

WAC 182-546-5700 Nonemergency transportation—Local provider and trips outside client's local community. (1) A client receiving services provided under fee-for-service or through a medicaid agency-contracted managed care organization (MCO) may be transported to a local provider only.

(a) A local provider's medical specialty may vary as long as the provider is capable of providing medically necessary care that is the subject of the appointment or treatment;

(b) A provider may be considered an available local provider if:

(i) Providers in the client's local community are not accepting medicaid clients; or

(ii) Providers in the client's local community are not contracted with the client's MCO, primary care case management group, or third-party coverage.

(2) Brokers are responsible for considering and authorizing exceptions. See subsection (3) of this section for exceptions.

(3) A broker may transport a client to a provider outside the client's local community for covered health care services when any of the following apply:

(a) The health care service is not available within the client's local community.

(i) If requested by the broker, the client or the client's provider must provide documentation from the client's primary care provider (PCP), specialist, or other appropriate provider verifying the medical necessity for the client to be served by a health care provider outside of the client's local community.

(ii) If the service is not available in the client's local community, the broker may authorize transportation to the nearest provider where the service may be obtained;

(b) The transportation to a provider outside the client's local community is required for continuity of care.

(i) If requested by the broker, the client or the client's provider must submit documentation from the client's PCP, specialist, or other appropriate provider verifying the existence of ongoing treatment for medically necessary care by the provider and the medical necessity for the client to continue to be served by the health care provider.

(ii) If the broker authorizes transportation to a provider outside the client's local community based on continuity of care, this authorization is for a limited period of time for completion of ongoing care for a specific medical condition. Each transport must be related to the ongoing treatment of the specific condition that requires continuity of care.

(iii) Ongoing treatment of medical conditions that may qualify for transportation based on continuity of care include, but are not limited to:

(A) Active cancer treatment;

(B) Recent transplant (within the last twelve months);

(C) Scheduled surgery (within the next sixty days);

(D) Major surgery (within the previous ninety days); or

(E) Third trimester of pregnancy;

(c) The health care service is paid by a third-party payer who requires or refers the client to a specific provider within their network;

(d) The total cost to the agency, including transportation costs, is lower when the health care service is obtained outside of the client's local community; and

(e) A provider outside the client's local community has been issued a global payment by the agency for services the client will receive, and the broker determines it to be cost effective to provide transportation for the client to complete treatment with this provider.

(4) Brokers determine whether an exception should be granted based on documentation from the client's health care providers and program rules.

(5) When a client or a provider moves to a new community, the existence of a provider-client relationship, independent of other factors, does not constitute a medical need for the broker to authorize and pay for transportation to the previous provider.

(6) The health care service must be provided in the state of Washington or a designated border city, unless the agency specifically authorizes transportation to an out-of-state provider in accordance with WAC 182-546-5800.

(7) If local Washington health providers refuse to see a client due to the client's noncompliance, the agency does not authorize or pay more for nonemergency transportation to a provider outside the client's local community.

(a) In this circumstance, the agency pays for the least costly, most appropriate, mode of transportation from one of the following options:

- (i) Transit bus fare;
- (ii) Commercial bus or train fare;
- (iii) Gas voucher/gas card; or
- (iv) Mileage reimbursement.

(b) The agency's payment, whether fare, tickets, voucher, or mileage reimbursement, is determined using the number of miles from the client's authorized pickup point (e.g., client residence) to the location of the local health care provider who otherwise would have been available if not for the client's noncompliance.

(8) The agency may grant an exception to subsection (7) of this section for a life-sustaining service or as reviewed and authorized by the agency's medical director or designee in accordance with WAC 182-502-0050 and 182-502-0270.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 41.05.021, 41.05.160. WSR 16-12-022, § 182-546-5700, filed 5/20/16, effective 6/20/16; WSR 15-03-050, § 182-546-5700, filed 1/14/15, effective 2/14/15. WSR 11-17-032, recodified as § 182-546-5700, filed 8/9/11, effective 8/9/11. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.057, 74.08.090, and 74.09.500. WSR 11-15-029, § 388-546-5700, filed 7/12/11, effective 8/12/11.]