

Transportation Primer - 2015

Types or modes of transportation

Public Transit (subsidized by state and/or federal transportation funds) – mass transportation providing service to the general public on a regular and continuing bases. Some public transit runs on a fixed route, fixed schedule (bus) and in Wisconsin, there are shared ride taxi programs that are funded as public transit (see Shared Ride Taxi section below). Most buses are equipped with ramps that allow individuals who use wheelchairs or walkers to board and ride the regular bus.

Fares: Public transit has fares established by the transit commission. There are often discounts for youth, Veterans, older adults and individuals with disabilities. Multiple ride passes or punch cards can often be purchased at a discount.

Paratransit – Paratransit is an alternative mode of flexible passenger transportation that does not follow fixed routes or schedules and is typically wheelchair-accessible service for older adults and people with disabilities.

Examples of paratransit services include:

- Human services transportation
- Taxi services
- Deviated-route or demand response systems
- ADA complementary paratransit

ADA complementary paratransit service is mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act to be offered to those who cannot use a regular fixed-route public transit service. The individual must be certified to be eligible to receive these services, usually through an application process and in-person assessment. This process can take up to 1-4 weeks depending on the system.

Fares: Paratransit fares can legally be set at twice the fare for fixed route service. If the individual resides in a Long Term Care Facility or is receiving transportation paid for by a third party, their transportation fare may be subject to an agency rate. This rate is higher than the regular fare and is designed to cover the local tax share of this public transit service.

Specialized Medical Vehicle (SMV) – a vehicle equipped with a lift or ramp to transport those needing assistive devices (wheelchairs, scooters and walkers) or additional assistance. The drivers must have first aid and CPR training. Riders may be required to have a Certificate of Need from a doctor for SMV transportation.

Fares and Fees– Fares for SMV are set by the company and are usually much higher than other modes due to the required training and other licensing regulations. In Wisconsin, licensed SMVs still have the ability to bill Medicaid directly for those not required to scheduled rides through the NEMT broker, such as nursing home residents.

Paratransit and SMV are not the same services – These services are not interchangeable because they do not provide the same level of service. Paratransit is typically curb to curb or door to door service and SMV is door **through** door and provides a higher level of service.

Shared Ride Taxi (SRT) – As referenced under the Public Transit section above, many WI communities have public taxi service that is financially supported by local, state and federal tax dollars and can transport more than one passenger on each trip. SRT systems are usually found in smaller communities or counties where a fixed route bus may not be feasible. Unlike regular taxi service, shared ride taxi is designed to stay within the municipality, tribe or county that provides funding for it. Out of these borders, fares are typically assessed on a per mile basis.

Fares: Fares for shared ride taxi are set like those for public transit systems by a transit commission, or the municipality, county or tribe in which it operates.

Taxi – Privately owned taxi companies also operate taxi services throughout the state. These are not subsidized by public transit funding.

Fares: Fares are established by the owner of the taxi company and are typically higher than public shared ride taxi programs because public shared ride systems are subsidized with state, federal and local funds.

Understanding service level

Curb to Curb Service – The vehicle picks up the individual at the curb and drops them at the curb. The driver may provide some assistance to the rider to get in and out of the vehicle, but the rider must be ready at the curb and able to get from the curb into their destination. This generally applies to taxi and fixed route bus systems.

Door to Door Service – The driver may go to the door and provide minimal assistance to the rider to the vehicle. This assistance does not include getting coats on, transferring into or out of a wheelchair or getting the individual into the correct room in a facility. This generally applies to paratransit service and some demand response service like volunteer driver programs.

Door through Door Service – The driver is able to provide some assistance to individuals who need to get from inside one location to inside another destination. This may include transferring, helping with coats and taking the individual into the correct waiting room at a medical facility (even on a different floor). This service level can also be referred to as hand to hand. This level of service is usually provided by SMV providers.

Who pays for the transportation matters.

Medical Assistance (MA) Transportation (Medicaid or Title XIX): Medical Assistance (MA) pays for transportation to and from MA-covered medical services for eligible members.

