

Penquis Transportation Brokerage

Contact Information

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Penquis Transportation Brokerage is the NET MaineCare transportation broker for Region 3 (Penobscot and Piscataquis Counties) and Region 4 (Kennebec and Somerset Counties). Penquis Transportation Brokerage is located in the same building as Penquis’ Lynx Mobility Services, but both operate as separate entities.

The Brokerage has a full-time volunteer coordinator who recruits and trains volunteers and manages approximately 190 volunteers. Volunteers attend advisory meetings. About a third of volunteer drivers are qualified to be child transporters. The Brokerage and Lynx Mobility Services share the same group of volunteers.

The call center gets about 900 calls per day, but sometimes as many as 1,300 to 1,400. Most of the calls are inquiries, such as “who is my driver going to be?” Penquis Transportation Brokerage averages about 3,000 trips per day, many of which are regularly scheduled trips that are arranged in advance.

Approximately 40% of the rides arranged by the Brokerage are provided through the Friends and Family program. The rest are provided by volunteers, Lynx Mobility Services, Community Connector, KV Van (KVCAP), Kennebec Explorer, regional transporters, taxi companies and chair car service providers. The NET transporters serving the Brokerage are shown below.

Penquis Transportation Brokerage Regions 3 and 4 NET Transporters		
Regional Transporters under service agreement	Taxi Companies	
BeeLine Transport	Dick’s Taxi	Roadrunner Taxi
Private Chauffeur	Old Town Taxi	J & L Taxi
	Marty’s Taxi	Marv’s Taxi
Volunteers	Town Taxi	Alydar Taxi
	Your Taxi	C & S Cab
Chair Car Service Providers	Campus Taxi	Campus Taxi II
United Ambulance	A & M Taxi	Tim’s Taxi
Capital Ambulance	B & J Taxi	All in Taxi
	Rickshaw Taxi	

Challenges

- **Region 4.** Providing rides in region 4 is challenging, in part because of a shortage of volunteers in the Augusta area.
- **Scheduling software.** The scheduling systems in Regions 3 and 4 have not been integrated. However, on December 1, 2018, the same scheduling software, QRyde, will be used in both regions. The new software will have features that show where any ride is at any given time. The software has been customized to include a feature that allows volunteers to key into the software with their own private phones.
- **No-shows.** “No shows” are no longer a significant problem. After about two years with the brokerage, DHHS permitted implementation of a no-show policy. The Brokerage now has a three strikes policy. The first no show results in a warning letter, a second results in a more aggressive warning, and a third results in a 30-day suspension. At that point, the individual with three strikes may only use the friends and family program. This policy has cut no shows in half. The Brokerage expects a further reduction to about 25% with the call-back system which is part of the new software.

Overall, the system works well for Penquis Transportation Brokerage. Actuarial rates are established by the Office of MaineCare Services for a one-year period, based on an audit of Penquis Transportation Brokerage’s revenues and expenses. If costs increase after the audit, the Brokerage may have to operate at a loss until the next audit

For a MaineCare member requesting a ride, it’s sometimes difficult to verify that the person doesn’t have a vehicle, or that a person with a vehicle may not be able to drive because of their medical condition or the type of treatment they receive. However, it is assumed that a MaineCare member receiving dialysis will need transportation following treatment.

MaineCare members have a grievance process but there have been no successful grievances against the Brokerage. There are more complaints in Region 4 because of a shortage of resources such as the lack of volunteers in Augusta.