



Department of Health

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Executive Deputy Commissioner

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Dear Ambulette Providers:

It has come to the Department's attention that some ambulette providers are refusing to provide personal assistance when there are one or more stairs involved in the provision of door-through-door transportation as required by the Medicaid program.

Please be reminded that ambulette transportation includes the provision of personal assistance, defined at regulation 18 NYCRR Section 505.10(b)(16). This regulation has been clarified in various editions of the monthly Medicaid Update publication, including the September 2002 and August 2011 editions, and translated into the Transportation Provider Policy Manual, which reads in part:

"Personal assistance by the staff of the transportation company is required by the Medicaid Program and consists of the rendering of physical assistance to the ambulatory and non-ambulatory (wheelchair-bound) Medicaid enrollees in:

- *Walking, climbing or descending stairs, ramps, curbs, or other obstacles;*
- *Opening and closing doors;*
- *Accessing an ambulette vehicle; and*
- *The moving of obstacles as necessary to assure the safe movement of the Medicaid enrollee.*

There is no separate reimbursement for the escort of a Medicaid enrollee. Necessary escorts are to be provided by the ambulette service at no additional or enhanced charge.

The Medicaid Program does not limit the number of stairs or floors in a building that a provider must climb in order to deliver personal assistance to a Medicaid enrollee. The ambulette provider is required to provide personal assistance and door-to-door service at no additional or enhanced charge. This means the staff must transport the enrollee from his/her front door (including apartment door, nursing home room, etc.) no matter where it is located; to the door of the medical practitioner from whom the enrollee is to receive Medicaid-covered medical services..."

Medical Answering Services (MAS) will report to the Department instances where ambulette providers refuse to provide personal assistance, or limit the circumstances in which the providers will provide personal assistance, and/or request enhanced reimbursement in order to provide personal assistance as required by the Medicaid program. **The Department will review such instances and consider administrative action against those providers having demonstrated non-compliance with this policy.**

Questions concerning Medicaid transportation policy should be referred to the Department via email to MedTrans@health.ny.gov or telephone to (518) 473-2160.