

FAMILY & CAREGIVER GUIDEBOOK

SENIORMEDRIDES

Getting your loved one to every appointment, safely and on time

CITY TRANSPORT GUIDES FOR ARIZONA · CALIFORNIA · FLORIDA · IDAHO · UTAH

WHEN TRANSPORT FAILS, CARE FAILS

Closing the gap in healthcare access

Every year, millions of older adults, people with mobility limitations, and patients recovering from procedures face a quiet but critical hurdle: simply getting to their appointments. Medicine keeps making remarkable leaps, yet finding reliable non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) from the living room to the exam table remains a persistent bottleneck.

Transportation barriers are tied to missed appointments, worsening health, and more emergency room visits. When a senior misses a routine checkup or a dialysis session for lack of a safe ride, the domino effect is immediate.

For patients, it means avoidable complications and readmissions. For hospitals and busy discharge planners, it means delayed discharges, bed backlogs, and staff hours spent hunting for local transport.

Transportation is no longer a mere logistical convenience. It is recognized as a vital **Social Determinant of Health (SDOH)**.

The SeniorMedRides.com difference

SeniorMedRides.com sits at the intersection of healthcare access, senior mobility, and care coordination. It connects families who need specialized rides with verified local NEMT operators, so caregivers can filter providers by location, mobility level, and insurance acceptance.

BUILT FOR FAMILIES & CARE TEAMS

- ☐ **NEMT only** — focused solely on non-emergency medical transportation and senior mobility, not generic rideshare.
- ☐ **Verified local fleets** — compare providers by mobility level, from ambulatory to wheelchair-accessible vans (WAV) to stretcher care.
- ☐ **Less calling, more confidence** — turns hours of phone calls into one trusted search.

DID YOU KNOW?

Missed appointments cost the healthcare system billions each year, but the real cost is a patient's well-being. Connecting families with verified local NEMT providers helps keep care plans on track.

By making medical transportation easier to find, easier to trust, and easier to arrange, SeniorMedRides.com helps patients get to the care they need, safely and on time.

FEATURE ARTICLE · FAMILY & CAREGIVER GUIDE

GETTING MOM TO HER APPOINTMENT

Navigating non-emergency medical transportation with confidence

For millions of adult children, the moment arrives quietly: Mom or Dad can no longer drive safely, yet the calendar is full of essential appointments. When rideshare or a taxi falls short on safety, hands-on help, or wheelchair access, NEMT bridges the gap.

CAREGIVER INSIGHT

"Curbside" pickup assumes your parent can walk down the driveway and open the car door alone. If Mom needs help getting out of her chair, down the front steps, or through the clinic door, request **door-to-door** or **door-through-door** service.

1 DETERMINE LEVEL OF CARE

Plan for your parent's *worst* mobility day, not their best: ambulatory (light assistance), wheelchair/ WAV (lift or ramp), stretcher (must stay reclined), or a door-through-door escort into the waiting room.

2 VET THE PROVIDER

Treat the first call like a job interview. Are drivers background-checked, drug-tested, and CPR/First Aid certified? Is it true door-through-door or only curbside? What is the cancellation policy? How often are vehicles inspected?

3 SORT OUT PAYMENT

Medicaid covers medically necessary rides through your state's program or health plan, with advance notice. **Medicare Advantage** plans may add a ride benefit; check the back of the card. **Private pay** is a per-trip fee plus mileage; always get a written quote.

4 SIMPLIFY THE SEARCH

Instead of calling a long list of numbers, use SeniorMedRides.com to compare verified local fleets by location, care level, and insurance acceptance in one place.

AMBULATORY	WHEELCHAIR / WAV	STRETCHER
Walks with light help; needs a hand in and out of the vehicle.	Manual or power chair; needs a hydraulic lift or ramp.	Non-ambulatory; must remain reclined for the whole trip.

