator units. The teams will start training on them the first week of June 2025 and the department will start rolling them out on the trucks the end of June 2025.

Pat Gabriel asked how MCFR’s fire component is working out. Chief Graff said the service is amazing and staffing is good. We have 36 positions open, but 12 of those positions are being held for Station 13, that has not opened yet. There are three ways to capture our community citizens and have them become an employee in our system. These programs include the new hire classes that will begin soon, the mentorship program that is currently hiring, and the Career Academy program that will start in the next school year for high school seniors. Metrics and equipment are great, and a lot of time is spent on apparatus replacement planning. Mandatory overtime is down. A deferral process was implemented that has alleviated the uneasiness of the staffing issues.

Dr. Fraunfelter said paramedicine is an experienced-based business. Having the experienced personnel in the field is critical. The hospitals benefit when a person does several years in paramedicine and then becomes a nurse.

Erin Jones, Healthcare Development Director, Ocala/Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership (CEP), asked who trains for the Career Academy. Chief Graff said MCFR does the

training, that is in addition to their normal school schedule. The mentorship program is a combined program between the City of Ocala and Marion County which is separate from the Career Academy.

Floyd Magwood thanked MCFR for doing a great job. He said it is impressive the way MCFR is being efficient with their money by moving things around.

Mr. Keesee said EMS Week was just celebrated (May 18-24, 2025). Dr. Fraunfelter thanked everyone that contributed to EMS week. In addition, Erica Skula, President and CEO, AdventHealth Ocala, and Ms. Jones thanked MCFR for their service and everything they do for the community.

Chief Graff advised the draft Strategic Plan was recently completed and this plan will be presented at the next quarterly meeting. Each member of this Advisory Board will receive a copy.

Ms. Gabriel said it is amazing to see how far Marion County has progressed since the 1990's with an emergency service that was questionable back then.

Chief Kruger said he appreciates these Advisory Boards and contributes the success with the collaboration between the community, the hospitals and the departments. The guidance and feedback are appreciated and this keeps the ball moving forward.

Chief Banta said he appreciates everything the hospitals have done for EMS Week and their recognition of the people that are actually running the calls.

Ms. Gabriel advised the committee that she is thinking about retiring the end of 2025.

7. **Next Quarterly Meeting Date** – The next quarterly meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 20, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. in the Training Room at Marion County Fire Rescue, 2631 SE Third Street, Ocala, FL 34471.
8. **Adjournment** – There being no further business to come before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Approved:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Pat Gabriel, Chairperson

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Date



# Marion County

## Fire Rescue and EMS Advisory Board

### Agenda Item

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**File No.:** 2025-20279

**Agenda Date:** 8/20/2025

**Agenda No.:** 5.1.

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**SUBJECT:**  
**Budget Update**

**DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND:**  
Budget Update



# Marion County

## Fire Rescue and EMS Advisory Board

### Agenda Item

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**File No.:** 2025-20280

**Agenda Date:** 8/20/2025

**Agenda No.:** 5.2.

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**SUBJECT:**

**Hospital Inter-Facility Update**

**DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND:**

Update



# Marion County

## Fire Rescue and EMS Advisory Board

### Agenda Item

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**File No.:** 2025-20281

**Agenda Date:** 8/20/2025

**Agenda No.:** 6.1.

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**SUBJECT:**

**FY 24/25 Quarter 3 Report**

**DESCRIPTION/BACKGROUND:**

See attached

# Quarter 3 Report

# Fiscal Year

# 2024–2025

April - June



*We proudly protect life and property with honor, compassion and respect.*



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Operations</b>	<b>3</b>
Service Demand	3
Figure 1 MCFR Service Demand by NFIRS Incident Type	3
Figure 2 Patient Transports by Primary Impression	4
Figure 3 Patient Transports by Destination	4
Figure 4 Cardiac Arrest	5
Hospital Interface	5
Figure 5 Transfer of Care Less Than 30 Minutes	5
Response Time Performance	6
Figure 6 First Arriving Unit	6
Figure 7 First Arriving Transport	6
Temporal Analysis of Service Demand	7
Figure 8 Service Demand by Day of Week	7
Figure 9 Service Demand by Time of Day	7
Workload and Concurrency	8
Figure 10 Unit Hour Utilization	8
Figure 11 Concurrent Incidents	9
<b>Ambulance Billing</b>	<b>10</b>
Charts	10
Figure 12 Revenue	10
Figure 13 Revenue Received/Bills Sent	11
Figure 14 Revenue by Payor Type	11
Figure 15 Charges by Payor Type	12
Figure 16 Transports by Level of Care	12
Figure 17 Current Ambulance Rate	13
Figure 18 Marion County Ambulance Collection Rate	13
<b>Fire Prevention</b>	<b>14</b>
Charts	14
Figure 19 Fire Prevention Activity	14
Development	14



Figure 20 Project Update ..... 15

Fire Inspectors..... 16

Fire Investigation ..... 16

Staffing Update..... 17

Annual Inspection Program ..... 17

Community Risk Reduction/Public Education ..... 17

**Public Safety Communications..... 18**

Charts..... 19

    Figure 21 PSC Performance Benchmarks..... 19

    Figure 22 PSC Phone Calls ..... 20

    Figure 23 PSC Law Calls for Service ..... 20

    Figure 24 MCFR Calls for Service..... 21

    Figure 25 PSC ProQA (Priority Dispatch)..... 22

    Figure 26 PSC Quality Assurance Reviews ..... 22

    Figure 27 PSC Push to Talk Count (By Talkgroup) ..... 23

    Figure 28 PSC Push to Talk Hours (By Talkgroup) ..... 23

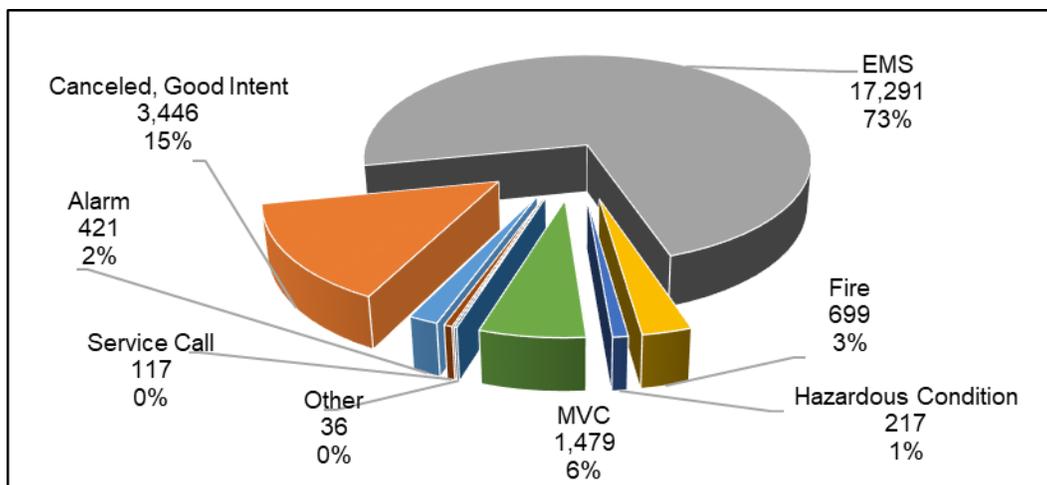


## OPERATIONS

### Service Demand

MCFR crews responded to 23,706 calls for service during this quarter—an increase of 1.2% over the same quarter during the prior fiscal year. The greatest demand for service was for emergency medical service (EMS) incidents, accounting for 73% of overall service demand. The following figure illustrates the percentages of service demand based upon the categories within the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS).

