



# Island Air Ambulance

## Frequently Asked Questions

If you can't find the answer to your question below, please call us at (360) 378-2376.

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## FAQs

### OVERVIEW AND MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

#### 1. What is Island Air Ambulance and how did the Island Air Ambulance Membership Program get started?

Island Air Ambulance is a service of Island Air, Inc., which has been providing aviation services to San Juan County for over 25 years. Island Air recently created the Island Air Ambulance Membership Program as an affordable way for island residents and visitors to be sheltered from out-of-pocket costs that could be incurred from the flight portion of an emergency medical transport on one of their fixed wing air ambulance aircraft. ^

#### 2. What is the benefit of Membership to you?

Although you do not have to be a member to be transported, membership offers two important benefits. First, Island Air Ambulance will work on your behalf with your benefits providers to secure payment for your air ambulance flight, with any uncovered amounts considered to be fully paid. Second, becoming a member is a good way to support the health care system of our local island communities by helping to keep this service sustainable. ^

#### 3. Who is eligible for Membership?

All residents of San Juan County are eligible for Membership provided they are listed on the Membership Application and also have medical insurance. There is also a Vacation Membership available for visitors. Household members or visitors with Medicaid or no health insurance are not eligible for membership. ^

#### 4. What does an Island Air Ambulance Membership cost?

Island Air is offering an introductory household membership price of \$39 per year per household (Regular \$55) or \$119 for 3 years (Regular \$165). The cost of a Vacation Membership for 3 continuous months is \$25. ^

#### 5. Who do I contact about the Island Air Ambulance Membership Program?

Additional information is available by:

1. Visiting us on the web at [www.islandairambulance.com](http://www.islandairambulance.com),
2. Calling us at 360-378-2376,
3. Emailing us at: [membership@islandairambulance.com](mailto:membership@islandairambulance.com)
4. Writing us at: 72 Airport Circle Dr., Friday Harbor, WA 98250. ^

## PROVISION OF SERVICES

#### 1. Is an Island Air Ambulance Membership considered insurance?

No. Island Air is not an insurance company and Island Air Ambulance Membership is not an insurance policy and cannot be considered as secondary insurance coverage or as supplemental coverage to any insurance policy. ^

#### 2. How would hospital or emergency personnel know I have a Membership?

It is your responsibility to notify medical personnel of any membership or insurance. Island Air Ambulances' service will be the same regardless whether or not you have a membership. Our billing company maintains an active list of current members and you are welcome to contact us at any time regarding your membership status. ^

#### 3. When do I need an Island Air Ambulance Membership?

Memberships are available for purchase at any time. To enjoy the benefits of membership, the membership must be purchased at least 3 days prior to the date of service. ^

#### 4. When does my Membership become effective?

Your Island Air Ambulance Membership becomes effective 3 days after receipt of your application and payment. ^

#### 5. How do I know if my application has been received?

New members will receive an email notifying them of their membership and effective date. ^

#### 6. Can I sign up and renew electronically?

Yes, you can sign up and renew your membership at [www.islandairambulance.com](http://www.islandairambulance.com). ^

#### 7. How do I sign up if I don't have access to the Internet or don't have a credit card?

We are happy to mail you a Membership Application and accept local checks.



#### **8. Does my Membership automatically renew?**

No. However, members will be notified via email 30 days, 7 days, and 1 day prior to their membership expiration.



#### **9. What if my address changes?**

Members can update their address on-line or by contacting Island Air.



#### **10. Is there a provision for a refund if I move from San Juan County?**

No.



#### **11. Can I enroll and check the status of my Membership on-line?**

Yes at [www.islandairambulance.com](http://www.islandairambulance.com).



#### **12. If I have a medical emergency, should I call the Island Air Ambulance Communications Center or the local 911?**

Always call 911 in an emergency.



#### **13. Who makes the decision on if and how I will be transported?**

There are established protocols that Physicians and EMS Professionals use on a case-by-case basis to determine the most appropriate resource for medical transportation. Factors that are considered include patient condition, weather, appropriate receiving facility, the availability of local and regional ground and aeromedical resources, timing, patient preference, and the location and bed availability of hospitals to name a few.



#### **14. Who makes the decision on which air ambulance service will transport me?**

Your Physician or EMS Professional will make the final decision as to which air ambulance service will be called.



#### **15. Does my Membership include ground ambulance transportation between my home or local island medical provider and an island airport?**

No. Your membership only covers the flight portion of your transport.



#### **16. Will my Membership include transportation from the receiving hospital back to the islands or my home?**

No. Your membership only covers medically necessary air ambulance flights.



