

## **WELCOME TO THE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM! (MATP)**

### **A. WHAT IS MATP?**

The Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) is a transportation service available to Medical Assistance consumers in Luzerne County. MATP is funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services. In Luzerne County the MATP Program is run by Luzerne County Transportation Authority.

Our program offers transportation or mileage reimbursement to help you get medical care or services from a Medical Assistance provider. We are required to provide you with the least expensive, most appropriate transportation service available that will meet your needs.

You can use MATP services to go to medical appointments or to get to any service Medical Assistance pays for. These medical services include therapies, tests, dental visits, trips to the pharmacy to get prescriptions, mental health treatment, drug & alcohol treatment, and trips to medical equipment suppliers.

You cannot use MATP:

- if you need emergency ambulance transportation
- for non-medical trips such as for grocery shopping or for social activities
- to obtain medical care that is not covered by Medical Assistance.

### **B. HOW TO CONTACT US**

Our office is located at 300 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Wilkes-Barre PA 18701 and our phones number(s) is 570-288-8420, toll free 800-679-4135.

Our regular office hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. If you call us after hours or on a weekend or holiday, you will be able to leave a message on our answering machine and we will return your call on the next business day. Our answering machine will also tell you what to do if you need urgent care transportation (see p. 4) or where to call for emergency transportation.

### **WHAT MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES DO WE PROVIDE?**

Transportation Options

Depending on where you are going, what your needs are, and the costs involved, we could provide you with transportation in one of the following ways:

- Public fixed route bus (after you complete a bus reimbursement form you will be reimbursed for a ticket)
- Shared van
- Lift-equipped vans

## **Mileage Reimbursement**

If you have a car available, or if you know someone who has a car and who can take you to your medical appointments, we will provide you with mileage reimbursement if it is the least costly, most appropriate service available. The **MATP will not fund multiple reimbursements for consumers traveling together in one privately owned vehicle**. If more than one individual is in a vehicle going to covered services, the reimbursement is the same as if only one individual was receiving services. We will reimburse you at the rate of \$ .25 per mile. We will also reimburse you for your actual parking expenses and tolls if you provide receipts showing how much you paid.

If you want to claim mileage reimbursement for a trip, you must tell us in advance. Clients who go to regularly scheduled appointments (i.e. methadone clinics, dialysis and rehabilitation) will be required to notify us within five (5) business days before the start of the following month. Please schedule each day of the month at this time. All other clients going to regular doctor's appointments (i.e. pharmacy pick ups and dentist appointments) will be required to call our office **before** each appointment.

**Please note:** if clients fail to notify our office of their appointment, the request for reimbursement will be **denied**.

We will send you the forms to fill that will tell us where you traveled to and whether or not you had any parking or toll costs. All trips must have the medical provider's signature and verification of your appointment. For pharmacy reimbursement trips you must provide receipt verification. You can turn in your reimbursement request right after a trip or you can wait until the end of the month. If reimbursement is submitted by the 3rd of the following month, then checks will be issued by the 17<sup>th</sup>. Reimbursement forms received after the 3rd and up to the 17<sup>th</sup> will be paid at the end of the month. LCTA calculates miles between "starting address" and "ending address" via MapQuest, it is not necessary for you to calculate mileage yourself.

All Mileage reimbursement forms must be submitted by the end of the following month.

## **Mass Transit**

If you currently reside near a public bus route and mass-transit is the least costly and most appropriate form of transportation to meet your needs, we will provide you reimbursement when you take the public buses to any medical facility. It is imperative that you first call our office to inform one of our schedulers of the trip you wish to take. Because the mode of transportation you may take can be different with each trip, the call to our office is necessary for us to determine which mode may apply. The forms for mass-transit differ from the mileage reimbursement forms but the process for claiming reimbursement is the same.

LCTA will issue mileage and mass-transit reimbursement checks only when the total amount reaches or exceeds ten dollars (\$10). LCTA will hold forms that amount to less than ten dollars (\$10) until the combined total of all forms meets or exceeds ten dollars (\$10). If the dollar amount of a recipient's reimbursement doesn't total ten dollars (\$10)

or more by the end of that quarter (three (3) month period ex. July through September, October through December, January through March and April through June), LCTA will issue a check for all reimbursement forms submitted during that quarter to the recipient.

