



## Medical Necessity Guideline

<b>Medical Necessity Guideline (MNG) Title: Non-Emergent Transportation</b>		
<b>MNG #: 101</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SCO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One Care <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MAPD-MA Medicare Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MAPD-MA Medicare Value <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MAPD-RI Medicare Preferred <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MAPD-RI Medicare Value <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DSNP-RI Medicare Maximum	<b>Prior Authorization Needed?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Clinical:</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Operational:</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Informational:</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Medicare Benefit:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<b>Approval Date:</b> 2/3/2022;	<b>Effective Date:</b> 05/07/2022;
<b>Last Revised Date:</b>	<b>Next Annual Review Date:</b> 2/3/2023;	<b>Retire Date:</b>

**OVERVIEW:**

Non-emergency transportation (NET) includes taxi/car service, chair car, and ambulance transports. Except for ambulance, non-emergency transportation is generally curb-to-curb. Companion or escort for supervision must be authorized separately. Not applicable during the COVID pandemic: When two or more members are traveling to the same locality at the same time, they must share transportation when such arrangements are made by CCA, the transportation provider, transportation broker, or medical provider. During a public health emergency (PHE), such as the COVID pandemic, ride sharing is suspended, and all members ride alone. NET may be used for transportation to medical services covered by CCA or for non-medical purposes as permitted by the benefit rules. Trip requests that are exceptions to the benefit rule will be considered by the care team and subject to the limitations contained in this MNG.

Also contained in this MNG are the consideration of medical companion services for use in conjunction with transportation. Some members may request a medical companion to attend appointments with them to escort them to and from appointments based on medical necessity. Medical companions do not offer clinical insight or advice. These services are furnished by Home Health Agencies (HHAs) typically, and therefore still require authorizations.

**DECISION GUIDELINES:**

**Clinical Eligibility:**

**Non-emergent transportation benefit:**

CCA’s non-emergent transportation benefit includes the following trips in Massachusetts:

Medical trips:

- Unlimited trips to medical destinations
- A limit of 50 miles per trip is desired.
  - Trips over 50 miles to medical destinations other than hospitals will be reviewed by the Product Dept. If applicable, the Product Dept will outreach to the Care Partner to discuss the potential for a trip to a closer provider for the member.
  - An alert will be created when a trip over 50 miles is created.



## Medical Necessity Guideline

- The trip will be reviewed for appropriateness and outreach to the Care Partner if it appears to a closer provider is reasonable.
- We do not transport members out of state unless it is a contracted provider (typically right over the border of Massachusetts).

### Non-Medical trips:

- Up to 8 one-way trips per month
- Limit of 50 miles per non-medical trip except to social determinant destinations such as the Housing Authority, Social Security Administration, MassHealth, Court House, or a housing appointment.
- Not covered: destinations to casinos, bars, liquor stores and destinations not appropriate for CCA to cover. We do not transport members out of state for non-medical purposes.

### Process for documentation:

- All members at time of assessment will have the following documented in the Care Plan in GC. Any member of the Care Team can document the need for transportation in the Care Plan:
  - Member needs non-emergent transportation Y/N
    - If Yes:
      - Member needs transportation for medical trips Y/N
      - Member needs transportation for non-medical trips Y/N

### Clinical Eligibility:

#### Medical Companion Services:

- Member qualifies for transportation AND needs assistance getting to / from their appointments.
- Examples of when it is appropriate to use a medical companion:
  - Member is having a procedure or operation, and needs an escort getting home safely;
  - Member has a medical condition that necessitates aid, such as cognitive impairment (dementia or similar), and needs an escort to get safely to/ from medical appointments; and
  - Member needs an escort during transit for other reasons based on medical necessity.
- **Consideration:** If member needs regular assistance with activities of daily living (ADL), including shopping trips, it may be more appropriate to arrange personal care attendant (PCA) services for them.

### DECISION GUIDELINES:

**Clinical Eligibility for transportation:** To be eligible to receive NET, a member must have a physical, cognitive, or behavioral health related disability that impairs the member's ability to use public or private transportation.

- Physical inability to use public transportation means that a person needs assistance to ambulate (using any mobility aids such as a walker or wheelchair), or that public transportation to/from the point of origin or destination is not accessible.
- Cognitive or behavioral health related disability means that a person has agoraphobia, dementia, violent or assaultive behavior, or similar disorder.

A member may receive NET without meeting clinical eligibility if public transportation is not available (see Determination of Need) and the member has no personal transportation resources.



