



## **Medical Assistance Transportation Program**

### **Recipient Guide**

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## What is the Medical Assistance Transportation Program?

The Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) is a grant from the state that provides transportation services for those who need transportation to medical appointments. This transportation should only be used as a **LAST RESORT**. There should be no other means of transportation available, including bus routes, vehicles in the home or mobility services. Rides are scheduled in advance (usually 24-hours) and are shared with others in the program.

## Who is eligible for MATP?

In order to be eligible for the MATP, the rider **MUST** be covered by Medicaid and have an **active** Medical Assistance (MA) number. The Medical Assistance (MA) number is 11 digits long and can be found on the medical assistance red and white card. Note: Specified Low Income Medicare Beneficiary (SLMB) and Qualified Medicare Beneficiary (QMB) are **NOT ELIGIBLE** for the program. Pending MA cannot schedule rides until their coverage is active in the system.

## Will the program transport to all providers?

The program will transport to the **CLOSEST APPROPRIATE PROVIDER**. An appropriate provider is one who:

- has the skills to complete the services requested
- accepts Medicaid insurance
- is willing to accept you as a patient

The program is only obligated to transport to the **closest provider** of the service needed. For example; the program will not be able to transport to a physical therapist who is 15 miles away if there is a physical therapist who is five miles away and accepting new patients.

## When is it ok to go to a provider further away?

Those who belong to a Managed Care Organization (United Healthcare, Priority Partners, Amerigroup, Maryland Physician Care, etc) may choose to go to a provider within the network. **However:** any appointments for substance use disorder or mental/behavioral health services, **MUST** go to the closest provider regardless of coverage.

## What kinds of medical appointments does the program cover?

This program will only provide transportation to services that are medically necessary and are covered by Medicaid. If there is a question regarding whether a service is covered or not, contact Howard County MATP program for more information.

## What does the program cover?

Some of the services that are covered are:

- Ambulatory surgical center services
- Chiropractic care for beneficiaries under age 21 and Rare and Expensive Medicine (REM) recipients
- Clinic services
- Dental services and dentures for beneficiaries under age 21, pregnant women up to delivery and REM recipients. Transplant services can be covered after approval on a case-by-case review. Contact the Program for verification of coverage
- Diabetes care services (covered under Health Choice)
- Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) for beneficiaries under age 21
- Eye glasses for beneficiaries under age 21
- Family planning services and supplies for Medical Assistance\* and Health Choice recipients. \*\*Medical Assistance transportation not provided to those recipients in the Family Planning Program.
- Hearing aids for beneficiaries under age 21.
- Hospital inpatient and outpatient services (acute, chronic, psychiatric, rehabilitation, specialty)
- Kidney dialysis services
- Laboratory and x-ray services
- Medical Day Care services. Transportation of recipients between the home and the facility to receive medical day care services is the responsibility of the center. Transportation to and from Medicaid covered services while attending the Medical Day Care facility may be provided after recipients are properly screened
- Medical equipment and supplies and oxygen services and related respiratory equipment services (Services are normally delivered to the recipient's home. A grantee should verify that a recipient has an appointment)
- Mental health treatment, case management and rehabilitation services
- Nurse anesthetist, nurse midwife, and nurse practitioner services
- Nursing facility services
- Physician services
- Podiatry services
- School based health-related services for beneficiaries under age 21 (Contact the Program to clarify coverage; these transportation services are usually covered under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Program)
- Substance abuse treatment services
- Vision care services (eye examinations every two years)

If there are questions regarding whether a service is covered or not, contact Howard County MATP program for more information.

## Services NOT covered:

Some of the services that are not covered are:

- Services which are free of charge or not billable to Medicaid
- Emergency transportation services
- Medicare ambulance services
- Transportation to or from Veteran's Affairs (VA) hospitals unless it is to receive treatment for a nonmilitary condition
- Transportation to or from any correctional institutions
- Transportation of recipients committed by the courts to mental institutions
- Transportation between a nursing facility and a hospital for routine diagnostic tests, nursing services, or physical therapy, which can be performed at the nursing facility
- Transportation services from a facility for treatment when the treatment is provided by the facility in which the recipient is located
- Transportation to receive non-medical services
- Gratuities of any kind
- Transportation to or from a State facility while the patient is a resident of that facility
- Transportation of non-Medical Assistance recipients
- Trips for purposes related to education, recreational activities or employment
- Transportation of anyone other than the recipient, except for an attendant accompanying a minor or when an attendant is medically necessary
- Wheelchair van service for ambulatory recipients
- Ambulance service for a recipient who does not need to be transported in a prone position
- Transportation between a community rehabilitation program and the recipient's home
- Transportation between a day habilitation program and the recipient's home
- Transportation to or from services that are not medically necessary

If there is a question regarding whether a service is covered or not, Howard County MATP program for more information.

