

Updated Interim COVID19 Guidance for Transportation Managers and Brokers

Last Issued: March 19, 2020

Revised: April 16, 2021 (Revisions Underlined)

Dear Transportation Managers and Brokers (MLTC):

The purpose of this letter is to provide guidance from the New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH) to the Department's transportation managers pertaining to the current novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. This guidance is provided in light of the COVID-19 outbreak and the state disaster emergency declared by Executive Order No. 202 and shall remain in effect until subsequent notice from the NYSDOH which will be provided prior to or upon the expiration of such state disaster emergency.

The health and safety of healthcare workers and our ability to provide and support patient care remain our priorities. Community-wide transmission of COVID-19 has occurred broadly in the United States (US) including NYS, though the number of both Persons Under Investigation (PUIs) and confirmed cases are slowly decreasing in NYS. The situation with COVID-19 infections identified in the US continues to evolve and is very rapidly changing. It is important for all agencies to keep apprised of current guidance by regularly visiting the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and NYSDOH websites, as well as the NYSDOH Health Commerce System (HCS), for the most up-to-date information for healthcare providers.

- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- NYSDOH: <https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus.htm>
- HCS: <https://commerce.health.state.ny.us>

Transportation Guidance

To ensure that Medicaid enrollees are transported to medical appointments during the state disaster emergency, transportation managers and transportation providers shall:

- Waive the 72- hour rule for enrollees requesting urgent trips for COVID-19 related symptoms;
- Prohibit multi-loading vehicles in all instances, including group rides, except in instances where six or more feet of social distancing can be achieved, or the vehicle has been installed with dividers or partitions to assure separation. Any instances of multi-loading or group rides shall not exceed fifty (50) percent of the vehicle manufacturer's recommended seating capacity. Drivers must be included in capacity calculations.
- Require that all individuals, including staff and the driver, wear face coverings at all times in the vehicle. Social distancing must be maintained for individuals who cannot tolerate wearing a mask and, when possible, such individuals should be transported alone or with members of the same household. Staff who cannot medically tolerate the use of a face covering should not be assigned to transport individuals at this time.

- After each trip is completed, the interior of the vehicle should be thoroughly cleaned before additional individuals are transported (see attached Vehicle Cleaning Guidance Document).
- Where appropriate and safe, windows should be rolled down to permit air flow and/or the air ventilation/air conditioning should be set to non-recirculation mode.

The Department will also waive the Form 2015 for taxi level trips when:

- Enrollees are symptomatic consistent with COVID-19 or were exposed to COVID-19.

Transportation Access

If any providers, plans, or consumers experience access issues or are refused a ride, please contact the Bureau of Medicaid Transportation at (518) 473-2160 or medtrans@health.ny.gov.

Managed Long Term Care questions should be addressed to the member's plan. Please contact (866) 712-7197 or mltctac@health.ny.gov for additional assistance as needed.

For additional information:

New York State Bureau of EMS Policy Statements and SEMAC Advisories

<https://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/ems/policy/policy.htm>

CDC Interim Guidance for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Systems and 911 Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) for COVID-19 in the United States

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html>