



Date: March 19, 2020

To: NEMT Providers

Subject: COVID-19 Guidance for NEMT

COVID-19 Guidance: Non-Emergent Medical Transportation (NEMT)

Non-Emergent Medical Transportation (NEMT) providers play a vital role in transporting vulnerable populations to medical treatment. COVID-19 creates new risks for NEMT providers and the Oregon Health Plan members they serve. New protocols are needed to keep those members safe. In order to reduce risk and maximize safety, NEMT brokerages and providers (subcontractors) are expected to follow the guidance in this document.

- 1. Follow CDC guidelines on staying home when symptomatic.**
- 2. Follow Oregon Administrative Rule requirements for safety and cleanliness.**
- 3. Passengers and NEMT providers each have the right to refuse service.**

1. Follow CDC guidelines on staying home when symptomatic.

NEMT providers will come into contact with vulnerable populations. NEMT workers should minimize risk of transmission by not working if they are showing any symptoms of a respiratory infection, including fever, cough or difficulty breathing. Complete CDC guidelines are available here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html>

OHA will be releasing additional guidance for health care providers who begin to show symptoms while on the job.

2. Follow Oregon Administrative Rule requirements for safety and cleanliness.

OAR 410-136-3040 Vehicle Equipment and Subcontractor Standards requires that:

(1) Brokerages shall require subcontractors to maintain their vehicles for the comfort and safety of the clients. The vehicles shall meet the following requirements:

(a) The interior of the vehicle shall be **clean**;

OAR 410-141-3925 Transportation: Vehicle Equipment and Driver Standards (2) (a) on the safety of CCO members requires, "The interior of the vehicle shall be **clean** and free from any debris impeding a member's ability to ride comfortably;

To prevent further spread of COVID-19, NEMT providers are expected to follow CDC's general guidelines on cleaning and disinfecting emergency vehicles: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-for-ems.html>.

Emergency vehicles have more equipment than NEMT vehicles, but NEMT providers are expected to clean and disinfect any surfaces that a passenger may touch in the same way described in the guidance for emergency vehicles.

3. Passengers and NEMT providers each have the right to refuse service.

If a passenger has concerns about a driver's health, they have the right to decline transportation from that driver. Passengers who do so will need to contact the broker to make alternate arrangements.

If a driver has concerns about a passenger's observable symptoms of respiratory infection, the driver has the right to refuse service to the passenger. In that event, the NEMT broker and provider are expected to help the passenger make other arrangements for transportation, including use of an ambulance service if transportation for treatment is required in the presence of respiratory symptoms.

Questions?

If you have any questions about this announcement, please email COVID.19@dhsosha.state.or.us.

Thank you for your continued support of the Oregon Health Plan and the services you provide to our members.