

MEDICAL
ASSISTANCE
TRANSPORTATION
PROGRAM

GUIDELINES



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**BERKS AREA REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY
1700 NORTH 11TH STREET
READING, PA 19604**

**PHONE 610-921-2361
TOLL FREE 1-800-383-2278
TDD 610-921-1018
(Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00
p.m.)
FAX 610-921-0209**

**URGENT CARE TRIPS
(To be used by primary physician or
specialist only)
610-451-6761
(After normal business hours)**

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 Berks County. MATP is funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. In Berks County, MATP is run by the Berks Area Regional Transportation Authority (BARTA) Special Services Division.

Our program offers transportation or mileage reimbursement to help you get to 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 that Medical Assistance pays for. These medical services include therapies, test, 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 1700 North 11th Street, Reading, PA 19604 and our phone numbers are: 610-921-2361 or toll-free 1-800-383-2278.

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, our answering machine will also tell you what to do if you need urgent care transportation (see Page 5). If you require emergency transportation, call 911 immediately.

C. 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:

- Tickets for the BARTA fixed route bus will be issued in advance for local trips.
- Ticket with Bieber Tourways will be available at the Intercity Bus Terminal , North 3rd & Court Sts., Reading the day of the appointment,
- Shared-ride service with BARTA or our sub-contractor.
- Lift-equipped vehicles.

Mileage Reimbursement

If you have a car, or if you know someone else who has a car and he/she can take you to your appointment, we will provide you with mileage reimbursement if it is the least costly, most appropriate service available. We will reimburse you at the rate of twelve cents (\$.12) per mile. We will also reimburse you for your actual parking and tolls if you provide dated receipts showing how much you paid.

If you want to claim mileage reimbursement for a trip, you must tell us in advance. We will send you a form to fill out or you may stop at our office to pick one up. You can turn in your reimbursement request form right after a trip or you can turn the form in at the end of the month. All forms must be completed and also returned with documentation from attending physician, clinic, pharmacy, medical equipment supplier or any other service that Medical Assistance pays for. The document must be issued by the provider showing the date of service and their full address i.e. physician/clinic

excuse slip, print out sheet showing dates of attendance or pharmacy slip. Also, all toll and parking receipts that are submitted must have the date. If the documents are not received with the mileage reimbursement form, all information will be returned and no payment will be issued until all proper documents are submitted. Reimbursement forms must be submitted within sixty (60) days from the appointment day. Mileage reimbursement checks will be issued only when the total amount reaches or exceeds ten dollars (\$10). You may continue to submit forms, but we will hold forms yielding amounts less than ten dollars until the combined total of submitted forms meets or exceeds ten dollars.

D. HOW FAR CAN YOU GO WITH MATP?

We are responsible for providing or for arranging your transportation to get you to the medical care you need.

If you are enrolled in a Medical Assistance MCO (Managed Care Organization), we can provide or arrange transportation for you to any medical provider in this MCO region. Your MCO region includes Adams, Berks, Cumberland, Dauphin, Lancaster, Lebanon, Lehigh, Northampton, Perry and York counties. However, we will only take you to providers in your MCO network, or providers that are out of network but who your MCO has referred you to.

If you are in Medical Assistance fee-for-service, we will provide or arrange transportation for you to the provider who is closest to your home and who can meet your medical needs. We will take you to a more distant provider only if your provider gives us written or verbal confirmation that this distant provider is needed to meet your needs.

If you have questions regarding the transportation options available to you, please contact our office.

E. SCHEDULING A RIDE TO AN APPOINTMENT

Fixed Route Bus 20 Trip Tickets

If you are capable of utilizing the BARTA fixed route bus service you will need to report to the BARTA Special Services Division office (1700 North 11th Street in Reading) to receive a twenty trip ticket and an instruction sheet on the proper use of the tickets. The tickets can be used on the BARTA fixed route bus service only to providers who are approved by Medical Assistance to pay for the services that you receive. The ticket, the form and also documentation from the attending physician, clinic, pharmacy, medical equipment supplier or any other services that Medical Assistance pays for must be returned. The document must be issued by the provider showing the date of service and their full address i.e. physician/clinic excuse slip, print out sheet showing the dates of attendance or pharmacy slip. If the documents are not received from the medical provider or any other services that Medical Assistance pays for, you will be refused another ticket until the proper documents are received.

ADA Paratransit Service

If you have a disability that prevents you from using the BARTA fixed route bus service you will be provided with an ADA paratransit eligibility form to complete or you must have written verification from your medical provider stating your disability prevents you from using the fixed route bus. BARTA Special Services, along with our sub-contractors, provide door-to-door transportation for clients who are not capable of utilizing the BARTA fixed bus route service. Transportation is provided on wheelchair accessible vehicles Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

If you need a ride to an appointment, you should call us as soon as possible. For regular appointments, you must call us at least two working days in advance to arrange a ride.

