LOUISIANA MEDICAID PROGRAM   **ISSUED:**   **09/25/23**
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CHAPTER 10: MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION
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NON-EMERGENCY AMBULANCE TRANSPORTATION

Non-emergency ambulance transportation (NEAT) is transportation provided by ground or air ambulance to a Medicaid beneficiary to and/or from a Medicaid covered service when no other means of transportation is available and the beneficiary's condition is such that use of any other method of transportation is contraindicated or would make the beneficiary susceptible to injury. The nature of the trip is not an emergency, but the beneficiary requires the use of an ambulance.

Coverage Requirements

The beneficiary's treating physician, a registered nurse, the director of nursing at a nursing facility, a nurse practitioner, a physician's assistant, or a clinical nurse specialist must certify on the Certification of Ambulance Transportation (CAT) that the transport is medically necessary and describe the medical condition which necessitates ambulance services. The certifying authority shall complete the date range on the CAT, which shall be no more than 180 days. A single CAT should be utilized by the transportation broker for all of the beneficiary's transports within the specified date range. A new CAT form from the certifying authority may not be required for the same beneficiary during this date range.

NEAT must be scheduled by the beneficiary or a medical facility through the transportation broker or the ambulance provider, following the criteria below:

1. **If transportation is scheduled through the transportation broker,** the transportation broker shall verify the following, prior to scheduling, beneficiary eligibility, that the originating or destination address belongs to a medical facility, and that a completed CAT form for the date of service is obtained, reviewed, and accepted by the transportation broker. Once the trip has been dispatched to an ambulance provider and completed, the ambulance provider shall be reimbursed upon submission of the clean claim for the transport; and

2. **If transportation is scheduled through the ambulance provider,** the ambulance provider must verify the following prior to reimbursement: beneficiary eligibility, that the originating or destination address belongs to a medical facility, and that a completed CAT form for the date of service is obtained, reviewed, and accepted by the ambulance provider prior to reimbursement. The transportation broker shall reimburse the ambulance provider only if a completed CAT form is submitted with the clean claim or is on file with the transportation broker prior to reimbursement.

Mileage must be reimbursed in accordance with the type of service indicated by the licensed medical professional on the CAT.

The CAT form is located at www.lamedicaid.com or by accessing the below link:
CertificationAmbulanceTransportation.pdf

Out-of-State Transportation

The beneficiary may seek medically necessary services in another state when it is the nearest option available. All out-of-state NEAT must be prior approved by the transportation broker. The transportation broker may approve transportation to out-of-state medical care only if the beneficiary has been granted approval to receive medical treatment out of state.

The transportation broker must maintain documentation to support compliance with these standards and must submit documentation to the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) upon request.

Scheduling and Dispatching

The transportation broker shall make every effort to schedule urgent transportation requests and may not deny a request based solely on the appointment being scheduled less than 48 hours in advance. Urgent transportation refers to a request for transportation made by a healthcare provider for a medical service which does not warrant emergency transport but cannot be postponed. Urgent transportation shall include chemotherapy, radiation, dialysis, Opioid Treatment Program (OTP), or other necessary medical care that cannot be rescheduled to a later time. An urgent transportation request may occur concurrently with a standing order.

Additional Passengers

The transportation broker shall prohibit ambulance providers from charging the beneficiary or anyone else for the transportation of additional passengers and shall not reimburse any claims submitted for transporting additional passengers.

Attendants

An attendant shall be required when the beneficiary is under the age of 17 years. This attendant must:

1.   Be a parent, legal guardian, or responsible person designated by the parent/legal guardian; and

2.   Be able to authorize medical treatment and care for the beneficiary.

Attendants may not:

1.   Be under the age of 17 years; or

2.   Be a Medicaid provider or employee of a Medicaid provider that is providing services to the beneficiary being transported, except for employees of a mental health facility in the event a beneficiary has been identified as being a danger to their self or to others or at risk for elopement.

Exceptions

All females, regardless of their age, seeking prenatal and/or postpartum care shall not be required to have an attendant.

Nursing Facility Ambulance Transportation

Nursing facilities are required to provide medically necessary transportation services for Medicaid beneficiaries residing in their facilities. Any nursing facility beneficiary needing non-emergency, non-ambulance transportation services are the financial responsibility of the nursing facility. NEAT services provided to a nursing facility beneficiary must include the CAT form, in accordance with the *Coverage Requirements* section, to be reimbursable by Louisiana Medicaid; otherwise, the nursing facility shall be responsible for reimbursement for such services.