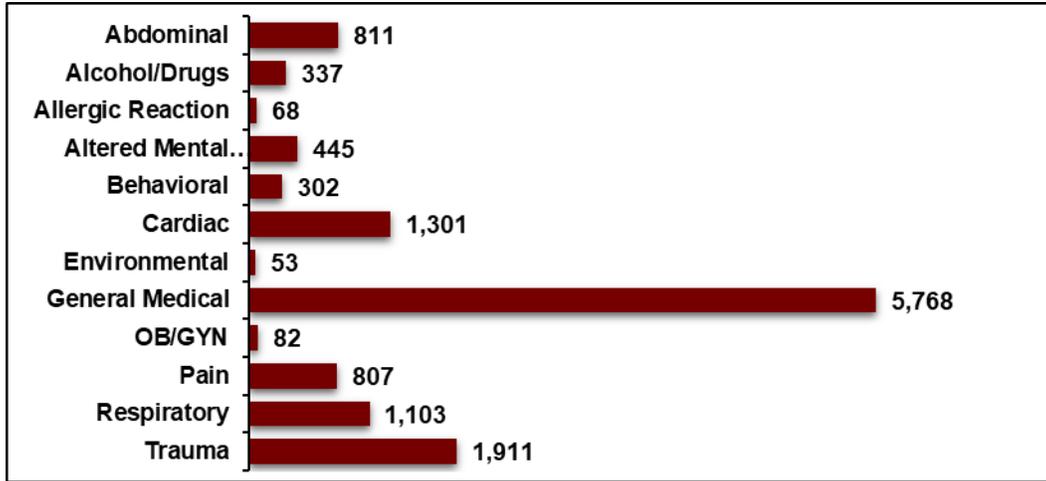
**Figure 1 MCFR Service Demand by NFIRS Incident Type**



For purposes of a more in-depth view of the patients that are classified within the broader categories of medical calls and inter-facility transfers, the focus is primarily on those being transported. The following figure illustrates the categories of primary impression (the paramedic’s determination of complaint based on gathering patient information and assessing the patient) for all patients transported within the quarter.

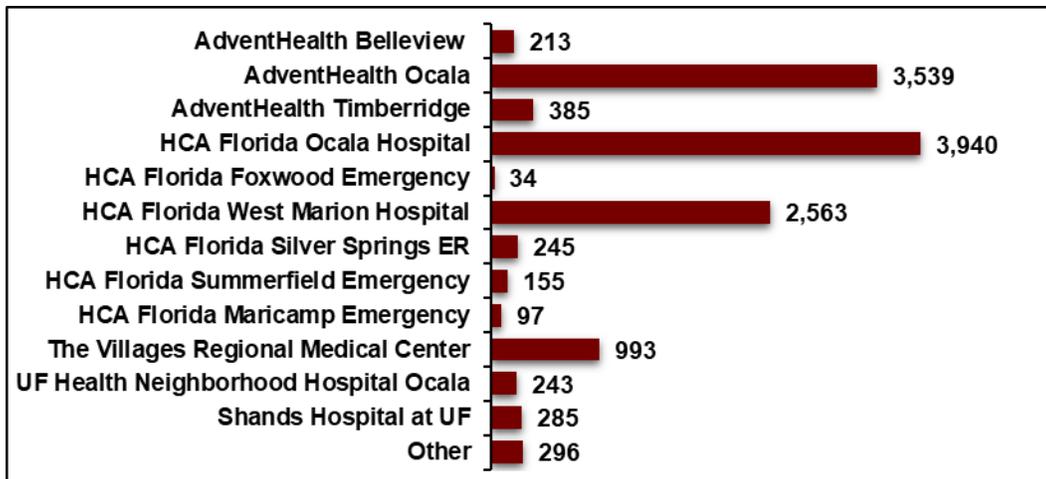


**Figure 2 Patient Transports by Primary Impression**



Marion County Fire Rescue works hand-in-hand with the local hospital organizations. The following figure illustrates the locations where patients were transported, with a combined total of 12,988 transports during the quarter.

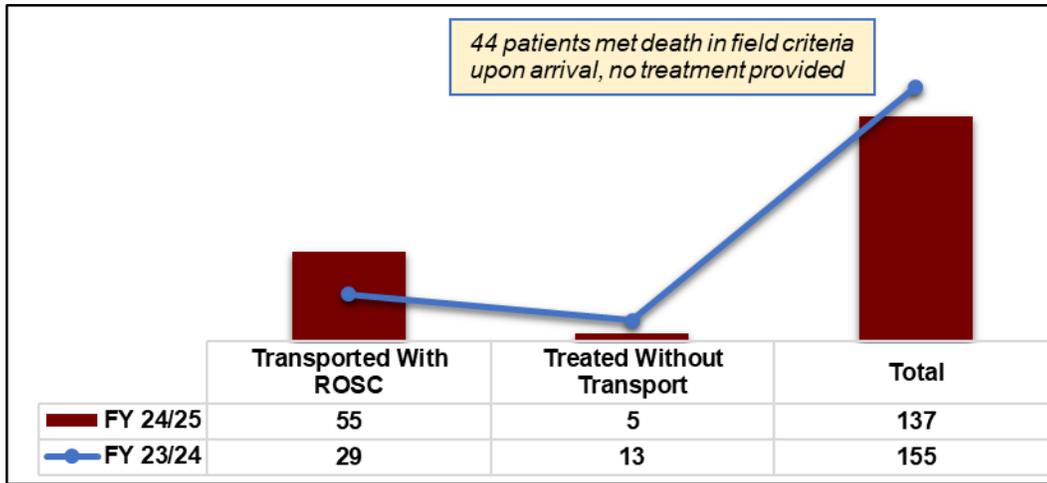
**Figure 3 Patient Transports by Destination**



One of the most significant goals for providing emergency medical services within the community is the ability to reduce illness and death wherever possible. The metric that illustrates this well is the ability to obtain return of spontaneous circulation (ROSC) in cardiac arrest patients. ROSC means that the patient’s heart began working at a level sufficient to produce a pulse.



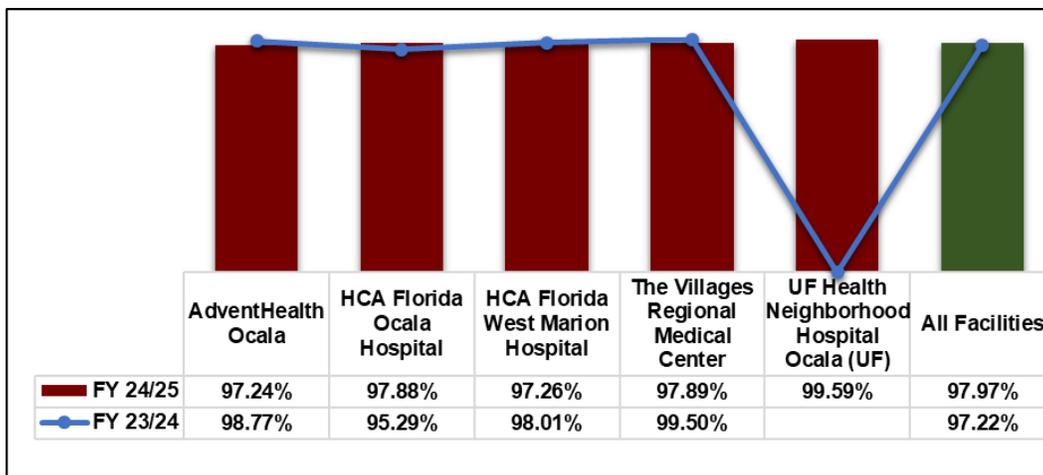
**Figure 4 Cardiac Arrest**



### Hospital Interface

The ability for Marion County Fire Rescue units to be available to respond to additional calls for service is impacted by the time spent at the receiving hospital. Working with the local hospitals, the first performance measure illustrated below is the transfer of patient care to hospital staff within 30 minutes of transport unit arrival at the hospital—with a target of 30 minutes or less for 90% of patients. FY 23/24 data became available for UF Health Neighborhood Hospital in mid-July 2024 when the facility opened.