## What types of transportation are available?

The Medicaid Program covers all modes of transportation as needed (i.e., shared ride bus/van, sedan/taxi, wheelchair, ambulance, air transport). **The Program will not cover a more expensive mode of transportation than is required by the recipient's medical condition.** For most, a shared ride bus or van is appropriate. Wheelchair van service is covered only when the recipient (or attendant) is not able to walk and can be safely moved in a wheelchair.

## Bus passes and tokens

At this time, Howard County does not pay for bus passes and tokens.

## How are rides scheduled?

1. Check with family and friends to see if a ride is available. If buses (fixed route or paratransit) operate in the area, find out whether a bus route is close to home and the provider. If family or friends can drive or a bus route is close, use them.
2. If another ride is not available, call 1-877-312-6571. **Scheduling hours are from 8AM to 3PM. Howard County MATP WILL NOT accept requests for rides for the next day after 3 PM.**
3. When calling, have the following information ready:
  - a. Medical Assistance number (the medical assistance number **MUST** be active)
  - b. Date and time of appointment;
  - c. Name, address, and telephone number of provider; and
  - d. Specific reason for visit.

## What are the scheduling hours?

**SCHEDULING HOURS ARE FROM 8AM to 3PM, MON-FRI**, except for holidays. Since our office is closed on the weekends, ride requests for Saturdays or Mondays must be requested by 3PM on Friday. Take note of the following state holidays. Our offices will always be closed on these days. This does not include other days when the office may be closed due to special events or inclement weather.

### STATE HOLIDAYS

New Year's Days

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr Day

Presidents Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Columbus Day

Presidential Election Day

Veteran's Day

Thanksgiving Day

American Indian Heritage Day

Christmas Day

### IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING HOLIDAYS

If a holiday falls on a Monday, ride requests for Saturday- Tuesday **MUST** be received by 3PM on FRIDAY.  
If a holiday falls on a Friday, rides requests for Friday- Monday **MUST** be received by 3PM on THURSDAY.

If a holiday falls on a day during the week, ride requests for the **HOLIDAY AND THE DAY AFTER** must be received by 3PM the **DAY BEFORE** the holiday.

**It is not the program's responsibility to return missed calls if a recipient waits until the day before to schedule a ride and cannot reach a call-taker. For this reason, the program strongly encourages recipients to schedule rides several days in advance.**

### Why are appointments verified?

We are required by State regulations to verify a certain percentage of all appointments to ensure proper use of grant funds. Recipients are selected at random to have their appointments verified. In addition, it is at the discretion of Howard County MATP to verify any appointment that may not appear to meet grant terms.

### What is the screening process?

Transportation services must be provided to those who have no other means of transportation available. Everyone who uses this service will be asked a series of screening questions to ensure that there is no other resource available at time of sign-up and every 90 days thereafter. Proper screening for other transportation resources includes inquiring about the following:

1. Whether the recipient or a family member in the recipient's household owns a vehicle;
2. Availability of other relatives' or friends' vehicles;
3. Availability of a volunteer using a privately owned vehicle;
4. Availability of a volunteer from a public or private agency;
5. Transportation services provided free by any other city, county, state or federal agency programs;
6. Transportation services provided free by any other city, county, state or federal agency programs;
7. Methods by which the recipient previously reached medical services or currently reaches non-medical services (such as the grocery store);
8. Whether the recipient can walk to the medical service;
9. Whether public transportation operates between the recipient's location and the medical service;
10. How far the recipient lives from public transit\*?

\*Public transportation, either fixed-route or paratransit. Recipients, whose home and provider are within ¼ mile from the closest fixed-route stop, and who have no documented medical reasons why such transportation cannot be used, are expected to use public transportation. **The program is not able to accept "length of bus ride" and "cost of fare" as reasons for not taking public transportation.**

### Provider Certification Forms

All recipients are required to submit a Provider Certification Form. **These forms must be completed by either a physician, Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner (CRNP), or a dentist. No other individual may complete these forms.** Certification forms are required for each recipient and must be renewed annually and/or as often as needed. The Program may either mail the form to the recipient or mail/ fax

it to the doctor's office. It is the recipient's responsibility to have the form completed and returned within 30 days of the first ride or transportation may be suspended. Please be aware that if forms are completed incorrectly, or are incomplete, they will be returned. This form notes the appropriate mode of transportation based on medical condition. NOTE: No provider can charge to fill out this form!

