

POLICY AND PROCEDURE

DEPARTMENT: Operations	DOCUMENT NAME: Access to Non-Emergency Transportation
PAGE: 1 of 7	REPLACES DOCUMENT:
APPROVED DATE: 10/2011	RETIRED:
EFFECTIVE DATE: 02/2012	REVIEWED/REVISED: 9/13, 9/14, 08/15, 7/16, 7/17, 07/18, 6/19, 4/20, <u>3/21</u>
PRODUCT TYPE: All	REFERENCE NUMBER: LA.CONT.03

SCOPE:

Louisiana Healthcare Connections (LHCC) Member and Provider Services, Medical Management, and Operations Departments, and Envolve PeopleCare (EPC).

PURPOSE:

The purpose is to provide guidelines for access to transportation and the provision of non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) services for LHCC members who are eligible for transportation services.

POLICY:

LHCC will provide access to transportation, including NEMT, to members who are eligible for transportation benefits by utilizing contracted vendors to provide transportation services. Roundtrip (if necessary) transportation will be provided for services as indicated for members eligible for transportation benefits or per contract with the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH).

Exception to this policy may be applied to members who request a provider who is located beyond the access standards and LHCC has an appropriate provider who accepts new patients. In these circumstances, LHCC may grant the Member's request, but may not be responsible for providing transportation to access the selected provider.

PROCEDURE: 1. If LHCC is unable to meet the geographic access standards for a member, LHCC will make transportation available to the member if needed, regardless of whether the member has access to transportation.

2. Contracted NEMT **brokervendors** will schedule the transportation so that the member arrives at least 15 minutes in advance of the appointment, but no sooner than one-two hours before the appointment. The member will also not have to wait more than one hour upon calling the "Where's my Ride?" line for will call pickups at the conclusion of the treatment for transportation home; nor will the member be picked up prior to the completion of treatment.

Member will also not have to wait more than three hours for unscheduled hospital discharges.

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3. Due to abnormal or unsafe driving conditions, or geography/waterway challenges the transportation providers may encounter, the one (1) hour time limit may not be feasible in certain instances. LDH allows up to two (2) hours from time of call to pick up Member when these challenges arise.

4. Contracted **NEMT vendor****NEMT brokers** will accept requests for transportation directly from Covered Persons, adult family members on behalf of minor Covered Persons, guardians responsible for Covered Persons, and licensed health care professionals on behalf of Covered Persons, or who are otherwise unable to communicate for themselves. LHCC and EPC can also request transportation from vendors on behalf of Covered Persons. **NEMT vendor****NEMT brokers** may deny or reschedule transportation if the request is not made before the contractually obligated timeframe to request NEMT (48 hours in advance of a scheduled appointment), with certain exceptions as outlined in step 12.

5. Contracted **NEMT vendor****NEMT brokers** will verify that each member is currently an eligible LHCC member through a monthly eligibility data file, by checking the LHCC web portal, or by calling LHCC Provider Services. Vendors will further confirm that the members' benefits include non-emergency medical transportation.

6. Contracted **NEMT vendor****NEMT brokers** will attempt to determine whether any person who does not reside in the Covered Person's household can reasonably provide transportation. "Reasonably" is defined to mean both willing and able. Contracted NEMT shall not demand the use of transportation resources available through any party residing outside the Covered Person's household.

7. Contracted NEMT will encourage use of public transportation, where available and appropriate, for ambulatory Covered Persons who are able to understand common signs and directions and who indicate familiarity with the use of public transportation.

8. Contracted NEMT shall not require any LHCC member whose escort (Mother) is pregnant or has more than two children under age of 6, also traveling to utilize public transportation.

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9. Contracted **NEMT vendorNEMT brokers** must provide fare, if requested, in a timely manner for a Covered Person and escort if applicable, when referring the Covered Person to public transportation.

10. Contracted **NEMT vendorNEMT brokers** must determine if the Covered Person is ambulatory or requires a wheelchair for transport. Covered Persons who are unable to walk, even with assistance, from their door to the vehicle must be transported via wheelchair or stretcher as appropriate. Covered Persons who are routinely confined to a wheelchair may be transported in vehicles appropriate to the level of confinement. Members who require a stretcher for NEMT or are confined to a bed will be provided transport through state-approved vendors in compliance with State requirements, which are outside the scope of this policy.

11. Contracted **NEMT vendorNEMT brokers** must inquire whether the Covered Person requires assistance in walking after receiving treatment. If the Covered Person requires assistance, and no escort is available, contracted **NEMT vendorNEMT brokers** must provide a driver that is willing to render that assistance, or transport by wheelchair, as appropriate.