**Figure 5 Transfer of Care Less Than 30 Minutes**

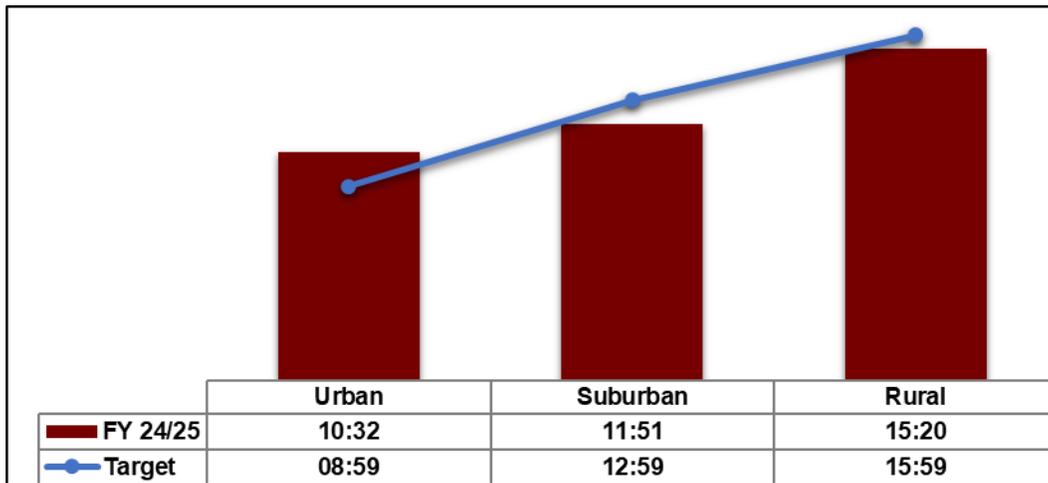




### Response Time Performance

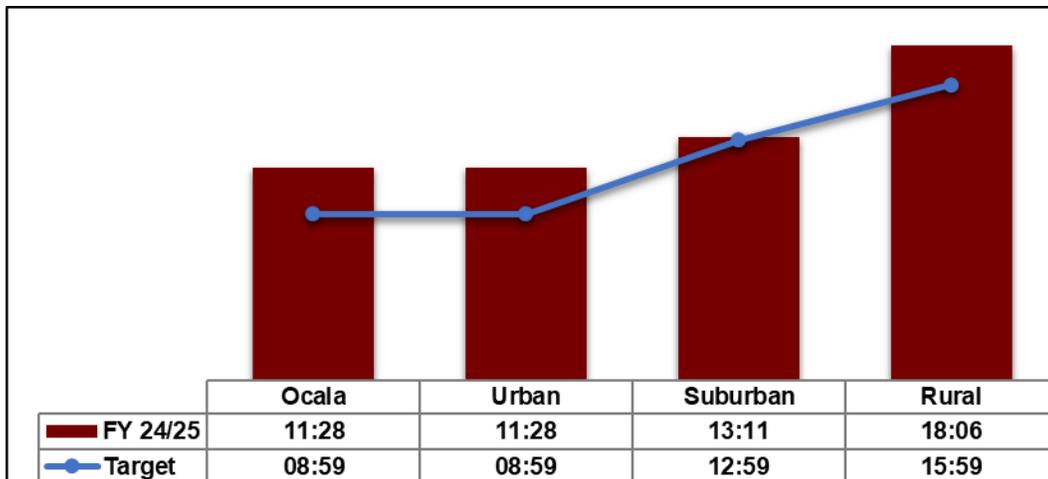
The ability to decrease damage and injury from incidents of all types is impacted by the time it takes for units to arrive. Generally, this is best calculated using only those incidents that were emergency response (lights and sirens). Performance is categorized by population density and the City of Ocala. Urban population density is greater than 1,000 persons per square mile, suburban is 500 to 1,000 persons per square mile and rural is less than 500 persons per square mile. The following figure illustrates the performance for the current quarter based on population density.

Figure 6 First Arriving Unit



For medical incidents, the first arriving unit may be a transport unit or a non-transport unit but both are staffed by paramedics and are able to provide lifesaving care. However, the ability to transport the patient to a receiving facility so that they can receive definitive treatment is the second goal. The following figure illustrates the performance for the current quarter based on population density.

Figure 7 First Arriving Transport

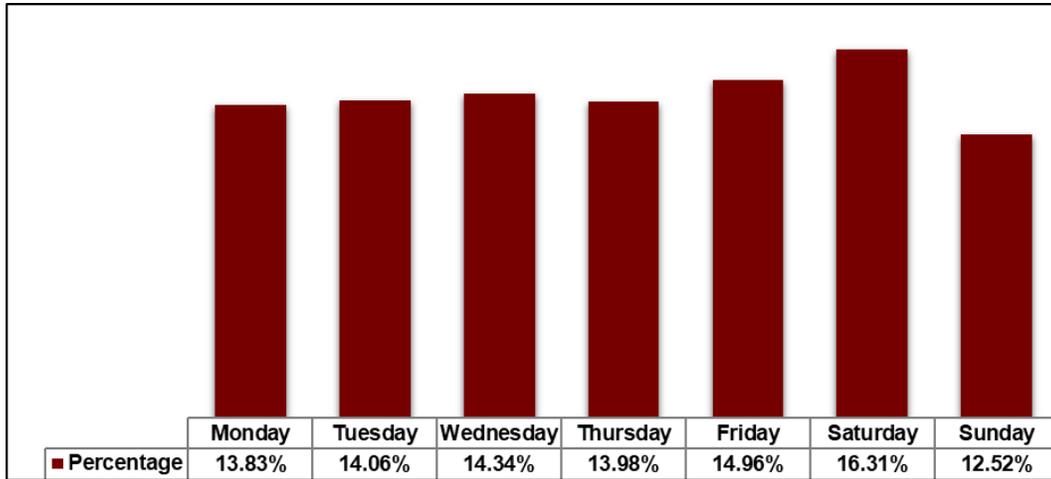




### Temporal Analysis of Service Demand

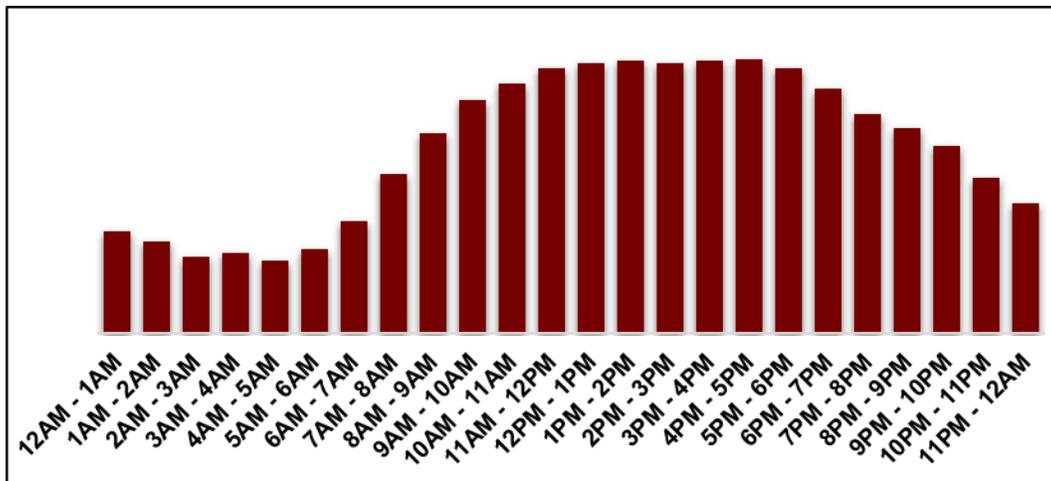
Another component in understanding the nature of service demand is the day of the week and the time of day that calls occur. For this quarter, the following figure illustrates the demand based on the day of week with the lowest demand on Sundays and the highest demand on Saturdays.

**Figure 8 Service Demand by Day of Week**



The following figure illustrates the service demand by time of day. As illustrated, the trend for service demand coincides with the movement of the population throughout the day. As the activity of the population increases, so does the demand for service.

**Figure 9 Service Demand by Time of Day**





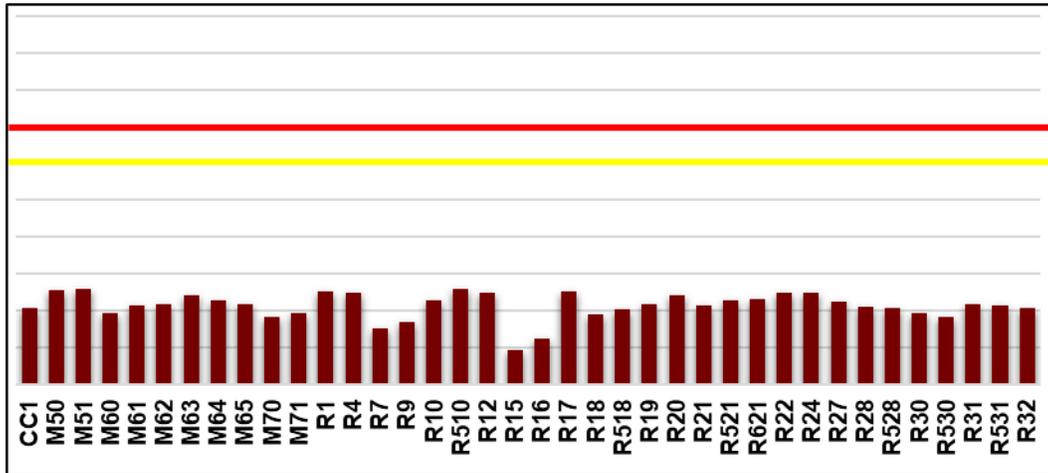
### Workload and Concurrency

Workload is a measurement of the percentage of hours spent assigned to incidents, relative to the hours in service. Marion County Fire Rescue has adopted the following benchmarks as it relates to unit hour utilization.

