



State of Louisiana

Louisiana Department of Health
Office of the Secretary

To: The Honorable John Bel Edwards, Governor, State of Louisiana (Via Email)
The Honorable Jeff Landry, Attorney General, Louisiana Department of Justice (apa.submission@ag.louisiana.gov)
The Honorable Patrick Page Cortez, President, Louisiana Senate (apa.senatepresident@legis.la.gov)
The Honorable Clay Schexnayder, Speaker, Louisiana House of Representatives (apa.housespeaker@legis.la.gov)
Catherine Brindley, Editor, *Louisiana Register* (reg.submission@la.gov)
Senate Health and Welfare Committee (apa.s-h&w@legis.la.gov)
House Health and Welfare Committee (apa.h-hw@legis.la.gov)

From: Stephen R. Russo, JD, Secretary, LDH

Date: September 11, 2023

Re: Justification of Promulgation of Emergency Rule
Medical Transportation Program – Emergency Medical Transportation
(LAC 50:XXVII.Chapter 3)

MEMORANDUM

In accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act (La. R.S. 49:950 *et seq.*) as amended, the Louisiana Department of Health is submitting the following emergency rule that amends Medical Transportation Program – Emergency Medical Transportation (LAC 50:XXVII.Chapter 3).

Should you have any questions or require additional information regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact Erin Lee at erin.lee@la.gov, and Veronica Gonzalez, at veronica.gonzalez@la.gov.

Attachments: Emergency Rule – Medical Transportation Program – Emergency Medical Transportation (LAC 50:XXVII.Chapter 3)

Cc: Kimberly Sullivan, Interim Medicaid Director, LDH
Kolynda Parker, Medicaid Deputy Director, LDH
Tangela Womack, Medicaid Deputy Director, LDH
Tizi Robinson, Medicaid Program Manager, LDH
Veronica Dent, Medicaid Program Manager, LDH
Bethany Blackson, Legislative Liaison, LDH
Catherine Brindley, *Louisiana Register* Editor, Office of the State Register

DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

**Department of Health
Bureau of Health Services Financing**

**Medical Transportation Program
Emergency Medical Transportation
(LAC 50:XXVII.Chapter 3)**

The Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing amends LAC 50: XXVII.Chapter 3 in the Medical Assistance Program as authorized by R.S. 36:254 and pursuant to Title XIX of the Social Security Act. This Emergency Rule is promulgated in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, R.S. 49:962, and shall be in effect for the maximum period allowed under the Act or until adoption of the final Rule, whichever occurs first.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) required reimbursement for emergency ambulance services to transition from the Full Medicaid Pricing program to an approved federal supplemental payment program by July 1, 2023. In compliance with CMS requirements, the Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing promulgated an Emergency Rule, which amended the provisions governing reimbursement in the Medical Transportation Program in order to align the reimbursement rates established for emergency ambulance services and providers with current practice for Medicaid managed care and fee-for-service

(*Louisiana Register*, Volume 49, Number 5). Upon further discussion with various stakeholders, the department has now determined that it is necessary to amend the provisions of the July 1, 2023 Emergency Rule.

This action is being taken to avoid sanctions or penalties by CMS.

Effective September 11, 2023, the Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing amends the July 1, 2023 Emergency Rule which amended the provisions governing reimbursement in the Medical Transportation Program in order to align the reimbursement rates established for emergency ambulance services and providers with current practice for Medicaid managed care and fee-for-service.

Title 50
PUBLIC HEALTH—MEDICAL ASSISTANCE
Part XXVII. Medical Transportation Program

Chapter 3. Emergency Medical Transportation

Subchapter A. Reserved.

Subchapter B. Ground Transportation

§325. Reimbursement

A. The Medicaid reimbursement for ground ambulance services is the rate established in the state fee schedule for emergency ambulance transport, basic life support, advanced life support and mileage, oxygen, intravenous fluids, and disposable

supplies administered during the emergency ambulance transport minus the amount paid by any liable third party coverage.