### What are Standing Orders?

If you have frequent appointments to the same provider (must be at the same time) you may schedule trips in advance. Recipients who have four or more appointments for the same service in a week may preschedule rides up to two weeks. Recipients who have three or less appointments for the same service in a week may preschedule rides up to one month.

APPOINTMENT FREQUENCY	POLICY
1-3 Times A Week	Pre-schedule rides up to 1 month
4 Or More Times A Week	Pre-schedule rides up to 2 weeks

#### **NOTE FOR STANDING ORDER RECIPIENTS**

**Standing Order recipients who have three or more no shows in a one (1) month period will no longer be able to pre-schedule trips in advance. You will be required to schedule each of your rides the day before by 3PM for a three month time period. Failure to schedule your ride will result in no transportation being provided.**

### What if there is an emergency and same day service is needed?

The program does not provide same day service. If there is an emergency, please call 911.

### What happens after a ride is scheduled?

When scheduling a ride, a representative will screen and verify all information. A representative will provide a ready time when the recipient should be ready on the lookout for the ride (Ready Time). On the day of the appointment, please be prepared and ready to go at the time provided. If Lifestar arrives and the recipient is not outside and prepared to go, they will receive one call after which Lifestar will wait approximately five minutes. If after five minutes no one responds, the driver will be released to go to their next location. If the ride is missed, the program is under no obligation to send another vehicle.

### Client Responsibility

Be ready and on time for the appointment. This is a shared-ride program. A transportation service cannot wait for recipients for extended periods of time. Do not smoke, eat or drink in the vehicle. Be courteous. Rudeness or use of profanity may disqualify recipients from future use of the transportation service.

Contact the program immediately with any cancellations and changes to rides. Update the Howard County Health Department immediately if any of contact information changes. It is important that the program has the most current address and phone number to ensure smooth transportation services.

### What if the ride is late?

If Lifestar has not arrived within 15-20 minutes of a provided ready time, please call HCHD at 1-877-312-6571. If it is past 4:30 PM, call Lifestar directly at 410-720-6060. **If a recipient is late to an appointment or has had to cancel an appointment due to Lifestar's tardiness, please call HCHD asap and inform us.**

### Cancelling a scheduled ride

If a recipient has cancelled an appointment or has found another ride, call HCHD at 1-877-312-6571 as soon as possible to cancel the ride. If it is after hours, please leave a message on the MATP line. Failure to call or to show up for a trip may result in restrictions being placed on future service.

### Forgetting to cancel a ride

If you miss a ride, you will be marked as a no show for that trip. Lifestar will notify HCHD that you were a no show. If you have more than two no shows in a span of six months, you will be contacted by HCHD and informed of our no show policy. More than three no shows will result in restrictions placed on future service. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU NOTIFY HCHD IF YOU NEED TO CANCEL YOUR RIDE.

### Can someone go with the recipient?

The program does not allow for any additional passengers other than the eligible person for whom the appointment is made. If there is a medical need of a companion/assistant, a doctor must sign a provider certification form that indicates an attendant is necessary due to medical need. All minors (17 years old and under) are required to be accompanied by ONE parent or guardian. **NOTE:** Children are NOT considered medical companions for their parents.

### Can children accompany parents on their appointments?

No. Transportation is only provided to the eligible person for whom the appointment is made. If the appointment is for a child, ONE parent or legal guardian may accompany them. It is the recipient's responsibility to find proper child care for their child while using these services. The transportation vendor WILL NOT accept any additional passengers unless authorized by HCHD.

### What if the appointment finishes earlier or later than planned?

If the appointment finishes early, call Lifestar directly at 410-720-6060 to see if they have any available drivers that may be able to come earlier. Also, if the appointment will not be finished by the designated return pick-up time, it is NECESSARY that Lifestar be notified as soon as possible and a later pick-up be requested. If Lifestar is not notified and no one is there at the designated time, the program is under no obligation to send another vehicle and a no-show is generated.

### What is the "No Show" Policy?

If a scheduled ride is no longer needed, please notify HCHD at 1-877-312-6571. If it is before 8AM, contact HCHD and leave a message, then call LIFESTAR directly at 410-720-6060 to cancel your ride. Failure to cancel a ride will result in a no show.