Unit Hour Utilization	Reference
0.30 or Less	Unit has an acceptable workload.
0.31 to 0.34 (Yellow Line)	Unit has an increased workload.
0.35 or Greater (Red Line)	Unit has a concerning workload.

While non-transport units are active with incident responses, none of them reach an increased workload. In contrast, the majority of transport units spend many more hours assigned to incidents. The following figure illustrates the workload for the transport units for the current quarter.

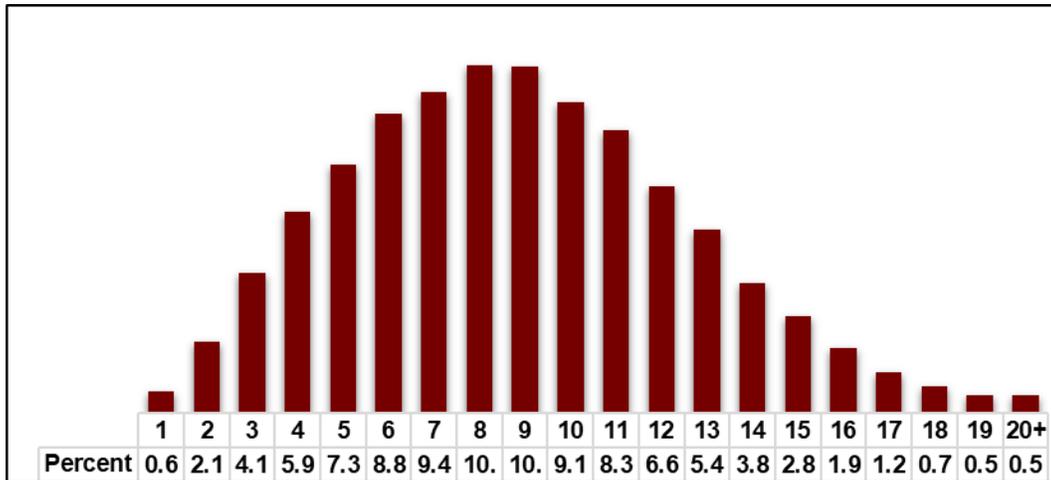
Figure 10 Unit Hour Utilization





The department’s ability to respond to calls may be impacted by the number of incidents occurring simultaneously. This measure is referred to as call concurrency and is illustrated in the following figure. As concurrency increases, there are fewer units available to respond to additional calls for service.

**Figure 11 Concurrent Incidents**



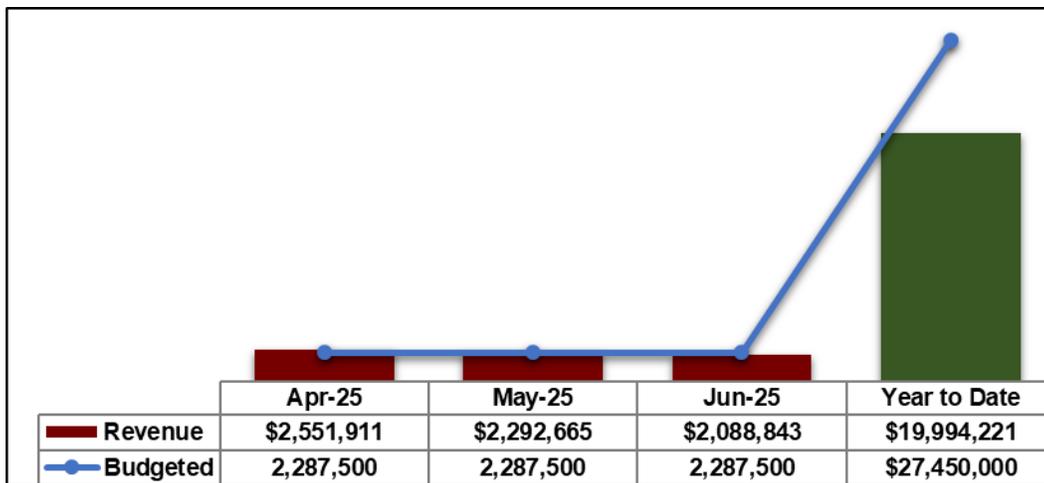


## AMBULANCE BILLING

### Charts

Marion County Fire Rescue transport units (equipment and staffing) are primarily funded within the General Fund of Marion County. This budget each year presumes an estimated amount of revenue that will be received through billing for transported patients. As illustrated in the following figure, the total revenues for the third quarter bring the year-to-date total revenues \$593,279 lower than the budgeted amount for the fiscal year.

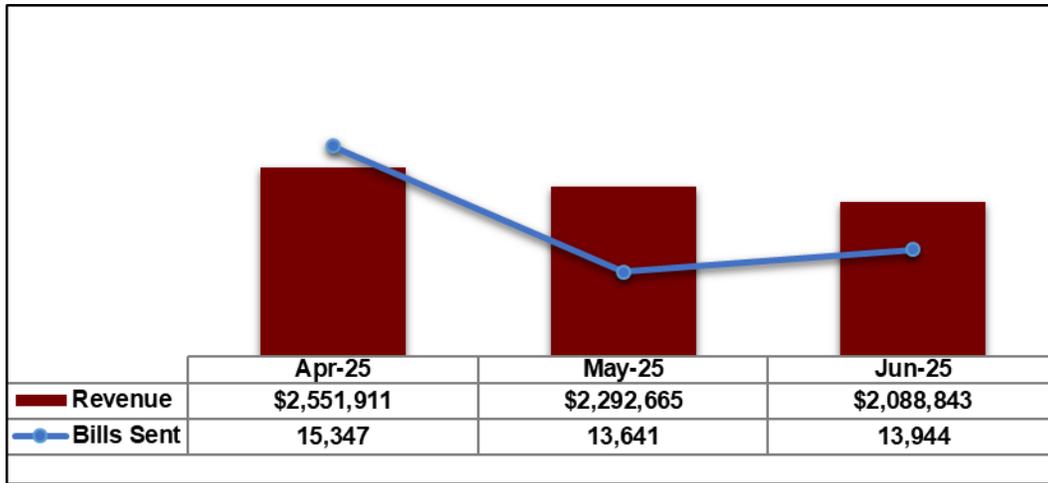
Figure 12 Revenue



Marion County Fire Rescue Billing staff works with many insurance companies, Medicaid, Medicare, Veterans Administration and others as well as directly billing the patient. This often results in more than one bill sent for each transport until full payment is received, as illustrated in the following figure.

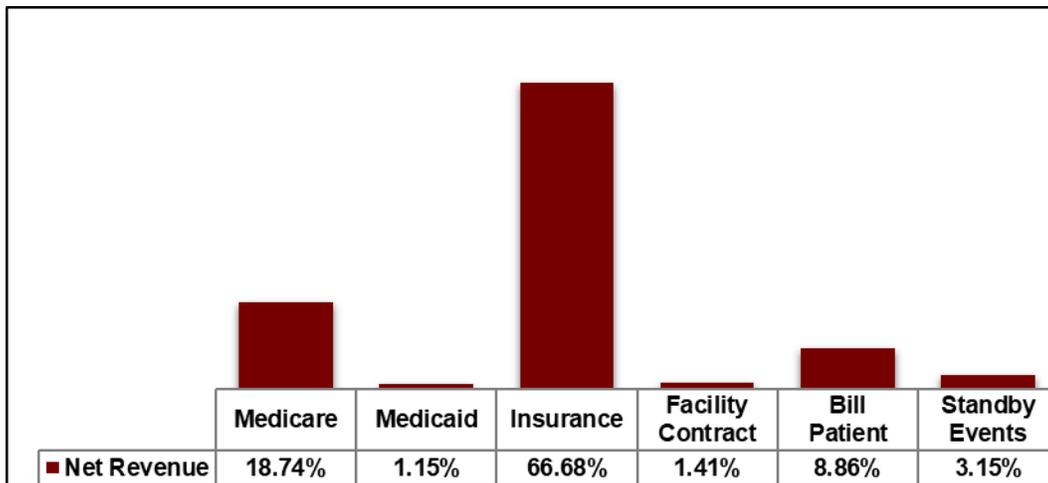


**Figure 13 Revenue Received/Bills Sent**



The following figure illustrates the various sources of revenue that account for the total revenue received during the quarter.

