

Medical Transportation During COVID-19

A Factsheet for Consumers



The Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) remains available during the COVID-19 public health emergency for MA consumers who need transportation to a medical appointment. However, the state has made changes to how medical transportation is requested and, in some cases, how it is provided during the crisis.

First, confirm that an in-person visit is needed.

Call your doctor and confirm that a face-to-face appointment is needed. Many medical visits are being done by [telehealth](#) during the public health emergency. MATP will prioritize visits that cannot be done by telehealth, such as dialysis, chemotherapy, medication-assisted treatment, and trips to the pharmacy.

Second, call your MATP provider to request a ride.

If the in-person visit is needed, call your [local MATP provider](#) to request a ride. The MATP provider will ask whether your medical provider has confirmed that an in-person visit is required. They will then ask you three screening questions to see if it is safe for MATP to transport you. Guidance on the new MATP screening process is [here](#).

To determine whether you can get transportation, the MATP provider will ask whether you, or anyone who lives in your house:

- 1) Has a fever of 100.4 degrees or symptoms such as cough, shortness of breath, or sore throat;
- 2) Had contact in the past 14 days with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 or was told by a medical provider that they may have COVID-19; or
- 3) Has tested positive for COVID-19 or been told by a medical provider that they may have COVID-19.

If you answer “no” to all three questions, then you can use MATP. You, the driver, and any other MATP riders should limit physical contact and wear a mask or face covering.

If you answer “yes” to question 1 or 2, then you can use MATP but will need to be transported as an individual rider.

If you answer “yes” to question 1 and 2, or if you answer “yes” to question 3, then you cannot use MATP. Your MATP provider should send you a written denial notice that explains why it cannot transport you. It should also help you get transportation through your Medicaid managed care plan.

If MATP denies your request, call your managed care plan and request “non-emergency” ambulance transportation.

If MATP cannot transport you because you have or likely have Covid-19, then your Medicaid managed care organization (MCO), such as Keystone First or UPMC for You, should provide non-emergency ambulance transportation to your medical appointment. The state recently issued [guidance](#) that reminds the MCOs that they must provide ambulance transportation when it is medically necessary.

You can ask for ambulance transportation through either member services or your plan’s [Special Needs Unit](#). Or, if you are in Community HealthChoices, ask your Service Coordinator.

The MCO will likely confirm that the face-to-face appointment is necessary and that MATP has denied your request. If the MCO denies your request as not medically necessary, they should send you a written denial notice. You can appeal this decision.

Get legal help

If you need an in-person medical visit and both MATP and your MCO have denied your request for transportation, call the Pennsylvania Health Law Project at 1-800-274-3258.

This publication is intended to provide general legal information, not legal advice. Each person’s situation is different. If you have questions about how the law applies to your particular situation, please call the Helpline at 1-800-274-3258.