You can call us up to two weeks before your appointment to arrange a ride. When you call to schedule we will ask you the date and time of your appointment, the complete address of where you need to go and the providers phone number. Please tell us if

you have any special needs such as: if you need an escort to go 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.

We will immediately confirm your appointment/ride and tell you when we will pick you up.

Group Trips

If we will be transporting you using shared ride (trips outside of Berks County, non-ADA trips or clients residing in rural areas with no fixed route bus service) you will be told in advance the approximate time you will be picked up by the MATP driver. Please contact our office for time schedules for group trips **prior** to scheduling your appointment. You must call us at least two (2) working days in advance to arrange a ride. You can call us up to two weeks before your appointment. We will require the date and time of your appointment, complete address of your provider and the providers phone number.

Please be ready ahead of time. Our drivers are required to pick you up no sooner than 15 minutes before your scheduled time and no later than 15 minutes after your scheduled pick-up time. Except for group trips that are waived, our policy is to drop you off at your providers office no later than 1 hour before your scheduled appointment, and to pick you up no later than one hour after your appointment is finished. If we do not meet these timelines and you are kept waiting, you should call us at 610-921-2361 to report the problem and to see if alternative arrangements can be made. We will also inform you of the return time or request that you contact our office when you have completed your appointment. Drivers have been instructed to wait at a residence for a period not to exceed five minutes from the scheduled pick-up time. Your trip will then be marked a no show and no transportation will be provided that day.

If your disability prevents you from using our group trips that are waived or if your physician cannot schedule within our times for group trips, we will require written or verbal confirmation from the medical provider.

Urgent Care Transportation

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 of service, that same day or within the next 24 hours. We have a process for responding to any urgent care requests and will make every effort to help you get to the medical care you need.

If you require transportation for an urgent care matter, you or your medical provider should call BARTA immediately during normal business hours, Monday through Friday 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM at 610-921-2361 or toll-free at 1-800-383-2278 to make arrangements. If your need for urgent care transportation occurs after normal business hours, including weekends, you or your medical provider must call 610-451-6761. We will require verification of “urgency” from the medical provider. Verification of urgency from the medical provider need not be in writing; we will accept verbal authorization from the medical provider.

F. ESCORT POLICY

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

- If you are under age 18, you may 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. We may require written verification from your physician.
- If you do not speak English, you may bring someone with you to interpret.

G. SANCTION POLICY

Missing a scheduled ride without notifying the office at least one hour in advance is considered a “no-show” and a sanctionable action. BARTA Special Services Division has the right to suspend service to an individual who has a practice of missing scheduled trips. An individual who is a “no-show” for the first scheduled trip will receive a written warning. Notice shall indicate that another no-show within 90 days will result in suspension from the program for 30 days. On the second “no-show”, a written notice will be issued. The notice will provide information regarding the effective date of the suspension and how the client can appeal the decision.

In addition, BARTA will not tolerate any verbal or physical abuse from a client, towards our employees, sub-contractor employees or other passengers aboard the vehicles. An individual who violates this policy will receive written notice that their service has been suspended for sixty days. A second violation of this policy will result in written notification that their service has been terminated. In any event, the notice will provide information regarding the reason(s) for the suspension or termination, the effective date of the action, and how the client can appeal the decision.

You have the right to appeal these decisions and ask for a fair hearing from the Department of Public Welfare. To request a fair hearing, send a letter requesting a hearing to BARTA.

H. COMPLAINT PROCESS

A complaint is any issue or dispute or objection you express to us about our agency or about the coverage, operations or policies of our MATP. If you have a complaint about our services, about how you were treated by our staff or a driver, or about our policies and procedures, please tell us. We will

record your complaint, investigate it and respond to you within five (5) days.

Copies of the complaint, agency responses/resolutions and corrective action plans will be kept on file and be made available to the Department of Public Welfare (DPW). If we are unable to resolve your complaint, please contact the County Commissioners office, listed in the blue pages of your telephone directory. If your complaint can't be resolved at the county level, the DPW will be used as a resource to facilitate your complaint.

I. APPEAL PROCESS

We are required to give you 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. The notice will tell you 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 or the Pennsylvania Health Law Project at 1-800-274-3258.

J. OTHER MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES

If we are not able to meet your medical transportation needs, you will be referred to your caseworker at the local County Assistance Office (CAO). The CAO also has funds available to provide transportation if you need to go a great distance, or if you need to stay overnight to get care and need help with additional costs like lodging and meals.

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