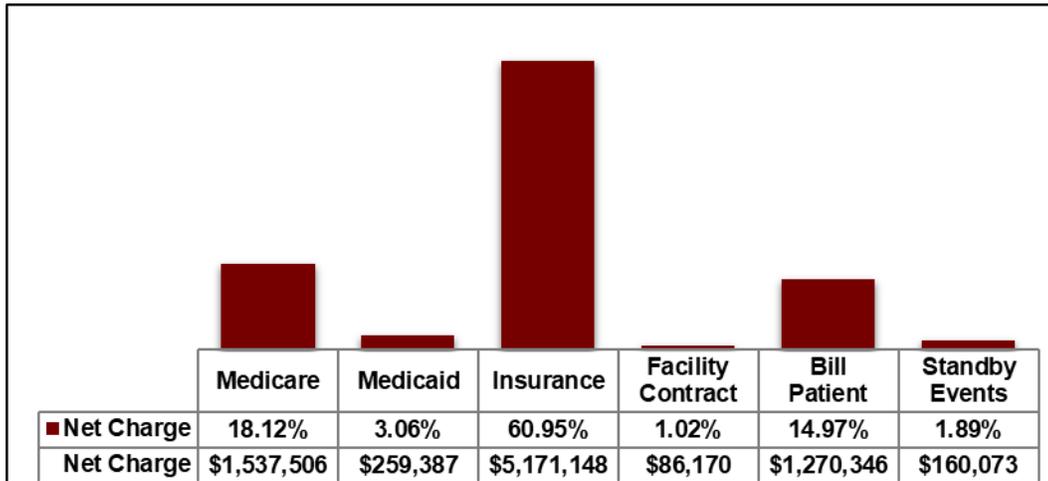
**Figure 6 Revenue by Payor Type**





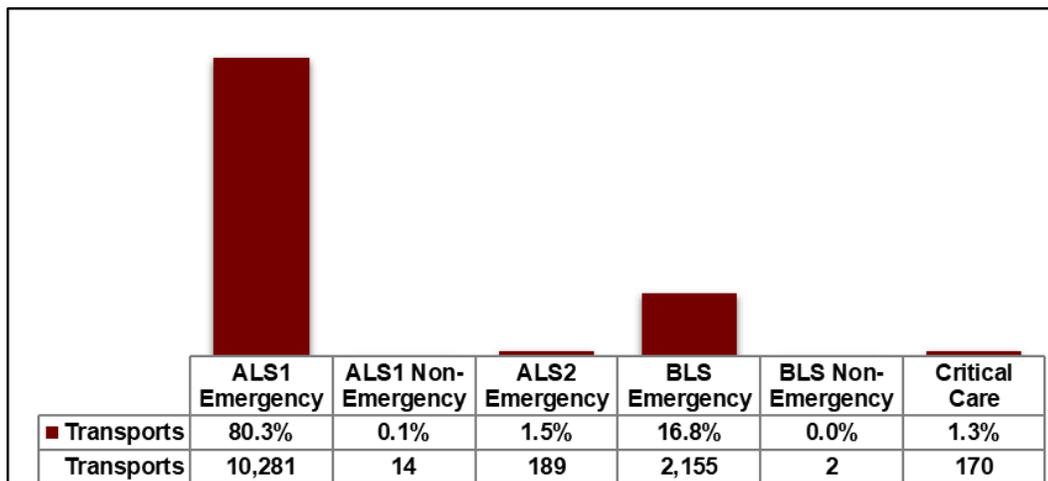
The following figure illustrates the various sources of charges that account for the total bills sent during the quarter.

**Figure 15 Charges by Payor Type**



Within guidelines set by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), patient bills are categorized into specific levels of service—advanced life support (ALS), basic life support (BLS) and critical care. This is illustrated below for those patients billed during the quarter.

**Figure 7 Transports by Level of Care**





To fully understand the overall charges/revenue, the above service levels are combined with the rates below. Marion County Fire Rescue performs an annual ambulance rate survey and provides a recommendation as to whether or not to propose a rate change. Medicare and Medicaid rates are set by CMS without any input from transport agencies.

**Figure 87 Current Ambulance Rate**

Level of Care	Marion County 12/20/2022 to Present	Medicare 2025	Medicaid 8/1/2013 to Present
BLS Non-Emergency	\$550.00	\$266.22	\$136.00
BLS Emergency	\$600.00	\$436.17	\$136.00
ALS1 Non-Emergency	\$650.00	\$319.46	\$190.00
ALS1 Emergency	\$700.00	\$517.96	\$190.00
ALS2 Emergency	\$850.00	\$732.10	\$250.00
SCT (Critical Care)	\$1,125.00	\$865.21	\$295.00
Standard Mileage	\$12.50	\$9.15	\$3.00
SCT Mileage	\$13.75	\$7.63	\$3.00
<b>Notes:</b> Medicare only pays 80% of listed rate. Medicaid only pays mileage for out-of-county transports.			

The final analysis takes into account each of the preceding data points and provides a view of the actual net revenue received based on the gross charges submitted. The following figure illustrates the average collection rate for Marion County Fire Rescue.

**Figure 18 Marion County Ambulance Collection Rate**

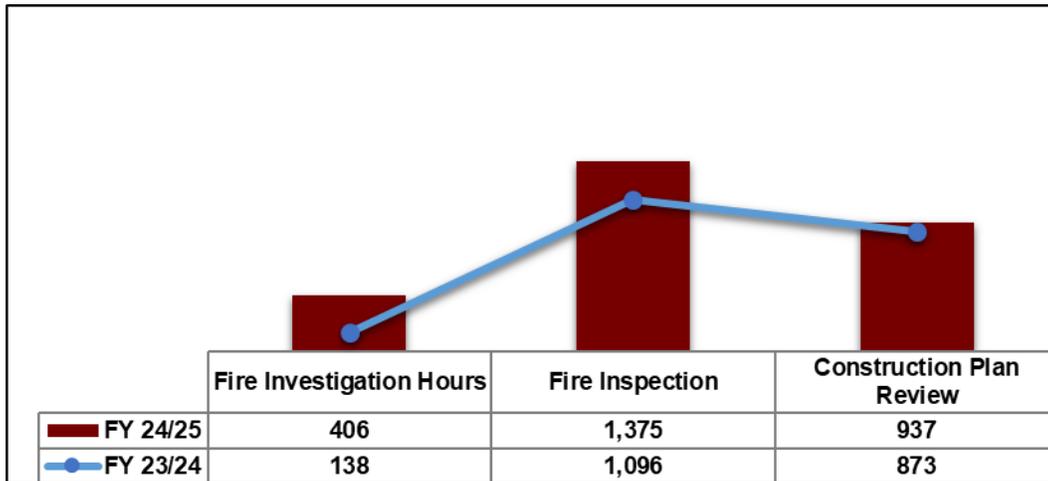
Analysis Date	Analysis Range	Amount Billed	Amount Collected	Collection Rate
4/14/2025	11/01/2023–10/31/2024	\$32,343,599	\$25,412,615	78.57%
6/10/2025	12/01/2023–11/30/2024	\$32,175,909	\$25,658,877	79.75%
6/10/2025	01/01/2024–12/31/2024	\$32,055,068	\$25,522,735	79.62%
Overall Average				79.31%
Analysis is based on revenue received specifically for the same patients billed and excludes other revenues received during the analysis range.				



