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Non-Emergency Transportation (NET) COVID-19 Member Guidance

Updated November 3, 2020

Is NET still available for my appointments during the pandemic?

Yes, NET is still offering rides to MaineCare members for MaineCare covered services.

Do I need to wear a face covering if I take NET?

Yes. MaineCare members and NET drivers are required to wear face coverings during NET rides, as physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain.

Face coverings are recommended for children ages 2 to 4 unless it is deemed developmentally inappropriate. Face coverings are required for all children age 5 and older in public settings.

Face coverings are not required for a person:

- Under age 2
- Who has trouble breathing or related medical conditions, or who is otherwise unable to put on or remove a face covering without assistance
- With a developmental issue that is complicated or irritated by wearing a face covering

Please alert the broker if you are not able to wear a face covering when you call to schedule the ride. If you have a disability that you believe prevents you from participating in, or fully benefiting from, the MaineCare NET program, and you believe that there is a reasonable change that could be made, you may ask the Department to make a change to the program under the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). You can find additional information on how to request a reasonable modification [here](#).

If you do not alert the broker, have not made a reasonable modification request that has been approved, are not wearing a face covering when the driver arrives, or refuse to wear a face covering when the driver arrives, the ride may be denied if the driver believes there is a direct threat to the safety of others or if the ride will be shared with other members.

Will the driver provide me with a face covering for my ride?

Drivers are not obligated to provide face coverings to riders, though some drivers may have disposable face coverings available. MaineCare members should plan on providing their own face coverings. More information about face coverings can be found [here](#), and [here](#) is information about face coverings sold by Maine manufacturers.

Will my driver have to wear a face covering?

Yes. Drivers are required to wear a face covering, unless they are unable to do so. Drivers who cannot wear a face covering must have a clear plastic barrier installed in their vehicles to isolate the driver from riders.

If I need to get tested for COVID-19, will I be able to take NET?

We recommend that all MaineCare members follow the CDC's advice if you feel sick, believe you have been exposed to COVID-19, or otherwise need a test: call ahead before going to your primary care practice or any other health care facility. NET will then arrange for your transport to a testing site. **Please alert the broker of the reason for your trip when you call to schedule the ride** so they can appropriately arrange for the safety of your trip. If you have COVID-19, or think you may have COVID-19, and require emergency care, call 911.

You can search for testing sites near you [here](#).

Through at least December 31, 2020, NET rides will *not* be available to [“Swab and Send”](#) testing sites, because those tests are covered by non-Medicaid federal grant funding and not by MaineCare. NET rides will also *not* be available to any testing sites that require patients to pay up front and submit a reimbursement to their health insurance.

If you are unsure whether you can get a ride through NET to your preferred testing site, you can check with the NET broker or MaineCare Member Services (1-800-977-6740).

If I need to go to the doctor to be treated for COVID-19, will I be able to take NET?

We recommend that all MaineCare members follow the CDC's advice and call your health care provider before going to your primary care practice or any other healthcare facility. NET will then arrange for your transport. **Please alert the broker of the reason for your trip when you call to schedule the ride** so that brokers can appropriately plan for the safety of your trip by alerting drivers to take extra precautions. If you have COVID-19 and require emergency care, call 911.

Can volunteer drivers (who receive mileage reimbursement) drive me for a trip related to COVID-19?

A volunteer driver may drive you to get a COVID-19 test if the test is a pre-surgical requirement **and** if you have no COVID-19 symptoms or known exposure to anyone with COVID-19 symptoms.

For COVID-19 related trips other than required pre-surgical testing, a volunteer driver may drive you **only** if that driver lives in your household.

As a reminder, volunteer drivers must contact the NET broker two days prior to delivering the trip for which they are seeking mileage reimbursement.

If I have COVID-19 or [symptoms of COVID-19](#), or if I have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, will I be able to take NET?

Yes. Please alert the broker that you have or might have COVID-19, or have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, when you call to schedule the ride so that brokers can appropriately plan for the safety of your trip by alerting drivers to take extra precautions.

If I have COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19, or if I have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, but I need to go to an essential medical appointment like dialysis or infusion, will I be able to take NET?

Before requesting a trip, call your health care provider to explore whether any in-home services may be an appropriate alternative to visiting a health care facility. If there are no in-home options, NET will arrange for your transport. **Please alert the broker that you have or might have COVID-19, or have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, when you call to schedule the ride** so that brokers can appropriately plan for the safety of your trip by alerting drivers to take extra precautions.

If I am sick, will I be able to take NET?

We recommend that all MaineCare members follow the CDC's advice if you feel sick, especially with symptoms that are common to COVID-19: call your health care provider before going to your primary care practice or any other health care facility. If your health care provider tells you to go into the office, NET will arrange for your transport. **Please alert the broker that you are sick when you call to schedule the ride** so that brokers can appropriately plan for the safety of your trip by alerting drivers to take extra precautions. If you require emergency care, call 911.

If I take NET, will I have to share the vehicle with other people?

Brokers are encouraged to schedule solo rides if there are enough drivers available to do so or to use vehicles that are large enough to allow for social distancing when feasible.

How have the NET brokers and transporters prepared for COVID-19?

Brokers have implemented cleaning protocols for transporters and drivers to keep vehicles sanitized. Drivers are required to wear a face covering, unless they are unable to do so for health reasons. Drivers who cannot wear a face covering must have a clear plastic barrier installed in their vehicles to isolate the driver from riders. Drivers are encouraged to drive with windows open when weather permits to improve air circulation and decrease the general risk of transmission.

If there is a driver shortage, will NET have to prioritize some trips over others?

The Department is looking closely at contingency planning for a scenario in which there are not enough drivers to meet the demand for rides. We encourage members to take advantage of mileage reimbursement that brokers offer for volunteer drivers (e.g. friends, family, and neighbors) when appropriate.