B. - J. ...

K. Effective for dates of service on or after July 1, 2023, the reimbursement rates for emergency ground ambulance transportation services shall be reimbursed based on the Louisiana Medicaid fee schedule.

EXCEPTION: Except as otherwise noted in the plan, state-developed fee schedule rates are established separately for governmental, New Orleans-based governmental, and private providers of ambulance transportation services to account for cost variability across these provider types and to maintain access to care through alignment with historic payment levels.

1. The agency's fee schedule rate, set as of July 1, 2023, is effective for services provided on or after that date.

All rates are published on the agency's website at:

<https://www.lamedicaid.com>.

2. The fee schedule was established as a function of historical rates in effect as of January 1, 2023 plus an enhancement which was calculated to achieve total fee schedule reimbursement as a percentage of average commercial rates (ACR), with the clarifications listed within Subparagraph a through c below:

a. governmental ambulance providers include those ambulance providers who are owned or operated by a public organization such as state, federal, parish, or city entities;

b. New Orleans-based governmental ambulance providers include ambulance providers located within the city of New Orleans; and

c. private ambulance transportation providers include corporations, limited liability companies, partnerships, or sole proprietors. Private providers must comply with all state laws and the regulations of any governing state agency, commission, or local entity to which they are subject as a condition of enrollment and continued participation in the Medicaid program.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 36:254 and Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of the Secretary, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 34:878 (May 2008), amended by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 36:1248 (June 2010), LR 36:2564 (November 2010), LR 37:3029 (October 2011), LR 39:1285 (May 2013), LR 40:1379 (July 2014), amended by the Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 49:

§327. Supplemental Payments for Ambulance Providers

A. Effective for dates of service on or after September 20, 2011, quarterly supplemental payments ~~may~~ shall be issued to qualifying ambulance providers for emergency medical transportation services rendered during the quarter if the department has received an appropriation from the legislature for these payments.

B. - E.7. ...

8. The department ~~may~~ will reimburse providers based on the following criteria.

a. ...

b. For all other ambulance service providers identified in Paragraph E.1, reimbursement ~~may~~ will be up to 80 percent of the provider's average commercial rate calculated in Paragraph E.7.

F. - F.2. ...

G. The supplemental payment ~~may~~ will be made effective for emergency medical transportation provided on or after September 20, 2011. This payment is based on the average amount that would have been paid at the equivalent community rate. After the initial calculation for fiscal year 2011-2012, the department will rebase the equivalent community rate using adjudicated claims data for services from the most recently completed fiscal year. This calculation may be made annually, but shall be made no less than every three years.

H. ...

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 36:254 and Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 40:1530 (August 2014), amended by the Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 49:

§331. Enhanced Reimbursements for Qualifying Emergency Ground Ambulance Service Providers

A. Emergency Medical Transportation

1. Qualifying emergency ambulance service providers assessed a fee as outlined in LAC 48:I.4001.E.1.a-b mayshall receive enhanced reimbursement for emergency ground ambulance transportation services rendered during the quarter through the Supplemental Payment Program described in the Medicaid State Plan if the department has received an appropriation from the legislature for these payments.

2. Effective for dates of service on or after July 1, 2019, qualifying emergency ambulance service providers assessed a fee as outlined in LAC 48:I.4001.E.1.a-d mayshall receive enhanced reimbursement for non-emergency ground ambulance transportation services rendered during the quarter through the Supplemental Payment Program described in the

Medicaid State Plan if the department has received an appropriation from the legislature for these payments.

B. - B.4. ...

C. Payment Methodology

1. Payment maywill include non-emergency ground ambulance services after July 1, 2019. The enhanced reimbursement to each qualifying emergency ground ambulance service provider shall not exceed the sum of the difference between the Medicaid payments otherwise made to these providers for the provision of emergency and non-emergency ground ambulance transportation services and the average amount that would have been paid at the equivalent community rate.

2. - 3.h. ...