With the exception of MA recipients residing in nursing homes, those enrolled in Family Care, some BadgerCare programs and SeniorCare; rides must be arranged through the non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) broker contracted through the Department of Health Services. Depending on the recipient's need, MA transportation may be provided through common carrier vehicles (any means of transportation except ambulance and SMV), specialized medical vehicles (SMVs), or ambulance. Eligible members must schedule rides at least two days in advance by calling 866-907-1493. More information about this program and links to the current vendor's site can be found at the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services' Website](#).

If an individual's services are paid through the Community Options Program (COP), Community Integration Program (CIP), or COP/CIP waivers, they can access their transportation benefit using their MA card and therefore, should call the NEMT broker to get a ride scheduled.

If a nursing home resident is on Medical Assistance, MA transportation can be provided by an SMV who can bill Medicaid for the trip or by the nursing home who can pay for the trip for the member and bill Medicaid. The resident should not be asked to pay for an MA-eligible trip.

If a nursing home resident is privately paying for services, the most appropriate and affordable service should be arranged and the individual is responsible for the charges unless there is a prior agreement with the nursing home.

For Family Care members, the responsibility for providing and paying for transportation is determined by the long term care outcomes of the member and what services (including transportation) are needed to achieve these outcomes.

Family Care member transportation, medical or non-medical, must be pre-approved by the Managed Care Organization (MCO) care team to qualify for provider reimbursement. Transportation that is not identified as meeting long term care outcomes or is provided through natural and self-directed supports may not be covered by Family Care. If an MCO contract with a residential facility includes transportation services, the residential facility may be responsible for arranging and/or paying for the transportation.

If an individual in a **CBRF** is *privately paying*, the following applies:

- **DHS 83.38 (1) (k) Transportation.** The community-based residential facility (CBRF) shall provide or arrange for transportation when needed for medical appointments, work, educational or training programs, religious services, and for a reasonable number of community activities of interest. CBRFs that transport residents shall develop and implement written policies addressing the safe and secure transportation of residents.

The responsibility for payment of transportation services provided by a CBRF should be identified in the CBRF's admission agreement with their residents. Under Section 83.29(1) (b), the CBRF is required to provide written information regarding services available and the charges for those services. The information shall include any charges for services not covered by the daily or monthly rate. If the CBRF is providing transportation, they need to identify whether transportation fees are included in their rate or whether this is a separate charge and the amount that will be charged. If the CBRF contracts with a separate transportation service, the admission agreement must contain information on the charges to residents who choose to use that service.

Other transportation terms

Common Carrier – Common carrier is any mode of transportation except SMV and ambulance. It can include taxi, public transit and volunteer drivers.

Demand – Response – This services can include buses, vans or sedans that do not operate on a fixed route or schedule, but are dispatched in response to requests from passengers.

Human Services Transportation –This type of transportation does not necessarily mean that the transportation is provided by a human services department. This is a broad umbrella term that refers to other types of transportation that may be available such as transportation by interfaith groups, independent living centers, Veteran's organizations or aging units, and can include many modes or types of vehicles.

Mobility Management – is defined as the innovative use of transportation services through multi-agency partnerships and resources to meet consumer needs. It is an approach to service development that focuses on the customer markets and involves establishing a variety of services to meet the needs. It is the practice of using all available services, and developing new ones, to improve mobility, increase efficiency, and reduce costs.

Mobility Managers are located in various agencies and can perform many different functions. Mobility Managers in Wisconsin teach people how to use transit, coordinate trips between agencies, manage volunteer driver programs, educate communities about transportation options, organize van pools and car pools, write grants, manage one call centers that act as transportation information clearinghouses and much more.

Travel Training or Mobility Training – Education for individuals on how to travel safely and independently in their community using public transit or other modes of transportation that may be available.

Travel Buddy/Bus Buddy – A trained and qualified volunteer who can provide assistance with accessing transportation services, planning trips, or helping a rider gain confidence.