#### **17. My insurance claims to cover 100% of the cost of air ambulance transports so do I need a Membership?**

Most insurance companies will pay 100% of what they deem an allowable amount for air ambulance, which does not necessarily mean that the total cost of the flight will be covered. Also, people often change insurance companies and medical plans. You will want to

check with your insurance company to find out exactly how much will be covered in the event of an air ambulance transport. ^

### **18. If I transport myself to Island Air, will you fly me to the hospital?**

No. Only Physicians and EMS Professionals can authorize an Island Air Ambulance flight. ^

### **19. Who decides where the patient will be flown?**

Your Physician or EMS Professional will determine the most appropriate hospital destination. ^

### **20. I live on San Juan Island and am part of the San Juan County Public Hospital District #1, do I need to be a member of Island Air Ambulance?**

Yes. Island Air ended its relationship with San Juan EMS and the San Juan County Public Hospital District #1 on March 31, 2016. Prior to this time, residents of the District did not incur out-of-pocket expenses if San Juan EMS and Island Air Ambulance transported them. Island Air has agreed to honor that arrangement through the remainder of 2106 at which time residents of the District will need to have a Membership if they wish to be sheltered from out-of-pocket costs that could be incurred from the flight portion of an emergency medical transport on Island Air's fixed wing aircraft. ^

### **21. Will my Membership cover the cost of air transportation if my hospital of choice is located further away than an appropriate hospital facility?**

Most insurance providers, including Medicare, will only cover air ambulance transportation to the closest appropriate facility. Island Air Ambulance reserves the right to charge the patient an additional amount if the patient's hospital of choice is located further away than the closest appropriate facility. ^

### **22. What if I can't afford a Membership or medical insurance and end up being flown by Island Air Ambulance?**

Island Air Ambulance has developed a Hardship Policy that may waive or substantially reduce the amount billed. This Policy is implemented on a case-by-case basis and will require the patient to substantiate the hardship. ^

### **23. Will Island Air Ambulance transport me without a Membership or medical insurance?**

Yes, Island Air Ambulance will transport patients regardless of insurance or ability to pay. ^

### **24. Who do I contact about patient billing questions?**

Island Air Ambulance utilizes a contract billing company which is very familiar with our unique island setting. Direct contact information for our billing company will be provided on request. ^

## **COLLABORATION WITH OTHER HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS**

### **1. What role does Island Air Ambulance play in the emergency services community?**

Island Air Ambulance considers itself to be a healthcare partner with all local emergency services, hospitals, medical clinics and physician offices. We are part of an integrated system that is overseen by the San Juan County Medical Director. ^

**2. Now that San Juan EMS has discontinued its MedEvac Membership Program, what should I do regarding an air ambulance membership?**

You should consider purchasing an Island Air Ambulance Membership.

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**3. I have an AirCare Membership with Airlift Northwest, do I also need an Island Air Ambulance Membership?**

Yes, if you wish to be shielded from out-of-pocket expenses in the event you are flown on one of Island Air Ambulance's fixed wing aircraft.

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**4. How can my Membership be so inexpensive and still cover all of my air ambulance transport expense?**

Island Air Ambulance members must also have medical insurance as a condition of membership which will help to offset the cost of medical transportation.

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**5. If Island Air Ambulance is not available, will my Membership cover another aeromedical provider?**

No, not at this time.

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**TERMS & CONDITIONS AND ENROLLMENT****1. What are the terms and conditions of membership?**

A complete list of the terms and conditions can be found on our website at [www.islandairambulance.com](http://www.islandairambulance.com).

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**2. Does Island Air Ambulance offer group Membership discounts?**

Yes, Island Air Ambulance offers group membership discounts. Please contact our Membership Program Manager for additional details.

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**3. Is there a limit to the number of transports per year covered by my Membership?**

No.

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**4. Does my Membership include ground ambulance transportation from the mainland airport to the hospital?**

No, the membership only covers the flight portion of your fixed wing transport.

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**5. How do I add or remove a member of my household to my Membership?**

Members can update their list of household members on-line or by calling our Membership Program Manager.

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**6. What if I am an Island Air Ambulance Member and my insurance company refuses to cover the insured portion of my air ambulance transport?**

Island Air Ambulance will work on your behalf with your benefits providers to secure payment for your air ambulance flight. If for some reason the benefits provider refuses to pay, the member will not be charged.

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**7. If I have Medicaid, do I need a Membership?**

No, we cannot offer memberships to folks who have Medicaid (or similar) insurance administered by the State of Washington. <sup>^</sup>

**8. Can a family member accompany me on the flight at no extra cost?**

A family member can often accompany the patient if approved by the pilot. <sup>^</sup>