D. Effective Date of Payment

1. The enhanced reimbursement payment mayshall be made effective for emergency ground ambulance transportation services provided on or after August 1, 2016, and for non-emergency ground transportation services provided after July 1, 2019. This payment is based on the average amount that would have been paid at the equivalent community rate.

D.2. - E.1. ...

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 36:254 and Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 42:1890 (November 2016), amended LR 45:1598 (November 2019), LR 49:

Subchapter C. Aircraft Transportation

§351. Standards for Participation

A. Rotor winged (helicopters) and fixed winged emergency aircraft must be certified by the Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing in order to receive Medicaid reimbursement. All air ambulance services must be provided in accordance with state laws and regulations governing the administration of these services.

B. ...

C. Prior Approval. Prior approval shall not be required for emergency air ambulance transportation services, including mileage. Approval shall be done during post payment review and shall not be completed prior to service delivery. Claims for payment of emergency air ambulance transportation services are received and reviewed retrospectively. The clinical documentation for each emergency air ambulance transportation service shall not be required for submission concurrent with the claim. If required, clinical documentation shall be required post claim submission.

1. Air ambulance claims will be reviewed and a determination will be made based on the following requirements. Air ambulance services are covered only if:

a. speedy admission of the beneficiary is essential and the point of pick-up of the beneficiary is inaccessible by a land vehicle; or

b. great distance or other obstacles are involved in getting the beneficiary to the nearest hospital with appropriate services.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 36:254 and Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of the Secretary, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 35:70 (January 2009), amended by the Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 49:

§353. Reimbursement

A. - B. ...

C. If a ground ambulance must be used for part of the transport, the ground ambulance provider will be reimbursed separately according to the provisions governing emergency ground transportation.

D. - I.2. ...

J. The reimbursement rates for emergency and non-emergency, rotor winged and fixed winged air ambulance transportation services shall be reimbursed based on the Louisiana Medicaid fee schedule. These rates include both in state and out-of-state air ambulance transportation. The agency's fee schedule rate was set as of January 1, 2022 and is effective for services provided on or after that date. All rates are published on the agency's website at:
<https://www.lamedicaid.com>.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 36:254 and Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Office of the Secretary, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 35:70 (January 2009), amended by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 36:2564 (November 2010), amended LR 37:3029 (October 2011), LR 39:1285 (May 2013), LR 40:1379 (July 2014), LR 42:277 (February 2016), amended by the Department of Health, Bureau of Health Service Financing, LR 49:

§355. Supplemental Payments for Ambulance Providers

A. Effective for dates of service on or after September 20, 2011, quarterly supplemental payments mayshall be issued to qualifying ambulance providers for emergency medical air transportation services rendered during the quarter if the

department has received an appropriation from the legislature for these payments.

B. - E.7. ...

8. The department maywill reimburse providers based on the following criteria.

a. ...

b. For all other ambulance service providers identified in E.1, reimbursement maywill be up to 80 percent of the provider's average commercial rate calculated in Paragraph E.7.

F. - F.2. ...

G. The supplemental payment maywill be made effective for air ambulance services provided on or after September 20, 2011. This payment is based on the average amount that would have been paid at the equivalent community rate. After the initial calculation for fiscal year 2011-2012, the department will rebase the equivalent community rate using adjudicated claims data for services from the most recently completed fiscal year. This calculation may be made annually, but shall not be made less often than every three years.

H. ...

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 36:254 and Title XIX of the Social Security Act.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 40:1531 (August 2014), amended by the Department of Health, Bureau of Health Services Financing, LR 49:

Implementation of the provisions of this Rule may be contingent upon the approval of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), if it is determined that submission to CMS for review and approval is required.

Kimberly Sullivan, Bureau of Health Services Financing, is responsible for responding to inquiries regarding this Emergency Rule. A copy of this Emergency Rule is available for review by interested parties at parish Medicaid offices.

Stephen R. Russo, JD

Secretary

RRJ 9/11/23