## FIRE PREVENTION

### Charts

Figure 19 Fire Prevention Activity



### Development

The Marion County Fire Rescue (MCFR) Fire Prevention team continues to work with our community partners by managing the sustained increase in construction projects. Many projects are underway which involve a considerable amount of staff time to review plans and perform inspections in the interest of public safety.



Figure 20 Project Update

Project	Status
World Equestrian Center (WEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction continues on the WEC Event Center. Interior work has begun with expected opening in September 2025.</li> <li>Site work has begun on the WEC Sports Complex near Highway 40.</li> </ul>
Retail Grocery Stores/ Restaurants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sprouts on Highway 200 completed their final inspections.</li> <li>A new Aldi Grocery Store opened in Marion Oaks in June 2025.</li> <li>Site plans for a new Publix have been submitted for Southwest Marion County.</li> </ul>
West Shire Village/Summer Pointe Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>West Shire Village construction is complete for all 82 buildings in the community.</li> <li>Summer Pointe Village is under construction bringing over 500 units to Marion County off of Highway 42. The first building is expected to be completed in September 2025.</li> </ul>
Marion County Fire Rescue Fire Station Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Renovations are underway at Orange Springs Station 13 to build the living quarters to convert the station to 24/7 career staff.</li> <li>Work continues on the expansion and remodel of Golden Ocala Station 20.</li> </ul>
Marion County School Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Construction continues at Ross Prairie Elementary School with expected occupancy in August 2025.</li> <li>Construction continues on the new high school in Marion Oaks with expected completion in 2026.</li> <li>Inspections are underway for the expansion of Liberty Middle School.</li> </ul>
Multiple Self-Storage Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inspections are underway for a new multiple story facility on Baseline.</li> <li>Three other self-storage locations are under construction and progressing well.</li> </ul>
Restaurants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final inspections completed for Small Sliders restaurant and Chipotle on Highway 200.</li> </ul>
Residential Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residential construction continues to remain active and strong.</li> <li>Auroua Oaks continues construction off SW 60<sup>th</sup> Avenue with over three hundred units.</li> <li>Belhaven off SE 92<sup>nd</sup> Street near Belleview is expected to have several hundred homes in multiple phases.</li> </ul>
Apartment/Townhomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pointe Grande Apartments off SW 60<sup>th</sup> Avenue has completed final inspections on several of the buildings.</li> <li>Plans have been submitted for multiple apartment complexes and new residential subdivisions.</li> </ul>



## Fire Inspectors

MCFR fire inspectors have completed several large projects during this quarter including many multifamily housing developments. The goal of these projects is to meet the growing demand for housing in the community. The apartments received their final inspections over the last few months adding several hundred units to the inventory. Fire Prevention has experienced a nearly 25% increase in inspections requests over this time last year. This can be attributed to several projects now underway and seeking final approvals to open.

## Fire Investigation

The Fire Prevention Division continues to support the Operations Division with a local fire investigation program. A member of the Fire Prevention Division is on call to provide fire investigation response coverage 24/7. Fire Prevention works closely with many different partners in order to complete investigations including the Bureau of Fire Arson and Explosive Investigation (BFAEI), the State Attorney, and various law enforcement agencies.

During the third quarter of FY 2025/2026, Fire Prevention was requested to investigate 36 fires. These investigations required a total of 406 staff hours, encompassing on-scene assessments, follow-ups, report writing, and quality assurance reviews. A notable effort during this period included a multi-day joint fire investigation operation which involved many agencies from local, state, and national response teams. Additionally, two fatal residential fires occurred during sleeping hours in homes without functioning smoke detectors. Additional incidents during the quarter involved pediatric burn injuries related to outdoor fires, improper disposal or use of smoking materials, and dangerous behavior influenced by social media challenges. Sadly, these incidents were entirely preventable.

Citizens are encouraged to take proactive measures including the proper installation and maintenance of smoke detectors, adherence to safe outdoor burning practices (especially keeping children at a safe distance), and community awareness regarding the risks of unsafe social media trends. The MCFR Community Risk Reduction Team remains committed to public education and is available to provide resources and support throughout the community.

Additionally, MCFR worked nine incidents which resulted in burn injuries. Taking proper precautions while conducting auto repairs and vehicle maintenance is important, such as wearing personal protective equipment (PPE), not exposing an open flame or cigarettes to flammable liquids or vapors, and having a working fire extinguisher in the area to put out fires. Other burn injuries are entirely preventable such as following approved outdoor burning guidelines and properly disposing of smoking materials. MCFR Community Risk Reduction is ready to support and provide education throughout the community.



## Staffing Update

Fire Prevention welcomed a new Fire Inspector–Trainee. He has completed all of his classes and is preparing to take the State of Florida Fire Inspector certification test. Fire Investigator Amanda Ramage has completed her training and has been assigned as one of the primary fire investigators. Congratulations to Fire Prevention Supervisor Nathan Wallace on being selected by the National Fire Protection Association as a Rising Star in Fire Prevention. Nathan was honored in Las Vegas as one of ten persons selected for this prestigious award.

## Annual Inspection Program

The Fire Prevention Division continues to develop the annual inspection program. Performing annual inspections allows fire inspectors the opportunity to meet with business owners to assist them in identifying and correcting any deficiencies. This proactive program is intended to provide fire safety guidance and positive public relations. The annual inspection program is assigned to one inspector who is assisted by other inspectors as time allows. For the third quarter of FY 2024-2025, fire inspectors completed 561 annual inspections. Currently, 66 locations have open violations which fire inspectors are actively working to assist the owners in coming into compliance with the fire code. The efforts of this program increase safety awareness, reduce risk, and provide public education benefits.

## Community Risk Reduction/Public Education

For the third quarter of 2025, Fire Prevention Public Education has been extremely busy partnering with many different organizations throughout the community. We have been proactive in the community teaching many topics including fire safety, smoke alarms, cooking safety, and fire extinguishers. Our educational partnerships include working with the Community Paramedicine Program, Fall Prevention Coalition, and the Marion County Health Department. Fire Public Education has participated in many events including High School Seat Belt for Life Program, PTSD Walk, and Car Safe Kids.

Fire Prevention has been focusing on educating residents about smoke alarms. Working smoke alarms can more than double your chance for survival in the event of a fire. Through a partnership with the Marion County Tax Collector, a fire safety message is being included in all tax mailings. This partnership helps us reach as many citizens as possible and provide safety messages and information on this critical life saving device. Additionally, Marion County Fire Rescue has an ongoing partnership with the American Red Cross, and has continued the “Sound the Alarm, Save a Life” program. This quarter Marion County Fire Rescue has installed 42 smoke alarms and have changed 55 senior residents smoke alarm batteries.



## **PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS**

Marion County Public Safety Communications (PSC) is a dual-Accredited Center of Excellence (ACE) and accredited by the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED) in call processing of Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) and Emergency Fire Dispatch (EFD). As a dual ACE, PSC is required to maintain or exceed a high level of service and compliance with protocols. The IAED ACE accreditation covers the call-taking aspect of the communications center using compliance to protocols as the primary focus.

PSC is also accredited by the Florida Telecommunications Accreditation Commission (FLA-TAC) which is a division of the Florida Police Accreditation Coalition (FLA-PAC). This is a policy driven accreditation which covers all aspects of the communications center ranging from administrative topics, to training and dispatch protocols. The accreditation has over 110 standards.

PSC is approved through the Florida Department of Health (DOH) to instruct the state required 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator (PST) training program. As an approved training center through the DOH, PSC routinely hosts other agency's Emergency Telecommunicators (ETCs) for this training. This training program is a minimum of 232 hours covering various topics of emergency medical, fire, and police dispatch and call processing.

Marion County, Florida currently operates a 7-RF-site, 12-channel, trunked simulcast ASTRO 25 (P25) system. The existing infrastructure has served the County well for many years but as the County has grown, the needs of the public service providers have also grown. The goal of this ASTRO 25 expansion project is to enhance the coverage performance of the radio system from countywide mobile radio coverage to countywide portable radio coverage. The addition of three (3) new simulcast sub-sites coupled with the conversion of the existing Dunnellon Water Tower site from a standalone Astro site repeater (ASR) to a simulcast radio frequency (RF) subsite will provide the county with 95% portable outside radio coverage countywide.