PAYING FOR TRANSIT

PATIENT COVERAGE & BENEFIT COMPARISON

The right payment pathway depends on coverage. **Medicaid** offers the broadest and most dependable ride benefit. **Medicare Advantage** may add rides, but benefits are plan-specific and often capped. **Commercial insurance** varies widely. **Private pay** gives the most flexibility at direct cost.

Note: Original Medicare (Parts A & B) is left out of the table below because it generally does not cover non-emergency rides to routine appointments.

	Medicaid NEMT	Medicare Advantage (Part C)	Commercial insurance	Private pay
Standard benefit?	Yes, for eligible members (rules vary by state and program).	Optional supplemental benefit; varies by plan.	Rarely; varies by insurer or employer.	Not insurance; you pay the operator directly.
Ride limits	Based on medical need, not a set number of trips.	Often a yearly trip or dollar cap.	Often capped by count, dollars, or diagnosis.	No cap beyond your budget.
Out-of-pocket	Usually $0 for covered trips.	Usually $0 within plan limits.	$0, a copay, or not covered.	Full fare: pickup fee, mileage, and wait time.
Wheelchair rides	Covered when medically necessary.	If included in the plan's network.	Depends on the contracted network.	Widely available at specialized rates.
Advance notice	Required; varies by state (e.g., 2 business days in Idaho, 3 in Utah).	Required; check with the plan.	Varies; prior authorization is common.	Same-day sometimes possible; booking ahead is best.
Choice of provider	Assigned by the state broker or health plan.	The plan's designated vendor.	The insurer's contracted vendor.	Widest choice among verified fleets.
Best fit for	Members with no other way to get to care.	Seniors with an active plan ride benefit.	Members in care-management programs.	Families who need fast, flexible rides.

HOW EACH PAYMENT PROGRAM WORKS

1 · Medicaid: comprehensive, strict rules

Federal rules require state Medicaid programs to ensure members can get to covered medical care. Rides are usually free, but each state sets its own booking rules, and many require you to try other options (family, transit) first.

2 · Medicare Advantage: helpful, not universal

Unlike Original Medicare, many Medicare Advantage plans offer rides as a supplemental benefit, but coverage, trip limits, and vendors differ from plan to plan. Never assume "Medicare covers rides": confirm trips remaining, any mileage limit, and which company dispatches.

3 · Commercial insurance: highly variable

Employer and marketplace plans rarely include standard NEMT. When they do, it usually sits inside care-management, dialysis or oncology support, or post-discharge programs. Ask member services about a "transportation to care" benefit.

4 · Private pay: maximum control

When insurance is exhausted or unavailable, paying directly gives you full choice of vehicle type, pickup times, and level of assistance.

The patient & caregiver action pathway

If your situation is...	Your recommended next step
Medicaid member	Call your state's NEMT line or your health plan (see pages 08–09) as early as possible, and at least as far ahead as your state requires.
Medicare Advantage member	Call member services to confirm remaining rides and the plan's transportation vendor.
Original Medicare only	Ask about Medicaid dual eligibility, your local Area Agency on Aging, paratransit, or private pay.
Commercial insurance	Ask member services specifically about NEMT or care-management transportation benefits.
Wheelchair user with no benefit	Compare local wheelchair-accessible fleets on SeniorMedRides.com and request written quotes.
Need a ride this week	Book private-pay NEMT directly with a local provider.

INSURER CALL SCRIPT FOR FAMILIES

"I'm calling to check whether [patient name]'s plan includes a non-emergency medical transportation or ride-to-care benefit. If so: how many one-way trips remain this year, is there a mileage limit, which number do we call to schedule, and how much advance notice is required?"

PRINTABLE CHECKLIST

FAMILY NEMT EVALUATION CHECKLIST

Use this sheet to evaluate local NEMT providers before you book. Print a fresh copy for each company you call.

