



**DATE:** July 22, 2014

**OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM 14-07-01**

**SUBJECT:** Medical Assistance Transportation Allowances Payment Procedures

**TO:** Executive Directors

**FROM:** Tom Strickler  
Director  
Bureau of Operations

**PURPOSE**

To inform County Assistance Offices of new procedures to follow when issuing a Medical Assistance Transportation Allowance (MTA) and to introduce reason codes 265 and 266.

**BACKGROUND**

Regulations in 42 CFR §431.53 require the state to ensure necessary transportation for recipients to and from Medicaid providers. The Pennsylvania Code further defines this transportation as medical transportation to and from necessary medical care or to obtain prescriptions. Transportation services are available to TANF, NMP, MNO, MAGI and SSI recipients. Transportation services are not available to recipients of the Medicare Savings Plan program Qualifying Individuals Group -1 (PG00), the GA-MNO 30-day non-continuous eligibility benefits used to prove disability for GA-related eligibility, or Select Plan for Women benefits.

If a county has a Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) provider to transport individuals in non-emergency situations (such as doctor's appointments, dialysis or other necessary but not immediately life threatening treatments, or to obtain prescriptions), the CAO refers the individual to the MATP provider. However, if the MATP provider cannot or will not transport the individual, the CAO is required to issue the benefit to the client, unless the individual is sanctioned or suspended by MATP.

[Operations Memorandum 130801](#) instructed CAOs to issue MTAs centrally via Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards unless the client verifies a critical need for cash to receive a local issuance.

## **DISCUSSION**

Effective July 28, 2014, payments for some MTAs will be made directly to the transportation vendor. This Operations Memorandum defines circumstances under which a payment will be made by check to the transportation vendor instead of via EBT.

When a recipient requests medical transportation services from the CAO, a determination of eligibility for the service must be made.

- Confirm that the recipient's category of medical assistance (MA) is eligible to receive MTA.
- Contact the county MATP agency to determine if it will provide the necessary assistance.
- If the MATP will provide the service, advise the recipient how to contact the MATP to apply for the service. It is the person's responsibility to contact the service to make arrangements and verify MA eligibility.
- If MATP denies the service, the CAO will approve a medical transportation allowance if *all* of the following requirements are met:
  - The county does not have an MATP or it has an MATP, but the recipient has been denied services or needs medical care that can only be provided outside the MATP service area. The CAO *must* receive a copy of the MATP denial notice and scan it into the case record.
  - The person has provided written verification from the physician or medical facility that an appointment has been scheduled or the service has been provided.
  - The medical service is necessary.
  - The transportation is to a medical service covered by the MA Program. It is not a requirement that the provider actually accept DPW payment.
  - Travel is to the closest source for providing the required care.
  - No other means of transportation is available.

If the medical transportation need meets the above requirements, the CAO will give a special allowance paid by EBT to the client, or by check to the provider of the service, following the procedures set out in this Operations Memorandum.

The CAO will authorize an allowance for transportation based on the most economical and practical means of travel meeting the needs of the recipient. Approval will not be based on convenience for the individual involved.

The Executive Director, or their designee, must review and approve all MTA payments prior to issuance.

## MTA Payments

MTA will be paid via EBT or by check mailed directly to the transportation vendor.

Payments made directly to the medical transportation vendor for the client will be issued by a batch process initiated in CIS. These may include payment for non-emergency ambulance transport, paratransit, and stretcher vans.

Payments will be issued using reason code 265 for new issuances and reason code 266 for replacement issuances.

Direct vendor payments will only be processed when:

- The recipient has been determined eligible to receive an MTA per Cash Assistance Handbook 138.412; **and**
- The transportation service was provided and the vendor has not yet been paid; **and**
- The CAO received an invoice from the transportation vendor showing the recipient's name, destination, and itemized amount of all charges; **and**
- The transportation vendor has been approved by Bureau of Policy as eligible to receive payment via direct vendor payment. Approved vendors will have a prefix of 'M'.

