

**Medical Assistance Transportation Program
Operations Memorandum
General Operations
MATP OPS Memo # 10/2026-002**

Date: October 26, 2026

Subject: Transportation Request Referrals

To: All County Administrators, Contracted Transit Agencies, and Brokers of the Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP)

From: Gwendolyn Zander, Director, Bureau of Managed Care Operations, Office of Medical Assistance Programs

Purpose:

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update to County Administrators, Contracted Transit Agencies, and Brokers who administer the Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) (collectively referred to as "MATP Administrators" or "Administrators") regarding changes to the referral process for transportation that cannot be provided through MATP.

Background:

To streamline the transportation referral process, MATP OPS #11/2022-001 was issued in 2022 to define the transportation referral process and introduce the MA 583 Transportation Referral Form, a fillable form that allows MATP Administrators, PH-MCOs, CHC-MCOs, and CAOs to record all relevant details collected during the transportation referral process.

Through the current referral process, MATP Administrators refer consumers who are enrolled in Physical Health HealthChoices (PH-HC) or Community HealthChoices (CHC) to their respective Managed Care Organization (MCO) when requesting medically necessary non-emergency ambulance or stretcher transportation that the MATP Administrator cannot provide.

Similarly, PH and CHC MCO's may forward the referral for consumers to the County Assistance Office (CAO) for exceptional transportation requests. Exceptional transportation is non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) that is necessary under extraordinary medical circumstances. This type of transportation may require great distances for medical

treatment not normally provided through regional medical providers or may include air travel, lodging, meals, and transportation for visitation purposes.

Individuals who are enrolled in the Medical Assistance Fee-for-Service (FFS) program and request medically necessary non-emergency ambulance transportation or transportation for non-covered services are referred to the CAO.

Discussion:

Transportation Referral Process for Managed Care Consumers

Effective January 1, 2026, Exhibit L "MATP Coverage and Coordination" of the PH HealthChoices Agreement and Section V. A.13 of the Community HealthChoices Agreement language was updated to include timeframes in the transportation referral process:

- A. MATP Administrators must refer Physical and Community HealthChoices members to their respective Managed Care Organization (MCO) when requesting non-MATP covered medically necessary non-emergency ambulance or stretcher transportation and exceptional transportation as defined in the "Background" section of this Operations Memorandum.
- B. The MATP Administrator will complete the MA 583 Transportation Referral Form, available on the MATP Website under the Provider Forms section and send it to the PH-MCO's Enhanced Member Support Unit (EMSU) mailbox or for CHC, utilize the CHC referral contact list supplied by the Department.
 - a. The PH or CHC-MCO will review the referral and determine if the consumer meets the criteria for Medically Necessary non-emergency ambulance transportation **within two (2) business days of receipt of all required documentation** and provide notification of the determination to both the consumer and MATP Administrator. Notification to the consumer must include, at minimum, a letter informing the consumer of determination and any applicable next steps, such as the MCO forwarding the referral to their CAO.
 - b. If the PH or CHC-MCO is also unable to accommodate the request, the PH or CHC-MCO will complete and sign the referral form, attach it to the email from the MATP Administrator and forward it to the CAO resource account, copying the MATP Administrator, for consideration of a Medical Transportation Allowance (MTA). All denied referrals must be forwarded to the appropriate CAO **within two (2) business days of the receipt of initial referral**. A complete list of CAO resource accounts may be found on the MATP website under Provider Information, Transportation Referral.

The following are examples of scenarios where a referral by the MATP Administrator to the MCO and/or CAO is necessary and the process by which the referral would be completed. It is important to note that all referrals to the CAO need to include a denial.

Example 1: A consumer enrolled in **Community HealthChoices** requests transportation for a medically necessary service in Texas.

- The MATP Administrator verifies the consumer's CHC enrollment, confirms the trip details, and makes reasonable efforts to determine whether the transportation can be safely and appropriately provided through MATP. Transportation requests may require a referral when no feasible MATP option is available.
- When the Administrator determines that the transportation cannot be provided through MATP, the Administrator must complete a denial with referral to the CHC-MCO. The Administrator completes the required Written Notice and the MA 583 Transportation Referral Form. (Note that this referral has to go to the CHC-MCO first because the CAO will not review without a denial from the CHC-MCO.)
- The Administrator sends the Written Notice to the consumer and emails the approved MA 583 to the designated CHC-MCO referral contact, copying the assigned Program Monitor. The CHC-MCO must review the referral and determine within two business days whether it can provide the service and notify the consumer and MATP Administrator.
- If the CHC-MCO cannot fulfill the request, it must complete and sign the referral form, attach it to the original email from the Administrator, and forward it to the designated CAO resource account, with a copy to the MATP Administrator, for consideration of a Medical Transportation Allowance (MTA). The CHC-MCO must also notify the consumer of the denied referral. The denied referral must be forwarded to the appropriate CAO within two business days of receipt of the initial referral.
- The Administrator advises the consumer or the consumer's representative to immediately notify their CAO caseworker of the denial and the actions taken to date and documents all actions, communications, and supporting records in the approved secure system.

