



2024 San Francisco EMA Ryan White HIV

STANDARDS OF CARE

MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION

MEDICAL TRANSPORTATION SERVICES STANDARDS OF CARE

Overview and Purpose of Transportation Services Standards

The purpose of the San Francisco Eligible Metropolitan Area (EMA) Medical Transportation Services Standards of Care is to ensure consistency among the Ryan White- funded case management services provided as part of the San Francisco EMA's continuum of care for persons living with HIV. These minimally acceptable standards for service delivery provide guidance to programs so that they are best equipped to:

- Provide client-centered services that respect the client's rights, values, and preferences;
- Coordinate any and all types of services and assistance to meet the client's identified needs;
- Minimize barriers to needed medical and wraparound support services;
- Meet the specific and varied needs of HIV-positive clients using a multidisciplinary team approach;
- Provide continuity of care for people with HIV within a comprehensive system of services throughout the course of their infection; and
- Appropriately address issues of consent, confidentiality, and other client rights for clients enrolled in services.

Description of Medical Transportation Services

Medical Transportation is the provision of nonemergency transportation services that enable an eligible Ryan White client to access or be retained in core medical and support services. Medical Transportation Services are intended to remove transportation barriers that may prevent clients from accessing necessary HIV-related health and support services. Providers utilize medical transportation services to transport clients to and from non-emergency medical and support service appointments using a range of transportation modalities.

Units of Service:

A Medical Transportation Unit of Service is defined as:

- Any single, one-way medical transportation trip using an approved transportation modality, including:
 - ✓ Municipal transit such as city buses, streetcars, subway trains, and other methods of public transport;
 - ✓ Local van / shuttle services;
 - ✓ Taxi and ridesharing services;
 - ✓ Non-cash mileage reimbursement through a non-cash system such as gas cards;
 - ✓ Contracts with providers of transportation services;
 - ✓ Purchase or lease of organizational vehicles for client transportation programs; and
 - ✓ Use of designated volunteer drivers.

Medical Transportation Requirements:

General Requirements and Conditions:

Medical Transportation services may be provided through:

- **Contracts with providers** of transportation services;
- **Voucher or token systems** for ride-limited vouchers (i.e. not monthly unlimited passes), except in cases where it can be demonstrated that a monthly pass would be more cost-effective to enable access to medical and support services;
- **Mileage reimbursement** through a non-cash system such as gas cards that enables clients to travel to needed medical or other support services, with reimbursement not to exceed established mileage rates for federal programs;
- **Purchase or lease of organizational vehicles** for client transportation, with prior approval from the California Office of AIDS and HRSA for purchase of a vehicle; and/or
- **Organization and use of volunteer drivers**, with programs required to specifically address insurance and other liability issues.

Medical Transportation funds **cannot** be used to support:

- Direct cash payments or cash reimbursements to clients;
- Direct maintenance expenses (tires, repairs, etc.) of a privately-owned vehicle;
- Monthly unlimited public transportation passes, except in cases where it can be demonstrated and a necessary and more cost-effective option; and/or
- Any other costs associated with a privately-owned vehicle such as lease, loan payments, insurance, license, or registration fees.

Fiscal Management:

Additional requirements apply when utilizing vouchers, gas cards, taxi tokens, or bus / subway tickets or passes:

- Providers must ensure that vouchers or store gift cards cannot be exchanged for cash or used for anything other than the allowable goods or services.
- General-use prepaid cards are considered equivalent to cash and are therefore unallowable. Such cards generally bear the logo of a payment network (e.g., Visa, MasterCard, or American Express) and are accepted by any merchant that accepts those credit or debit cards as payment. Gift cards that are cobranded with the logo of a payment network and the logo of a merchant or affiliated group of merchants are general-use prepaid cards, not store gift cards, and therefore are unallowable.
- Providers must have systems in place to account for disbursed vouchers. The systems must track: client's name, staff person who distributed the voucher, date of the disbursement, voucher dollar amount, voucher serial number, and confirmation that the client actually traveled to and attended their medical or support services appointment.
- Providers should only buy vouchers in amounts that are reasonable for use in the contract year. In no case should use of vouchers lead to monies being held over to future contract years

Use of Transportation Staff or Volunteers:

Medical Transportation Services may be provided directly by provider staff or volunteers, by staff of an outside company/agency (i.e., taxi service, ride share such as Lyft, paratransit), or by individuals such as family or friends. There are no minimum educational standards. However, agency staff or volunteers providing medical transportation must:

- Have a valid California Driver's License with any endorsements required by California law (e.g., passenger endorsement if driving vehicles designed for more than 10 passengers) and
- Hold the minimum required amount of automobile insurance as required by law, and be enrolled in the California Pull Notice program, which enables organizations to monitor the driving records of employees who drive for them. By monitoring their employees' driving records, organizations can:
 - Ensure that each driver has a valid driver's license;
 - Recognize problem drivers or driving behavior;
 - Improve public safety; and
 - Minimize liability.

All staff and volunteers providing Medical Transportation Services supported in whole or part through Ryan White CARE Act funding must complete an initial training. Topics must include:

- General HIV knowledge, including HIV transmission;

- Universal precautions; and
- Privacy requirements

Staff who directly provide Medical Transportation Services must also receive initial and ongoing safety training as appropriate for their position and required by federal, state, or local regulations. Training may be any combination of (1) in-person, (2) articles, (3) home studies, or (4) webinars, and must be clearly documented and tracked for monitoring purposes. Topics must include:

- Emergency equipment;
- Defensive driving;
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and first aid (renewed every two years); and
- Pre-trip inspections.

Any agency or staff vehicles used for client transportation must be registered, insured, and in safe operating condition. They must be equipped with seat belts and other safety equipment as appropriate. Disabled clients must be transported in Americans with Disability Act (ADA)-compliant vehicles, and all staff and volunteers transporting clients with disabilities must be trained on how to properly and safely transport these clients.