**Note:** not all MTAs will be issued via this direct payment. The following MTAs will continue to be issued via EBT and reason code 200:

- Personal Auto: transportation provided by the person, volunteer driver, car or van pool, parking fees, highway and bridge tolls.
- Public transit: bus, subway, trolley, commuter rail service and passenger air service.
- Taxi.
- Lodging.
- Meals.
- Requests where the client has actually paid for the transportation and is requesting reimbursement.
- Mileage reimbursements.
- Any other situation where an immediate need for payment is determined AND pre-approved by the Area Manager.

Reminder: A PA1908 must be signed when the MTA is issued via EBT. This form must be scanned into the record and a narrative must state the form was received. Thereafter, a new form must be signed at renewal.

## **CAO Liaisons**

Each CAO will appoint a liaison to serve as the point of contact between the CAO and the MATP agency. The liaison is responsible for communication between the CAO and the MATP agency. The CAO liaison should direct any questions regarding MATP service areas, reasons for denials, available modes of transportation, etc., to the MATP liaison to ensure that the CAO is responsible for payment of the least expensive mode of transportation being provided.

The MATP agency is required to send a written referral to the CAO when MATP services are denied. The CAO liaison will contact the MATP agency when the referral is needed or is incomplete. With consent of the MATP liaison, the CAO liaison may correct the referral. The CAO liaison should initial any changes or additions and narrate thoroughly.

The MATP referral must include the following information:

- Name, address and recipient number of the person being referred.
- Specific reason why MATP denied the service. "Exceptional Transportation" is not a sufficient reason. An explanation why the transportation is exceptional is required.
- The recipient's requested destination.

## **Narratives**

Each step of the eligibility process must be narrated. Narratives must include:

- The date the allowance was requested. Confirm that the recipient was informed of all program requirements and no other means of transportation was available.
- The date the MATP referral was received and any action taken to correct incomplete information. Include the reason MATP denied services.
- The date(s), starting location and destination of the transportation being requested, the written verification from the physician or medical facility, and verification that transportation is to the closest facility.

- If the individual chose to travel further than the CAO determines necessary, and an explanation of which facility the approval and amount of the allowance is based on.
- Written or verbal verification that the service is covered by MA. It is not a requirement that the provider actually accept DPW payment, only that the service would be paid under the recipient's benefit package.
- Whether the payment was issued via EBT or paid directly to the transportation vendor.
- If a bill from a transportation vendor is received, include the name of the company, dates of service, amount billed, and the invoice number.
- If EBT payment, state if the recipient signed the PA1908.
- Amount authorized. Narrate if EBT payment or direct vendor payment.
- Statement that this was the least expensive mode of transportation available to the client.
- Any other action taken.

### Verification

All verification must be scanned and attached to the record. These documents will be attached together under Special Allowances. Enter the payment date in the comments. Each scanned package will contain:

- MATP referral.
- Physician or medical facility verification.
- Vendor invoice.
- PA1908, if required.
- Any other documentation received.

### Issuing the MTA to the Transportation Vendor

The CAO will issue payment to the transportation vendor following the current One Time Issuance (OTI) process. The system will always default to central issuance for reason codes 265 and 266.

Access the OTI screen via the Financial Management module in eCIS. Enter case number and search. The case result section appears. The worker will select reason code 265 (initial issuances) or 266 (replacement issuances) and complete the following required fields:

**Budget:** From the drop-down box, select the category/budget group for the individual who received the transportation.

**Amount:** Enter the amount of the allowance.

**Individual #:** From the drop-down box, select the name of the person who received the transportation.

**Description:** Enter the invoice number from the vendor invoice.

**Benefit Period:** Enter the exact dates on the vendor invoice.

**Prefix – Vendor ID:** Click “Look up” and select the name of the vendor from the table.

When you submit this information, the local issuance field at the bottom of the page will populate. The worker will not be able to make any adjustments to this section. The worker must verify that the vendor name and address shown matches the invoice.

If the information does not match OR the vendor is not listed in the vendor drop-down table, the CAO Liaison will contact Bureau of Policy.

The OTI will be sent for approval by the Executive Director, or their designee, before the allowance is issued.

### **NEXT STEPS**

1. Implement these procedures for MTAs effective July 28, 2014.
2. Direct questions to your Area Manager.
3. The Cash Assistance Handbook will be updated to incorporate the information in this memorandum.