Veterans Transportation - Some regions have access to Disabled American Veterans (DAV) vans to take Veterans to Veteran's Health Services medical appointments. Other communities have volunteer driver programs that meet this need, either through an existing agency's volunteer program, the Veterans Service Officers or through another Veteran's organization or the VA Medical Center.

Volunteer Driver Programs – Volunteer driver programs can be operated by a variety of agencies. They can be part of a county or tribal transportation program, interfaith agency, Veteran's organization or other non-profit organizations. Some drivers are reimbursed for mileage while others do not receive any compensation. There typically is an application process and rides may need to be scheduled in advance. Some volunteer driver/escort programs accept donations, while other have a fee structure or copayment required.

Timebanking is a relatively new opportunity for people to receive transportation services. Time banking is the practice of trading one hour of service or product to someone for an hour or product in return. No money is exchanged. If the volunteer driver is enrolled with a community timebank, they can drive in return for other services from other members in the timebank.

Vouchers are coupons or tickets that eligible riders can use for full or partial payment to participating transportation providers, including human service transportation providers, taxis, and family, friends or neighbors. The voucher system allows customers to choose transportation services that meet their needs and use the existing networks.

More acronym & coordination materials can be found at the website below.

<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/transit/newfreedom-mobility.htm>

Funding Programs

State

State 85.21/County Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Grant – Section 85.21 is an annual state grant program funded from the segregated transportation fund. Counties are the only eligible applicant. A 20% local cash match is required. The amount of money each county receives is determined by formula based on the proportion of elderly and disabled residents in their county to the rest of the state. Counties may choose to operate their own system, contract for services or both. This state money can be used to leverage Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds. Older adults and individuals with disabilities are eligible for this program; however, the way the program is administered and service priorities are determined by each county.

State 85.215/Tribal Elderly and Disabled Transportation Assistance Grant – This state grant is for tribes to use for transportation of elderly and disabled tribal members. The allocation for this program is split evenly among the 11 tribes. No local match is required. This state money can be used to leverage Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

funds. Older adults and individuals with disabilities are eligible for this program; however, the way the program is administered and service priorities are determined by each tribe.

Federal - (The latest surface transportation legislation MAP-21 was extended by continuing resolution until May 2015. Reauthorization is currently being discussed.)

5310/Enhanced Mobility for Seniors and Individuals with Disabilities – This federal program funds traditional 5310 purchases, vehicles and can also be used for operating expenses, mobility management and non-vehicle capital purchase projects. This program was expanded to include mobility management when New Freedom, 5317 was repealed in 2012. Eligible grant recipients include local public and tribal governments and private, non-profits.

5311/Rural and Small Urban Area Public Transportation Assistance Grant – This federal program is administered through the state Dept. of Transportation (DOT) to local public bodies or tribes and supports capital and operating expenses for public transportation services in non-urbanized areas (population between 2,500 and 50,000).

5307/85.20 Public Transit Assistance Grant –

The Federal Formula Grant Program for Urbanized Areas (5307) is a federally-funded grant program administered through the state DOT that assists transit systems in large communities (populations over 200,000) with capital expenditures. Transit systems in urban areas with populations between 50,000 and 200,000 may use the funds for capital and operating assistance. No tribes in WI qualify for this funding.

The State Urban Mass Transit Operating Assistance program (85.20) is state funding for transit systems. Eligible applicants serve populations greater than 2,500 and include tribes, counties, municipalities and towns – along with transit or transportation commissions or authorities.

Rural Transportation Assistance Program (RTAP) –

These Federal funds are available for persons involved in providing transportation to the state’s rural and small urban areas of the state for the development of skills and abilities. Scholarships are awarded through an application process and can be for individual attendance at training events or to host a training in your area. More information can be found at www.wisconsinrtap.com

A resource provided by the Greater WI Agency on Aging Resources, Inc. 3/15
Carrie Porter, Transportation Specialist, carrie.porter@gwaar.org, 608-228-8092