

Emergency vs. Non-Emergency Medicaid Transportation



Emergency

- When needs are immediate.
- **Examples:** Heart attack, stroke, serious injury from a car accident, and life threatening situations.
- Ride may be by ambulance (ground) or by air (medical flight).
- No advance approval needed.
- Cost of transportation is billed by the provider directly to the State Medicaid agency.

Non-Emergency

- When needs are not immediate.
- **Examples:** Scheduled medical appointment, dialysis, chemotherapy, physical therapy, and picking up prescriptions.
- When free transportation is not available, ride may be by car, taxi, van, public transit (bus or subway), or specialized medical vehicle, depending on medical need.
- In some States ride may be by volunteers – family, friends, or State-approved volunteers.
- Preauthorization by the State Medicaid agency is required in many States.

Generally, each trip must be arranged in advance and include dates, times, and pick-up and drop-off locations.

- Cost of transportation may be billed directly to the State Medicaid agency when the provider is a pre-authorized contractor or vendor; or, by the beneficiary when provided by public transit, a neighbor, family member, or friend.