## Medical Necessity Guideline

### Determination of need:

Determination of need for members who do not have a disability related to the use of transportation:

- A member is eligible to receive NET if public transportation is not available. Public transportation is considered available if all the following criteria are met:
  - Public transportation is accessible and suitable to the member's medical condition and circumstances as determined by CCA.
  - Public transportation is operated in the member's locality on a regularly scheduled basis. A wait of up to one hour for a regularly scheduled ride and up to two transfers in transit is considered reasonable.
  - The public transportation stop (i.e., bus or trolley stop, subway or commuter rail station) is
    - Within 0.75 mile from the member's residence or other authorized point of origin; and
    - Within 0.75 mile from the destination address.
- Determination of need for members who meet the clinical eligibility requirement: The authorizing clinician must determine that neither public nor private transportation resources exist that could meet the needs of the member.

### Clinical eligibility for medical companion services:

- The member meets the eligibility requirements above for use of transportation **AND** needs assistance getting to/from appointments during the use of transportation.
- The assistance granted by a medical companion may be occasional, for example a colonoscopy appointment.
- The assistance needed may be more stringent, and the member could need a medical companion each time they go to an appointment. For example, a member with dementia traveling from their residence to a medical appointment.

### LIMITATIONS/EXCLUSIONS:

#### Limitations:

#### Non-medical Transportation:

The benefit rule covers up to 8 one-way trips to covered non-medical destinations. A member may request a benefit exception for more than 8 one-way trips per month. This request must be reviewed by the Care Partner and assessed for need. The following criteria need to be followed in considering a benefit exception:

- 1) Social isolation: member is isolated, and the trip(s) is/are needed to avoid exacerbation of depression/anxiety
- Or**
- 2) Chronic disease mitigation: trip is needed to avoid exacerbation of chronic disease including behavioral health
- And**
- 3) Member does not have access to transportation

Approvals of benefit exception requests must include:

- The total number of non-medical trips the member is approved for each month
- The end date for the approval (i.e., July 31, 2020) and cannot exceed one year
- The criteria met above that is the basis for the approval

#### Limitations:

#### Medical Companions:



## Medical Necessity Guideline

If the member requires assistance with activities of daily living (ADL), such as completing errands, it may be appropriate to look into other services. For example, consider a personal care attendant (PCA). A medical companion for transportation should be used as an escort for getting to/ from appointments.

### KEY CARE PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS:

- Services must be non-duplicative; PCA care plans frequently include transportation. In western Massachusetts, certain providers also provide Companion and Interpreter services. In the east, these services usually must be coordinated separately.
- SCO members on the Frail Elder Waiver (FEW) may require this service in their care plan to remain eligible for the waiver. This service may be approved as an exception to existing limitations/exclusions in those instances. Consult with the GSSC for additional information.

### AUTHORIZATION:

- NET does not require prior authorization for trips covered within the benefit rules. The member's need for transportation must be documented in the member record. Anything over the standard benefit requires approval from the Care Partner. Please reference the [Benefit Exceptions for Non-Emergent Transportation SOP 188](#).
- Medical companions require an HCBS authorization utilizing code S5135-TG. Authorizations are required because services are furnished by a Home Health Agency, not a transportation company. Please reference the SOP and RGs on how to enter an authorization.
  - **Exclusions – Medical Companions:** Members living on the Western side of the Massachusetts have access to medical companions via transportation companies. They do not need an authorization most of the time unless there is no availability within the transportation company.
    - This includes the counties of Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden.
    - Berkshire county requires an authorization.

### REGULATORY NOTES:

MassHealth transportation regulations may be found at 130 CMR 407.00.

### Disclaimer:

This Medical Necessity Guideline is not a rigid rule. As with all of CCA's criteria, the fact that a member does not meet these criteria does not, in and of itself, indicate that no coverage can be issued for these services. Providers are advised, however, that if they request services for any member who they know does not meet our criteria, the request should be accompanied by clear and convincing documentation of medical necessity. The preferred type of documentation is the letter of medical necessity, indicating that a request should be covered either because there is supporting science indicating medical necessity (supporting literature (full text preferred) should be attached to the request), or describing the member's unique clinical circumstances, and describing why this service or supply will be more effective and/or less costly than another service which would otherwise be covered. Note that both supporting scientific evidence and a description of the member's unique clinical circumstances will generally be required.



## Medical Necessity Guideline

**RELATED REFERENCES:**

[Benefit Exceptions for Non-Emergent Transportation SOP 188](#)

**ATTACHMENTS:**

<b>EXHIBIT A:</b>	
<b>EXHIBIT B:</b>	

**REVISION LOG:**

REVISION DATE	DESCRIPTION

**APPROVALS:**

Avideep Chawal  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**CCA Senior Clinical Lead [Print]**

Director, Utilization Management  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Title [Print]**

2/3/2022  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature**

**Date**

Douglas Hsu, MD, MPH  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**CCA Senior Operational Lead [Print]**

Vice President, Medical Policy and  
 Utilization Review  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Title [Print]**

2/3/2022  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature**

**Date**

Lori Tishler, MD  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**CCA CMO or Designee [Print]**

Senior Vice President, Medical Services  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
**Title [Print]**



**Medical Necessity Guideline**

*Arl Tishler*

2/3/2022

Signature

Date