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**Note:** This content changes often. Please be sure to check <http://www.mchaccess.org/> for the latest version of this document.

## Medi-Cal's Non-Medical Transportation Benefit Under a New State Law

**What is it?** “Non-medical transportation” is transportation to and from a doctor’s visit, a pharmacy, or medical supplier to pick up prescriptions or medical equipment or devices, to attend to a sick baby in the NICU, or to receive any other Medi-Cal-covered service, including mental health and dental.

**Medi-Cal now covers this transportation for beneficiaries who do not have and cannot get transportation on their own.** See Welf. & Inst. C. § 14132(ad). Transportation includes round trip rides for a beneficiary to obtain covered Medi-Cal services by, for example, a ride service arranged by a managed care plan, taxicab, bus tokens or passes, train tickets, and similar.

This “non-medical” transportation differs from and is in addition to emergency medical transportation by ambulance or non-emergency medical transportation.

**Who qualifies for Non-Medical Transportation?** All Medi-Cal beneficiaries, regardless of whether the person is in a health plan or “regular” (fee-for-service) Medi-Cal, who lack other transportation to reach a Medi-Cal-covered service, and who do not require medical assistance with transport. This includes women in all categories of pregnancy-related aid codes.

**Distance? Time? How many rides?** There shouldn’t be any limitation on the distance or time for the travel or how many times non-medical transportation may be used so long as the person continues to be eligible for Medi-Cal and they lack other transportation to a medically necessary service covered by Medi-Cal.

**Transportation is also covered for one person to go with the Medi-Cal beneficiary when necessary,** such as an attendant to accompany an elderly person or a parent to take her child to the doctor. Parents can authorize teens to receive Medi-Cal transportation assistance on their own. But when parental consent is not required for the Medi-Cal service, such as for Minor Consent program services, transportation must be provided without a parent’s consent.

## For Medi-Cal health plan members

Plans must also provide transportation when needed to “carved out” services, such as dental and specialty mental health. See [All Plan Letter No. 17-010 \(July 17, 2017\)](#).

### **How do plan members get non-medical transportation?**

**Plan members should be able to get non-medical transportation by calling the dedicated transportation number or member services.**

**Please Note:** Members should specify that they need **non-medical transportation** and they don’t need “door to door” assistance (physical help to and from the vehicle) from the transportation provider.

## Here are phone numbers for Los Angeles County health plans:

- Anthem Blue Cross: (877) 931-4755
- Care First: (877) 433-2178
- Health Net: (800) 675-6110
- Kaiser: (844) 299-6230
- LA Care: (866) 529-2141
- Molina: (844) 292-2688

For plan members residing outside of Los Angeles County, please visit

<http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/individuals/Pages/MMCDHealthPlanDir.aspx> and click on the plan member's county to find the health plan's contact number.

**Please note:** Some of the plans seem to require a plan provider to make the request, using a form to certify that the transportation is needed. However, this should not actually be required.

If after contacting the Medi-Cal managed care plan your clients are **STILL** experiencing transportation access barriers, you can contact the state for assistance by e-mailing [Rene.Mollow@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:Rene.Mollow@dhcs.ca.gov), Deputy Director for Benefits and Eligibility, with a cc: to [Laurie.Weaver@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:Laurie.Weaver@dhcs.ca.gov), Assistant Deputy Director. If you use a client's name or information, send the email through a secure/encrypted system.

### For Medi-Cal fee-for-service (FFS) beneficiaries

Non-medical transportation services for "regular" or fee-for-service (FFS) beneficiaries will generally require an advocate or provider's assistance. The groups of beneficiaries who are most likely to be in FFS Medi-Cal are pregnant women, foster children, and some seniors and people with disabilities.

**Please note:** July 1, 2018 is the target date for FFS to begin working with contracted transportation providers to provide this service. However, there may be delays and until further notice please follow the process described below. We will also update this fact sheet and send out email blasts about updates to the process.

### How do Medi-Cal fee-for-service beneficiaries access non-medical transportation before July 1?

#### Los Angeles County

Providers and advocates should send an email (securely, if client's name is used) to [Cynthia.Smiley@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:Cynthia.Smiley@dhcs.ca.gov) to schedule transportation for clients. Cynthia is the Benefits Division Chief for the state's Medi-Cal program.

#### For All Other Counties

Providers, **advocates** and others should email your client's county to schedule transportation. **To find the email contact for your county**, please visit <http://www.mchaccess.org/pdfs/alerts/Transportation-claiming%20counties%20-%20contact%20listing.pdf>.

If the county contact says they do not provide non-medical transportation, send an email explaining your client's problem accessing transportation to [Cynthia.Smiley@dhcs.ca.gov](mailto:Cynthia.Smiley@dhcs.ca.gov).

**Please let us know if you are or your Medi-Cal clients are still having problems** accessing transportation by contacting MCHA at (213) 749-4261 or Brigid Sweeney at [brigids@mchaccess.org](mailto:brigids@mchaccess.org) or Lynn Kersey: [lynnk@mchaccess.org](mailto:lynnk@mchaccess.org).