Marion County is purchasing three hundred seventy-eight (378) APX NEXT XE devices for Marion County Fire Rescue. APX NEXT XE devices are a next-generation P25 platform, purpose-built for first responders to access and act on information while maintaining their focus in critical situations. With natural and accessible touch interface, best-in-class audio optimized for high-noise environments, and extended coverage through broadband connectivity, APX NEXT XE devices deliver actionable intelligence to the point of engagement for personnel to stay connected and in control wherever the mission takes them. In addition, APX NEXT XE devices deliver all of this in a form factor designed for extreme environments.

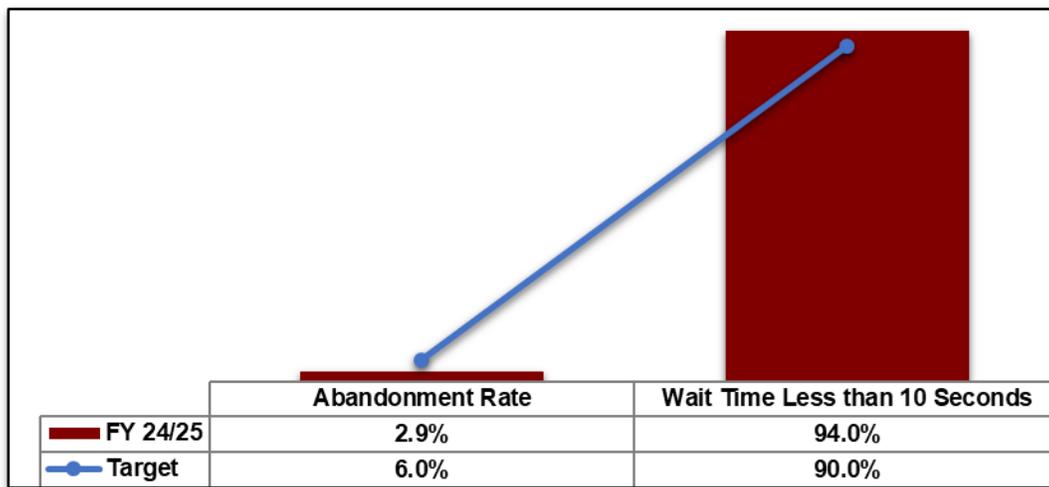


### Charts

The following figure illustrates two key performance measures for the answering of 911 calls by the public safety answering point (PSAP) at PSC.

*Abandonment rate* describes those instances where the call is not answered within the PSC PSAP, either being transferred to another PSAP or the call disconnects prior to PSC having the ability to answer. The target for this measure is 6% or less and correlates directly with the second target measure of answering at least 90% of 911 calls in 10 seconds or less.

**Figure 21 PSC Performance Benchmarks**



The following figure illustrates the total incoming and outgoing call volume for PSC.

*Emergency Inbound* represents the number of 911 calls that are routed to the PSAP at PSC.

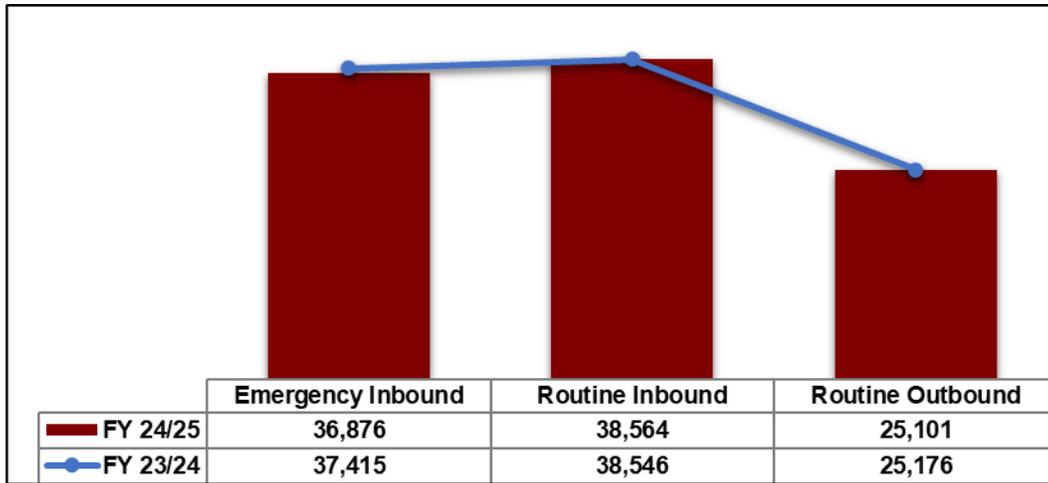
*Routine Inbound* represents the number of phone calls received by PSC on the non-emergency lines. These lines are used for calls from alarm companies, medical facilities, hospitals, other public safety/service agencies, MCFR personnel and the public to speak with PSC ETCs.

*Routine Outbound* represents the number of phone calls that originate from within the PSAP. These calls include call-backs to 911 disconnects, calling local agencies, calls to MCFR personnel, etc.

*Total* represents all three categories combined. This total is one of the key factors used to show the call volume workload of PSC ETCs.



Figure 22 PSC Phone Calls

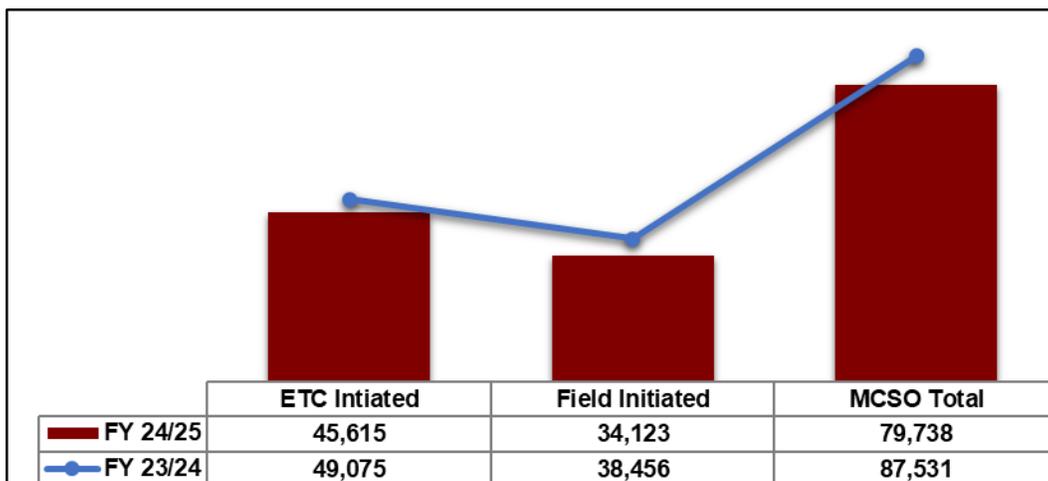


Calls for service (CFS) which are law enforcement related are grouped into two categories; ETC Initiated and Field Initiated and is illustrated in the following figure, along with the total calls for the Marion County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO).

*ETC Initiated* calls for service are those calls that are created in the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system and were processed by an ETC.

*Field Initiated* law calls for service are those that are created as a result of an action by a Sheriff’s Deputy. These are calls such as a traffic stop or any other call for service that is initiated by the deputy and not originating from within the PSAP.

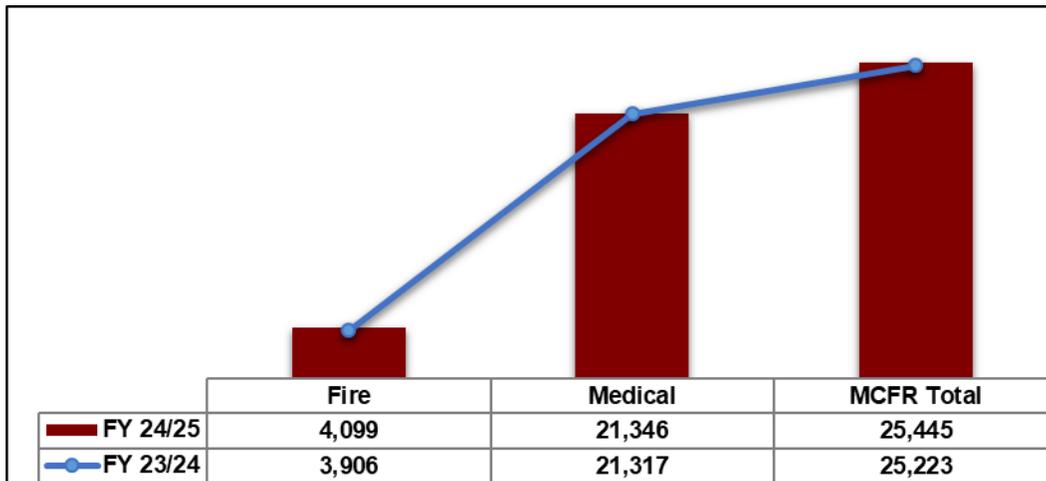
Figure 23 PSC Law Calls for Service





MCFR calls for service are broken down into two types, Fire and Medical. These are the call types within CAD and organized using the call priority, rather than the nature/problem and are illustrated in the following figure.

