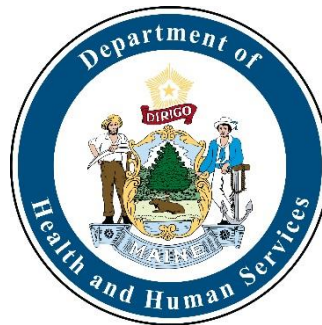


# MaineCare Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) Update

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# NET Overview

- Transportation to MaineCare-covered services for full benefit regular MaineCare members, including children and Home and Community Based Services waiver members (Sections 18, 19, 20, 21, and 29)
- ~2.4 million trips per year\*
- ~50,000 unique riders per fiscal year (~13% of eligible members)\*
- DHHS contracts with three brokers for eight MaineDOT transportation regions: ModivCare, Penquis Community Action Corp., Waldo Community Action Partners
- Brokers contract with dozens of transportation providers, employing hundreds of drivers, who provide rides to MaineCare members

\*Pre-pandemic

# NET Contracts

NET contracts have requirements in the following categories, with some examples listed below:

- **Safety:**
  - Annual vehicle inspections (includes volunteer drivers)
  - Criminal background and driver record reviews upon hire and every two years thereafter (includes volunteer drivers)
- **Quality:**
  - Answer 90% of calls within 60 seconds
  - Driver training for customer assistance
- **Timeliness:**
  - Deliver 85% of overall trips on time
  - Deliver 95% of trips for children <16 and HCBS waiver members on time
  - No more than 1% missed trips

# Impact of COVID-19 on NET

- More members: Due to federal requirements, the Department has not been disenrolling MaineCare members during the Public Health Emergency except in very limited circumstances
- Demand for rides has increased since the initial drop at the beginning of the pandemic, but it is not back to pre-pandemic levels
- Fewer drivers: Despite strict safety protocols as well as financial incentives, many professional and volunteer drivers stopped driving at the beginning of the pandemic, and they have not all returned
  - 2019 to mid-2021: 37% decrease in available drivers and 48% decrease in volunteer drivers
- This has led to fluctuating demand on a system with less capacity

# Recent Timeline for Program Improvement

- 2019-2020: DHHS workgroup to align contractual requirements and performance measurements across transportation programs
  - Statewide listening sessions (fall 2019)
  - Standardized and aligned quality, performance, and safety requirements in program contracts (effective July 2020)
  - Recommended an independent evaluation
- 2020-2021: Evaluation by vendor RLS & Associates, Inc. of all DHHS transportation programs
  - Input from beneficiaries/riders, healthcare providers, transportation providers, NET brokers, MDOT
  - Analysis of program oversight and performance measurement tools
  - Comparison to 2015 NET evaluation for 1915(b) waiver renewal
  - Recommendations to improve cost effectiveness and performance

# Operational Improvements – In Place

- Investigate complaints of redundancy in trip schedules (e.g., two drivers arriving to pick up the same MaineCare member)
- Continue to monitor on-time performance for waiver members and children ages 16 and under
- Encourage health care providers to work with brokers to adjust appointments and activity start/end times around off-peak hours when possible
- Work with MaineDOT to explore opportunities to procure Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) technology that would benefit all providers

# Operational Improvements

## Medium- to Long-Term

- July 2022 (contract updates)
  - Track missed healthcare appointments due to late or cancelled rides
  - Track performance for both scheduled and unscheduled trips
- October 2022 (internal NET audit)
  - Implement a protocol to verify resolution of complaints across all DHHS transportation programs
- Longer term (technology not yet available)
  - Determine a standardized cost allocation methodology that encourages ride-sharing for trips with different payment sources

# Structural Recommendations

RLS recommended we keep the NET brokerage model, with, at minimum, improved oversight and administrative adjustments.

Additional considerations for structural changes:

- Redefine how broker procurement matches up to MaineDOT transportation regions (currently one procurement/contract per region)
- More formal coordination with MaineDOT at both the Department and regional levels regarding all forms of public transportation

DHHS is still assessing these considerations, in alignment with MaineDOT's strategic planning process.



# Recent NET Successes

- Successful and safe transport during the pandemic thanks to installation of plastic barriers in vehicles, enforcement of masking requirements, provision of solo rides when possible, and diligent cleaning of vehicles
- Successful navigation of changing transportation needs (often longer trips) as health care facilities closed or are unable to take new patients
- Rides to COVID-19 vaccinations:
  - Thousands of trips for MaineCare members
  - ModivCare provided >350 free round trip rides open to all Mainers (outside NET contract)
- In the last quarter of 2021:
  - Complaints averaged 0.09% per month (out of total trips delivered)
  - Trips for children <16 and waiver members averaged 97% on time per month

# Questions?

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