### **C. HOW FAR CAN YOU GO WITH MATP?**

#### **Out of County Transportation**

LCTA and its subcontractors will provide transportation to specialist appointments out of Luzerne County to the following locations listed below. All of these out-of-country trips have guidelines and requirements that must be followed. All out of the county trips must be scheduled 10 business days in advance. Appointments must be scheduled between 10am and 2pm. A note from your medical provider may be required.

Days and Locations are as follows:

#### **Thursday – Danville**

Transportation to medical services that are outside of Luzerne County MATP's service area will only be allowed if a medical service is not available locally or at one of the approved locations listed above.

### **D. SCHEDULING A RIDE TO AN APPOINTMENT**

If you need a ride to a medical appointment or service, you should call us as soon as possible. For regular appointments, you must call us by noon the day before. (Example. Call Monday before noon for Tuesday, Tuesday before noon for Wednesday, Wednesday before noon for Thursday, Thursday before noon for Friday, Friday before noon for Monday).

You can call us up to 2 weeks before your appointment to arrange a ride. When you call to schedule, we will ask the date and time of your appointment, where you need to go, and how long the appointment will last (if you know). Please tell us if you have any special needs like: if you need to bring an escort with you, or if you need accessible transportation due to a temporary or permanent disability. We will arrange for the least costly way to get you to and from your appointment that meets your needs. If your appointment is rescheduled or cancelled, or if things change and you no longer need a ride, you must call us immediately and let us know.

#### **Pick Up and Drop Off Guidelines**

If we are transporting you, on shared ride you will be given a half hour pick up window to which you are scheduled to be picked up by the LCTA driver. Please be ready ahead of time. Our policy is to drop you off at your provider's office no more than 1 hour before your scheduled appointment, and to pick you up no later than 1 hour after your appointment is finished. If we do not meet these timelines and you are kept waiting longer than an hour, you should call us at 288-8420 (toll free 800-679-4135) to report the problem and to make alternative arrangements.

**Urgent Care Transportation**

MATP defines Urgent Care as “Any illness or severe condition, which under reasonable standards of medical practice would be diagnosed and treated within a 24 hr period, and if left untreated, could rapidly become a crisis or emergency situation”. Additionally, it includes situations such as when a member’s discharge from a hospital will be delayed until services are approved or a member ability to avoid hospitalization depends upon prompt approval of service. At some point you may need transportation on short notice for an urgent care matter. Urgent care includes any situation where your medical provider has told you that you need to come to their office, or to obtain some other medical treatment or service, that same day or within the next 24 hours. We have a process of responding to any urgent care requests and will make every effort to help you get to the medical care you need.

If you need transportation for an urgent care matter, you should call LCTA immediately. During normal business hours 570-288-8420. After normal business hours, weekends, holidays 570-283-2444 and speak with a Trans-Med dispatcher let them know you are a shared ride client, and they will arrange transportation if the requested service meets the definition of urgent care; a verification that the person requesting the transportation is an eligible registered MATP client will be required.

**Pharmacy Providers** – LCTA shall only provide transportation to a choice of two pharmacies closest to the consumer’s residence or two pharmacies closest to the consumer’s prescribing physician’s office (if the prescription was provided at the office visit and is being filled in route from the prescribing physician’s office).

**Methadone Treatment** – LCTA shall only provide transportation to methadone treatment up to the closest in-network methadone treatment program to a consumer’s residence, unless the consumer is granted an exception. See LCTA Representative for further information on exception.

**E. ESCORT POLICY**

You may bring someone with you as an escort at no cost to you in the following situations:

- If you are under 21, you can be escorted by a parent or other relative/guardian
- If you cannot travel independently, or you need any assistance due to age, illness, physical or mental disability, a letter from the treating physician is required verifying the need.
- If you do not speak English, you can bring someone with you to interpret

## **F. SANCTION POLICY**

A sanction is any reduction, change, suspension, refusal, delay and/or termination of transportation service because of a consumers' action(s) or Luzerne County Transportation Authority (LCTA) judgment.

LCTA reserves the right to sanction a passenger when the passenger is uncooperative, for misuse of services, or presents a safety hazard

- Passengers must always remain seated and may not board or disembark the vehicle until the driver says to do so.
- Persistent foul sexist, racist, or otherwise offensive language, including yelling and screaming is not permitted.
- Unwanted touching by another passenger, hitting, biting, or spitting by another passenger is not permitted.
- Other disruptive and unsafe or illegal behavior, such as throwing items on the vehicle, or carrying weapons of any kind including BB guns is not permitted.