**Figure 24 MCFR Calls for Service**

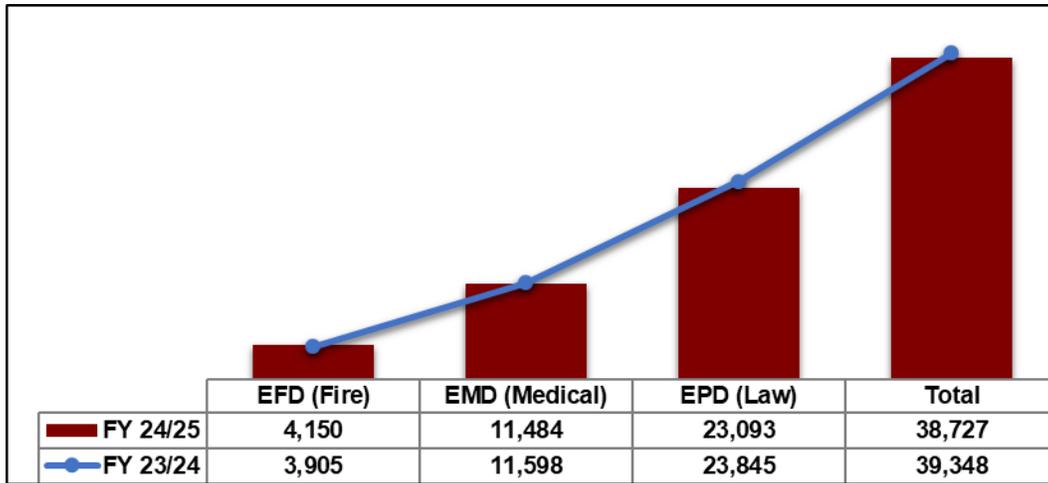


PSC utilizes ProQA software to aid in the call processing, which assists the ETC in collecting vital information for first responders and to aid in providing critical life safety and lifesaving instructions while not delaying the dispatch of first responders. This process also assists in prioritizing calls for service based upon the information gathered. For example, a caller who has fallen, is not injured, and only needs help up off the floor will be prioritized lower than someone experiencing chest pain and difficulty breathing.

Calls for service that are processed by the Ocala Police Department (OPD) PSAP, or that originate as Field Initiated MCSO calls for service are not processed through ProQA by PSC. This, along with duplicate calls for service, unit initiated calls for service, etc. contribute to the variance between total calls for service and total calls processed through ProQA as illustrated in the following figure.



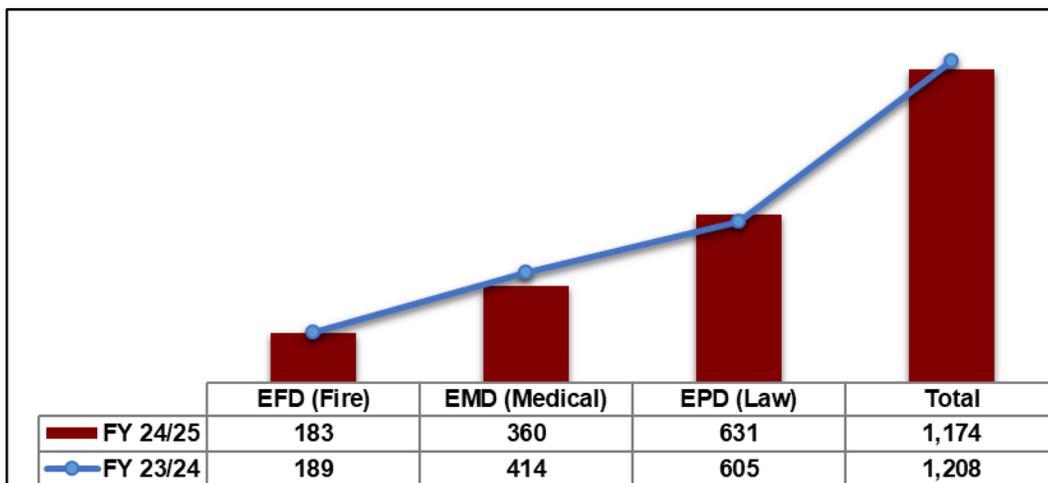
**Figure 25 PSC ProQA (Priority Dispatch)**



As an ACE, PSC is required to conduct a random review of calls for service processed through ProQA for EMD, EFD and EPD (emergency police dispatch). The percentage of calls reviewed for each discipline is determined by the IAED based upon total call volume for the preceding year. This ensures that PSC is maintaining or exceeding accreditation standards. These calls are selected randomly by the software program which is used for the review process.

The PSC Quality Assurance Unit also conducts focused, non-random reviews for various reasons. This can include, but is not limited to complaints received, disciplinary reasons, inquiries by other agencies or field personnel, and requests by PSC ETCs for educational purposes. The numbers are reflective of a reprioritization of our efforts during the quarter. The following figure illustrates the calls that were reviewed during the quarter.

**Figure 26 PSC Quality Assurance Reviews**

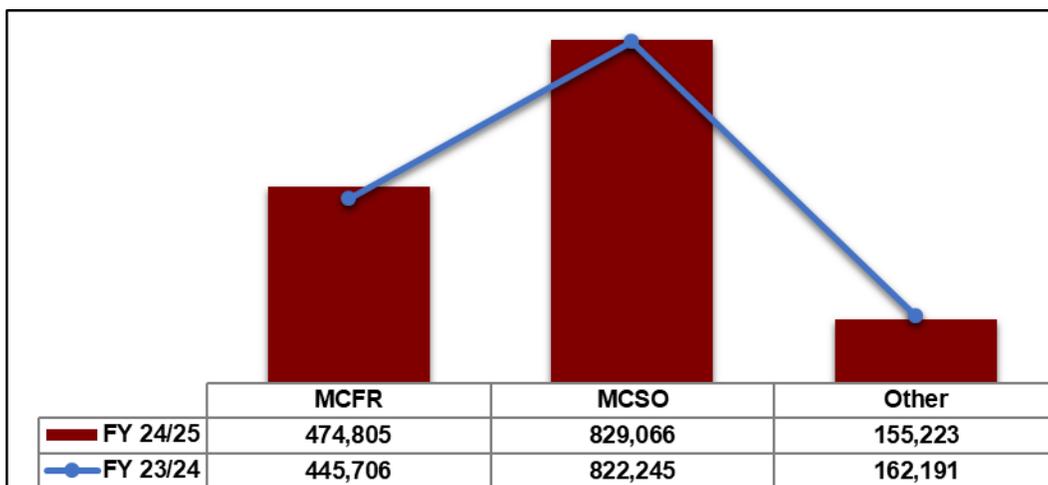




The Marion County 800 MHz Radio System is countywide and used by Marion County Fire Rescue (MCFR), Marion County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO), Belleview Police Department (BPD), Dunnellon Police Department (DPD), Marion County general government agencies, and interoperability partners, which are internal and external.

The following figure illustrates the push to talk by talkgroup each time the radio system is accessed. The talkgroups are broken down by MCFR, MCSO, which includes BPD, DPD, Marion County Jail and the Courthouse. The “Other” category includes Marion County general government agencies.

**Figure 27 PSC Push to Talk Count (By Talkgroup)**



The Marion County 800 MHz Radio Systems shows the total time the radio system is used to voice communicate over the talkgroups on the radio system as illustrated in the following figure.

**Figure 28 PSC Push to Talk Hours (By Talkgroup)**

