

Medicaid Transportation Policy Reminder

**Issued by the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) and the
Office of Addiction Services and Supports (OASAS)**

Overview

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

Trips are arranged at the most medically appropriate, cost-effect 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 NYS Department of Health (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.

Policy Update

Medicaid Transportation program 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.

Policy Update Enrollee FAQs

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 Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) or Outpatient Program (OP) , you may be required to return to a program closer to your home in order to receive transportation to OTP or OP services.

How Do I Know if My 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 let you know if services are available closer to your home address. If it is determined that services are available to closer to your home, your current OTP or OP will contact you with additional information. See more details in the section below.



Department of Health

Can I still go to my regular program?

NYS Medicaid allows you the to have the freedom to choose any medical provider or treatment program you wish to use. However, if that medical provider is outside the established CMMA a medical provider within the CMMA must complete documentation on your behalf in order for NYS 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 program.

Please Note: *If you choose Option 1, Medicaid Transportation services may not continue to be covered if you choose to continue treatment at your 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 established CMMA at which you would continue receiving Medicaid covered transportation.

Please Note: *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 services for an intake session 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 Regarding This Update

- Questions related to Medicaid transportation policies can be directed to the NYS 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 (OASAS) at PatientAdvocacy@oasas.ny.gov or at **(800) 553-5790**.
- Questions and information related to Medicaid Answering Services (MAS), including setting up transportation to medical appointments through the MAS online portal, can be found on the MAS website: <https://www.medanswering.com/>, or by contacting the MAS Contact Center at <https://www.medanswering.com/contact-center/>, or via phone at **Downstate: (844) 666-6270** or **Upstate: (866) 932-7740**.