

Medicaid Transportation Policy Reminder from NYS Department of Health (DOH) and the Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS)

Overview:

The Medicaid Transportation program ensures Medicaid members can get to and from their medical appointments at no cost to them. We arrange non-emergency transportation, such as pre-scheduled trips to primary care and the dentist. For emergency medical services, please call 911. We do not provide trips to non-medical locations like pharmacies, gyms, schools, or grocery stores.

Trips are arranged at the most medically appropriate, cost-effective level of service. These include public transit, taxi/livery, ambulette, ambulance (ALS/BLS), and personal vehicle mileage reimbursement. Members generally travel using the same mode they use for daily living.

The Department contracts with a transportation broker, Medical Answering Services (MAS). They schedule the trips, manage contact centers, conduct utilization review, and perform other administrative functions for the Medicaid Transportation program.

More detail about the program can be found on the Department's website at https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/members/medtrans_overview.htm

Medicaid transportation policies are reviewed periodically. Recently, policies concerning the distance an enrollee may travel for services when the same service is available closer to their home address have been reviewed, and program changes are needed to comply with existing policy.

Why Does This Matter?

Medicaid transportation regulations require transportation to be within the "common medical marketing area" (CMMA) associated with your address. The current treatment program you receive service from may be impacted by this CMMA policy review. At this time, with assistance from your current OTP or OP, you may be required to return to an OTP closer to your home in order to receive transportation to OTP or OP services.

How Do You Know if Your Transportation Will Be Impacted?

When your transportation to your current program was set up, a medical provider completed a "Standing Order" for recurring trips on your behalf. When your Standing Order is set to expire, the Medicaid Transportation Broker (MAS) will contact your current OTP or OP to determine if services are available closer to your home address. Your current OTP or OP will contact you with information should services be available closer to your home. See details in the section below.

Can I still go to my regular program?:

Medicaid allows you the to have the freedom to choose any medical provider you wish to use. However, if that medical provider is outside the CMMA, a medical provider within the CMMA must complete documentation in order for Medicaid to be able to cover the transportation expense outside the CMMA.

What You Need to Do:

Option 1: Continue receiving your OTP or OP services at your current location.

**Please note, Medicaid Transportation may not continue if you choose to continue treatment at the current program outside of the CMMA. Your current OTP or OP can share your available treatment options to continue being transported to treatment.*

Option 2: Transition to an OTP or OP facility within your CMMA in which you would continue receiving Medicaid covered transportation.

If you choose Option 2, your current OTP or OP facility staff will work with you to create a transition plan to your new OTP or OP facility. This Transition must take place at the end of your current "Standing Order" or within an extended grace period from the end of your current "Standing Order."

Your new OTP or OP facility will schedule Medicaid transportation for Intake and then by setting up a "Standing Order" for Medicaid Transportation to your ongoing OTP or OP appointments.

NYC Public Transportation:

In New York City, if an enrollee chooses to continue receiving services at an OTP or OP which is not within the CMMA, public transportation (MTA) would be the option covered by Medicaid. Your current OTP or OP facility can facilitate this.

Questions:

- Questions related to Medicaid transportation policies can be directed to the Department of Health at medtrans@health.ny.gov or at 518-473-2160
- Questions related to OTP patient advocacy can be directed to the Office of Addiction Services and Supports at PatientAdvocacy@oasas.ny.gov or at 1-800-553-5790
- General questions about setting up transportation to medical appointments can be made through the MAS online portal <https://www.medanswering.com/> or by calling the MAS Contact Center (Downstate: 844-666-6270; Upstate: 866-932-7740), <https://www.medanswering.com/contact-center/>