For any safety violations, the passenger may be removed until LCTA can consult with the appropriate health care provider. Transportation will continue as long as the passenger can be safely transported with no danger to him/herself, another passenger and the driver. Safety violations that clearly pose a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of passengers on the vehicle, as well as the transportation provider's staff, can result in immediate termination of transportation services.

Sanctions may include suspensions from Para transit service. In any case the passenger and/or his/her guardian will be officially informed of Luzerne County Transportation Authority action at least 10 days in advance of the suspension, except for severe safety violations, and will be informed of the opportunities afforded by policy and regulations of the Medical Assistance Transportation Program to appeal any decision or action of the Luzerne County Transportation Authority. You will Be referred to the County Assistance Office for possible alternative assistance when you are suspended from MATP.

## **ILLEGAL OR DISRUPTIVE CONDUCT WILL NOT BE TOLERATED**

Service will be suspended or refused by customers who engage in violent, seriously disruptive or illegal conduct. The severity of the incident will determine whether an individual is suspended temporarily or permanently.

For example, a person whose behavior threatens the safety of Para Transit personnel or other customers may be refused service immediately.

Other sanctioned behaviors will be communicated via correspondence.

An Individual who contests a refusal of Para Transit service may appeal the decision through an administrative appeal process.

## ***Appeal Process***

We are required to give you a DPW written notice if we deny your request for MATP transportation service/mileage reimbursement. We are also required to give you written notice in advance if we plan to reduce, change, or terminate your service. The notice will tell you the reason for our action, when the action will go into effect, and your right to appeal.

## **No-Show Sanction**

A no-show is defined as any scheduled trip that is not taken or not cancelled with enough time to notify the LCTA. You will be considered a no-show in the following situations:

- You (or someone on your behalf) do not call the office at least 1 hour prior to your scheduled pick-up time to cancel your ride
- You are not present at the designated pick-up site when the driver arrives

If you accumulate 2 no-shows within a 90-day period, you may be subject to the following:

You will receive notice from our office after each no show.

The notice of the first no-show may be verbal or written with a warning that you may be asked to call into your MATP office the day before all scheduled trips, if you want to receive a trip the next day.

After the second no-show, you will be sent a letter notifying you that you are required to call in the day before all scheduled trips, if you want to receive a trip the next day.

If no confirmation is received, the trip will be automatically cancelled. No call will be made to notify you that the trip has been cancelled.

## **COMPLAINT PROCESS**

Service complaints should be submitted by phone or in writing to Luzerne County Transportation Authority, 300 S. Pennsylvania Ave., Wilkes-Barre PA 18701, telephone 570-283-1683.

A complaint is a verbal or written expression of dissatisfaction. All complaints received from MATP clients will be reviewed and a Luzerne County Transportation Authority person will provide a telephone response within 3 days and a written response within 7 days. This staff person may not have been involved in the action that is the subject of the complaint. Written documentation of complaints will be kept on file.

If the complaint resolution is not satisfactory, the consumer has the right to request that the Executive Director review the complaint. A written response to this second level of complaint review/resolution will be provided with 7 days after receipt.

If the complaint resolution by the Executive Director is not satisfactory to the consumer, the complaint will be forwarded to the Office of Medical Assistance Programs, Department of Human Services for review and resolution.

## **G. APPEAL PROCESS**

We are required to give you a DHS written notice if we deny your request for MATP transportation or for mileage reimbursement. We are also required to give you written notice in advance if we plan to reduce or change your services or suspend you from the program for any length of time. The notice will tell you about the reasons for our action, when the action will go into effect, and your rights to appeal from the action.

**You can get free legal assistance if you need help with an appeal.** If you need help with an appeal, you can call your local legal services office on 825-1674 or the Pennsylvania Health Law Project at 1-800-274-3258.

## **H. OTHER MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES**

If we are not able to meet your medical transportation needs, you will be referred to by your case worker at the local County Assistance Office (CAO).

\*Si necesita este español traducido por favor, póngase en contacto con nuestra oficina al 570-288-8420