Example 2: A consumer enrolled in **Physical HealthChoices** requires medically necessary non-emergency stretcher transportation. Because stretcher transportation cannot be provided through MATP, the request must be denied with referral to the PH-MCO.

- The MATP Administrator verifies the consumer's PH HealthChoices enrollment, confirms the trip details and the medical necessity for non-emergency stretcher transportation, and documents any reasonable efforts made to identify possible local resources, as appropriate. Because the request is for medically necessary non-emergency stretcher transportation, it must be denied through MATP and referred to the PH-MCO.
- The Administrator completes the Written Notice of Denial of Transportation and the MA 583 Transportation Referral Form.

- The Administrator sends the Written Notice to the consumer and emails the approved MA 583 to the PH-MCO's Enhanced Member Support Unit (EMSU), copying the assigned Program Monitor. The PH-MCO must review the referral and determine within two business days whether it can provide the transportation and notify the consumer and MATP Administrator.
- If the PH-MCO cannot fulfill the request, it must complete and sign the referral form, attach it to the original email from the Administrator, and forward it to the appropriate CAO resource account, with a copy to the MATP Administrator, for consideration of an MTA. The PH-MCO must also notify the consumer of the denied referral. The denied referral must be forwarded to the appropriate CAO within two business days of receipt of the initial referral.
- The Administrator advises the consumer or the consumer's representative to immediately notify their CAO caseworker of the denial and the actions taken to date and documents all actions, communications, and supporting records in the approved secure system.

Transportation Referral Process for FFS Consumers

If the MATP Administrator is unable to provide the requested transportation and has made efforts to seek possible local resources, the following steps should be followed to manage the referral for the consumer's transportation request:

1. MATP Administrator sends Written Notice of Denial of Transportation to Consumer.
2. MATP Administrator completes the MA 583 Transportation Referral Form.
3. MATP Administrator forwards referral form via email to the appropriate CAO Resource Account for MTA consideration **within 2 business days of receipt of all required documentation.**

Note about CAO Referrals: The CAO will not coordinate or schedule transportation for the consumer. Instead, the CAO will review for an allowance based on an invoice or pay the vendor directly if they are registered with OIM.

4. MATP Administrator advises consumer that the referral is sent to their CAO and to contact their CAO caseworker to alert them of their situation.

Example 3: A consumer enrolled in Medical Assistance **Fee-for-Service** requests medically necessary non-emergency ambulance transportation. Because ambulance transportation cannot be provided through MATP, the request must be denied with referral to the CAO.

- The MATP Administrator verifies the consumer's FFS status, confirms the trip details and the medical necessity for non-emergency ambulance transportation, and documents any reasonable efforts made to identify possible local resources, as appropriate. The request must then be denied through MATP and referred to the CAO for possible MTA consideration.
- The Administrator completes the Written Notice of Denial of Transportation and the MA 583 Transportation Referral Form MA 583 to the appropriate CAO liaison and CAO resource account, copying the assigned Program Monitor, within two business days of receipt of all required documentation.
- The Administrator advises the consumer or the consumer's representative to immediately notify their CAO caseworker of the denial and the actions taken to date. The Administrator also explains that the CAO does not coordinate or schedule transportation; rather, it determines whether the consumer qualifies for an MTA and may provide an allowance or pay the vendor directly, if appropriate. The Administrator documents all actions, communications, and supporting records in the approved secure system.

Next Steps:

1. MATP Administrators shall update their standard operating procedures to reflect the timeframes and MCO notification process established in this Memorandum.
2. MATP Administrators shall update any consumer-facing materials that explain this process and provide to DHS MATP for review and approval prior to publication.

Questions or concerns should be directed to the appropriate MATP Program Monitor.

Obsolete:

This Operations Memorandum renders MATP OPS #11-2022-001 obsolete.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1: 2026 PH HealthChoices Agreement
- Attachment 2: 2026 CHC HealthChoices Agreement
- Attachment 3: MA 583 Referral Form
- Attachment 4: CAO Resource Accounts

Attachment 1: 2026 PH Health Agreement

2026 PH Health Agreement posted on DHS website:

<https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/dhs/documents/providers/providers/documents/managed-care-information/2026-healthchoices-agreement-including-exhibits-and-non-rate-financial-appendices-draft.pdf>

Attachment 2: 2026 CHC Health Agreement

2026 CHC Health Agreement posted on DHS website:

<https://www.pa.gov/content/dam/copapwp-pagov/en/dhs/documents/healthchoices/hc-providers/documents/2026-chc-agreement.pdf>

Attachment 3: MA 583 Referral Form

Referral form for transportation that cannot be provided through MATP posted on MATP website: <http://matp.pa.gov/PDF/MA0583.pdf>



MA0583.pdf

Attachment 4: CAO Resource Accounts

List of CAO Resource Accounts posted on MATP website: [CAO Resource Accounts](#)