## What is a “No Show”?

A “no show” is when a recipient either is not at the arranged pickup point at the appointed time or refuses the ride when the vehicle has already arrived and has not cancelled the trip in advance.

### **“No Show” Procedures:**

#### **Initial No show**

If you have two no shows within a span of six months, you will receive a call from the HCHD. You will be informed that future no shows without appropriate notification may result in you having to confirm all of your scheduled rides the day before your appointment.

#### **NOTE FOR STANDING ORDER RECIPIENTS**

Standing Order recipients who have three or more no shows in a one month period will no longer be able to preschedule trips in advance. Trips will have to be scheduled the day before by 3PM. Failure to schedule rides by 3PM the day before will result in no transportation being provided.

## Trip Cancellation Policy

All cancellations for scheduled trips must be received at least one hour before the scheduled ready time (For example: If the scheduled appointment is for 11:00 a.m., the ready time is 10:00 a.m. The ride needs to be cancelled by 09:00 a.m.

**Reminder:** Return trips must also be cancelled. Failing to cancel a return ride is considered the same as a “no show.” (Example: A ride home from a doctor’s office is arranged with a friend when a return trip has been scheduled and the return trip with Lifestar and HCHD are not notified. **BE AWARE:** If a recipient is considered a “no show ” for the arrival trip to the appointment, it will be assumed that they did not go to the appointment; and therefore the return trip will be automatically cancelled unless otherwise notified.

## Why was a transportation request denied?

Ride requests may be denied due to the following reasons:

- a. Do not have full medical assistance coverage (SLMB and QMB are not eligible)
- b. Transportation requested less than 24 hours from appointment
- c. Alternative means of transportation including public transportation available
- d. Transportation is covered by a 3<sup>rd</sup> party insurer
- e. Vehicle is available to recipient
- f. Transportation requested to a provider that is not the closest provider
- g. Service requested is not covered by Medicaid

## What if recipient disagrees with a transportation request denial?

If a request for transportation is denied and the recipient does not agree, contact HCHD and ask to speak with the grant manager. If after speaking to the grant manager there is still disagreement with the denial, follow the instructions provided in the denial letter to request reconsideration or appeal the denial. There is a 90 day deadline to submit a request for a fair hearing.

## Inclement Weather Procedures

In the event of inclement weather, transportation services will follow the activities of Howard County Government. Information regarding Howard County closings can be accessed by calling Howard County's Snow and Ice Hotline (410-313-4444) or by visiting the County's homepage at [www.howardcountymd.gov](http://www.howardcountymd.gov) where the latest inclement weather related information will be prominently displayed. At any time, you may call Lifestar at 410-720-6060 with any questions regarding transportation services regarding pending inclement weather.

If either the Howard County Government or the Maryland State Government is closed, the Howard County Medical Assistance Transportation Program's office will be CLOSED and unable to schedule rides.

## **Inclement Weather Operational Procedures**

<b><u>Howard County/State Government Activity</u></b>	<b><u>Transportation Status</u></b>
<b>OPEN</b>	<b>NORMAL OPERATIONS</b>
<b>LIBERAL LEAVE</b>	<b>NORMAL OPERATIONS- Transportation will be provided UNLESS conditions are determined to be unsafe by Lifestar. Recipients will be contacted by Lifestar if transportation cannot be provided.</b>
<b>CLOSED</b>	<b>Life Sustaining Transportation Only (Dialysis, Radiation)</b>

If transportation services are not available due to inclement weather on a day a recipient has an appointment, they will have to reschedule the appointment or find another means of transportation. When rescheduling appointments, remember that the program does not allow same day transportation. If an appointment is scheduled for the next day, we will be unable to accommodate the request.

## CALL HOWARD COUNTY MATP IF:

- YOU NEED TO CANCEL OR CHANGE YOUR RIDE
- LIFESTAR HAS NOT ARRIVED WITHIN 20 MINUTES OF YOUR READY TIME
- LIFESTAR DID NOT PICK YOU UP AT ALL
- YOU ARRIVED MORE THAN 15 MINUTES LATE TO YOUR APPOINTMENT
- YOU HAD TO CANCEL YOUR APPOINTMENT BECAUSE LIFESTAR WAS LATE
- YOU HAVE COMPLAINTS REGARDING HOWARD COUNTY MATP OR LIFESTAR SERVICE
- YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS

**\*\*1-877-312-6571\*\***