

## **Alaska Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Travel Program using the State Travel Office**

Your health care provider may refer you to a doctor or specialist in another community. Medicaid will pay for transportation under certain conditions. First, the referral must be for tests or treatment that is covered by Medicaid and not available in your community. Secondly, Medicaid will cover transportation to the nearest available facility that provides the recommended service. Lastly, Medicaid will cover the least expensive type of transportation based upon your health condition.

When you need to be seen in another community, your health care provider will call First Health Services Corporation and describe why travel is needed. First Health will use this information to determine eligibility for transportation service. When it is determined that you are eligible, First Health will prior authorize the travel. Once you have a prior authorization, call the State Travel Office at 1-800-514-7123. Friendly travel agents will book your travel on an available air carrier.

The State of Alaska has contracted with air carriers to transport Medicaid recipients to health care in other communities. The State Travel Office will book your travel on an approved air carrier. You will need to travel on the approved carrier. You will not be able to choose or change air carriers without authorization from Medicaid.

Traveling to another community for health care can be a stressful time, especially when you or a loved one is not feeling well. Here are some travel tips to help make the trip more pleasant:

- ✓ Be sure that your travel has been approved and properly booked before you go. Medicaid cannot pay for travel, taxi rides or a hotel room that was not properly authorized.
- ✓ Prepare to travel only for the length of time needed to complete your appointment. Medicaid cannot cover weekends or extra days that are not related to your medical care.
- ✓ Bring personal identification and bring your Medicaid coupons or Denali KidCare Card. You are responsible for giving a coupon or showing your card for all your appointments.
- ✓ Bring some money for things that are not covered by Medicaid. Medicaid cannot cover room service, tips, phone calls, pay-per-view movies, movie rentals or other extra services. If you order these things, you will need to pay for them.

Traveling by taxi:

- ✓ Use of the taxi voucher in your home community is not authorized. Medicaid does not cover a ride to the airport in your home community.
- ✓ Once you arrive in the community where you will receive health care, the taxi vouchers can be used to travel from the airport to your place of lodging, medical

- appointments, referrals for medical services and back your place of lodging and the airport.
- ✓ Taxi vouchers cannot be used for personal travel such as visiting family or friends or for shopping.
  - ✓ Using a Medicaid taxi voucher for travel other than from the airport to your place of lodging, medical appointments, referrals for medical services and back to your place of lodging and the airport is an erroneous benefit and must be paid back to Health and Social Services.

If you have any questions about how to use Medicaid travel benefits please call the Recipient Helpline at 1-800-780-9972.

Here are some frequently asked questions about the Medicaid transportation program:

*My child needs to travel for medical care. Will Medicaid pay for me also?*

Yes. Medicaid will cover one parent to escort their child to a necessary medical appointment. Under certain conditions, Medicaid will pay for an adult to have an escort. First Health will determine if an escort is necessary.

*My child needs to stay in the hospital for a long time. Will Medicaid authorize an extended stay for me, or can I travel back and forth?*

Medicaid recognizes that this is a difficult time for families. First Health will work with you and your health care provider to determine the most appropriate level of support.

*My health care provider referred me to a doctor in another state. Will Medicaid send me out-of-state?*

Maybe. Medicaid will cover transportation to another state if the service is not available in state; it must be a Medicaid covered service and be medically necessary. Remember, transportation is provided to the nearest hospital or facility that provides the kind of health care recommended by your doctor.

Children under the age 18 who are traveling out-of-state for medical services must travel with a legal parent or guardian.

*When I'm traveling for health care, will Medicaid pay for taxi rides and hotels?*

Yes. First Health will determine and authorize the services that are necessary while you are traveling. You will receive vouchers that cover hotel and appropriate taxi rides. Adults who are traveling with an escort are expected to share a hotel room.

*When I'm traveling for health care, will Medicaid cover my meals?*

Yes. First Health will determine the number of meals for you and/or your escort. Medicaid can pay up to \$36 for three consecutive meals if the restaurant where you choose to eat is enrolled in Alaska Medicaid. You may want to plan to stay at a hotel that has a restaurant enrolled with Alaska Medicaid.

*My doctor said that I need to stay longer, what do I do?*

When your travel plans change for medical reasons or bad weather, your health care provider needs to call First Health as soon as possible. First Health will make the necessary changes to your hotel and airplane prior authorization. After your health care provider has called First Health, you will need to call the State Travel Office to update your air tickets.

If you cannot travel due to bad weather, call First Health as soon as possible.

*My child is going to an out-of-state residential psychiatric treatment center. Can I travel with my child?*

Yes. Medicaid will pay for one parent or legal guardian to travel with the child to the treatment center and back home. Siblings or other relatives are not covered for travel. Medicaid may also cover limited travel for one parent or legal guardian to travel to the treatment center for therapeutic visits.

*My plans changed and I didn't travel. What do I do with the tickets?*

Call the State Travel Office. They will make arrangements for you to return the tickets so that Medicaid may collect a refund.

*I need to travel for a medical service, but I want to stay with family or friends.*

Great! First Health can help identify the things that Medicaid can and cannot cover when you stay with family or friends.

*I need transportation to a medical appointment in my home community. Can Medicaid help?*

Maybe. Medicaid does not typically provide transportation services in your home community. However, the "Early Screening Program" provides assistance for pregnant women and children to attend medical and WIC appointments. Please call 269-4575 in Anchorage, or 1-888-276-0606 Statewide to see if you might qualify.