12. Contracted **NEMT vendorNEMT brokers** must allow for extenuating circumstances in applying the two (2) day advance application requirement for transportation. If the Covered Person has extenuating circumstances that prevent a two (2) day advance notification, Covered Person will need to contact the contracted **NEMT vendorNEMT broker** at the designated telephone number or contact LHCC to request transportation. Such extenuating circumstances shall include, but not be limited to, such situations as requirement for post-operative or follow-up appointments in less than 2 days; urgent care requirements as claimed by the Covered Person, adult family members on behalf of a minor, elderly or disabled Covered Person, guardians responsible for Covered Persons, and licensed health care professionals on behalf of Covered Persons who are otherwise unable to communicate for themselves; hospital and emergency room discharges; and transportation to appointments made to replace appointments missed because of failed transportation arranged by contracted **NEMT vendorNEMT brokers**.

13. No more than one escort shall be permitted per Covered Person. Exceptions can be made to allow parents, guardians, safety or security personnel, or caregivers to transport children, provided space is available.

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14. Contracted ~~NEMT vendor~~**NEMT brokers** shall consider in good faith information presented by or on behalf of a member relative to the need for NEMT services upon each such request for transportation, regardless of the Covered Person's having been previously denied NEMT services.

15. Contracted ~~NEMT vendor~~**NEMT brokers** may require that a Covered Person and associated escort be picked up from, and returned to, a common address.

16. If a member requests a provider who is located beyond access standards, and LHCC has an appropriate provider within the network who accepts new patients, LHCC may grant the member's request. However, in such cases LHCC shall not be responsible for providing transportation for the member to access care from this selected provider, ~~and LHCC shall notify the member in writing as to whether or not LHCC will provide transportation to seek care from the requested provider.~~

17. In addition to the monthly invoice submitted for payment, contracted ~~NEMT vendor~~**NEMT brokers** shall provide LHCC a monthly report based on LHCC's members that includes the following elements (the report is due by the 15th of the month following the month of telephone activity):

- Number of calls received
- Number of calls placed on hold
- Average hold time for calls placed on hold
- Number of abandoned calls
- Abandoned calls as a percent of total calls received
- Average hold time prior to abandonment
- Average talk time

18. Contracted ~~NEMT vendor~~**NEMT brokers** shall submit to LHCC on a monthly basis an invoice for payment that includes the following elements:

- Member ID Number
- Member Address
- Date of Service
- Medical Services that Member was transported to (physician office appointment, pharmacy pick-up, etc.)
- Name of Medical Provider that Member was transported to

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- Address of Medical Provider

19. In addition to the provisions outlined in this Policy and Procedure Document, Non-Emergency Services shall also be subject to the provisions outlined in the Oversight of Contracted Vendors Policy and Procedure.

REFERENCES:

ATTACHMENTS:

DEFINITIONS:

REVISION LOG

REVISION	DATE
Under Policy Heading Added Exception to this policy may be applied to members who request a provider who is located beyond the access standards and LHCC has an appropriate provider who accepts new patients. In these circumstances, LHCC may grant the Member's request, but may not be responsible for providing transportation to access the selected provider. LHCC will notify the member in writing of this limitation.	3/27/2013
Section 13 – Changed 72 hour notice to 48 hour notice. Added language to instruct Covered Person on how to arrange extenuating circumstance exception for NET transportation.	9/5/13
Corrected LHC to LHCC. Removed that the vendor verifies that the member has an appointment. Removed that the vendor verifies the member does not have other transportation resources.	9/2014
Updated language to reflect new requirements that are part of 12/1/2015 RFP amendment that expands covered services to	08/2015

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include specialized behavioral health. Attached transportation process flow.	
Updates made to be compliant with existing RFP. Updates to acronyms and distinguished between NEMT and NEAT (ambulance).	07/2016
Under Policy section, removal of written notification of transportation limitations in cases where provider is beyond access standards. Procedure Section 10, change from “attendant” to a willing driver. Procedure Section 16, removal of report of telephone operators by time/day of week. Procedure Section 17, removal of Member Name as included in invoice (ID is sufficient). Changed Cenpatico to EPC	7/2017
Grammatical & Formatting edits	7/2018
In step 4, corrected the reference from step 11 to step 12.	6/2019
Updated reference to Envolve PeopleCare with “PeopleCare” as one word instead of two. Updated procedure to clarify transport arrival requirement. Made clarification that members must call the “Where’s My Ride” line for will call pickups. Added “abnormal or unsafe driving conditions” to timeliness exceptions. Removal of outdated process flow.	4/2020
Per MCO Transportation manual: Update time frame for drop off to two hours prior to appointment. Added discharge pickup time frame. Removed reference to mailed denial letter. Updated reference from NEMT vendors to NEMT brokers to distinguish transportation vendor providers from the broker. Modified procedure language to clarify members will only receive transportation “if needed.”	32/9/2021

POLICY AND PROCEDURE APPROVAL

The electronic approval retained in RSA Archer, Centene's P&P management software, is considered equivalent to a physical signature.

VP, Operations:

Approval on File:

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