1 · VERIFICATION & SAFETY

- [ ] **Licensing & insurance** — licensed where required and commercially insured for patient transport?
- [ ] **Driver qualifications** — background-checked, drug-tested, CPR and First Aid certified?
- [ ] **Accessibility** — working ramps or lifts and secure wheelchair tie-downs?
- [ ] **Cleanliness** — how often are vehicles cleaned between rides?

2 · MOBILITY & LEVEL OF CARE

- [ ] **Service level** — ambulatory, wheelchair, stretcher, or bariatric available?
- [ ] **Assistance** — true door-through-door, or only curbside?
- [ ] **Companion policy** — can a family member ride along, and at what cost?
- [ ] **Special equipment** — oxygen, walkers, or power chairs accommodated?

3 · SCHEDULING & PRICING

- [ ] **Booking window** — how much notice; any same-day service?
- [ ] **Clear rates** — written quote showing pickup fee, mileage, and extras?
- [ ] **Cancellation terms** — window and fee if the doctor reschedules?
- [ ] **Insurance billing** — bills Medicaid, Medicare Advantage, or other insurance directly?

A provider who checks every box in all three sections is ready to book with confidence.

PRO TIP FOR CAREGIVERS

Keep the completed sheets together. A side-by-side comparison makes the final decision much easier.

NOT SURE WHERE TO START?

SeniorMedRides.com prescreens local fleets on many of these questions, a faster start than an open web search.

Provider name: _____ Phone: _____ Quote: $_____

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ANSWERS TO YOUR MOST PRESSING QUESTIONS

What do I need when booking?

Pickup and destination addresses, appointment time and expected length, mobility needs (cane, walker, wheelchair, power chair, or stretcher), and anything special like oxygen or a companion seat.

Can a caregiver ride along?

Many providers allow one family member or caregiver to ride along, often at no extra charge. Mention it when you book so a seat is reserved.

How far ahead should I schedule?

For private pay, one to three days is a good habit. Medicaid programs set their own minimums, such as two business days in Idaho and three in Utah. Hospital discharges may qualify for faster dispatch.

Curbside, door-to-door, or door-through-door?

Curbside: patient walks to the vehicle alone. **Door-to-door:** driver helps from the home's front door to the clinic's front door. **Door-through-door:** driver escorts inside and hands off to staff.

Does Medicare or Medicaid pay for rides?

Medicaid covers medically necessary rides when you have no other way to get there. Original Medicare (Parts A & B) generally does not. Many Medicare Advantage plans add a ride benefit; check the back of the card.

What does private pay cost?

Usually a base pickup fee plus a per-mile rate. Wheelchair lifts, stretcher or bariatric service, wait time, and after-hours trips may add charges. Always ask for a firm written quote.

Will the provider bill my insurance?

Some operators bill Medicaid, Medicare Advantage, or private insurance directly. Ask during your vetting call, because not every fleet does.

No wheelchair benefit, now what?

Compare local wheelchair-accessible fleets on SeniorMedRides.com and request private-pay quotes when a plan doesn't cover the ride you need.

HOW SENIORMEDRIDES.COM HELPS

Instead of calling dozens of providers or guessing which fleets are licensed and insured, families filter verified local providers by location, mobility level, and insurance acceptance.

LOCAL RULES & CONTACTS

REGIONAL METRO GUIDES

ARIZONA

Phoenix Metro · AHCCCS

How to book: call your AHCCCS health plan's member services (number on the member card).

First ask: AHCCCS expects members to use family, transit, or rideshare first when possible.

Have ready: mobility device, any oxygen or IV, and whether you need help to the vehicle.

Summer tip: confirm the vehicle is air-conditioned and ask for door-to-door so no one waits outside in the heat.

CALIFORNIA

Sacramento · Medi-Cal

Managed care members: call your Medi-Cal plan's member services to book.

Two ride types: NMT (car or transit, for those with no other way) and NEMT (wheelchair van, litter van, or ambulance).

NEMT needs a prescription from a licensed provider.

Fee-for-service members: request rides through the online form on the DHCS transportation page.

FLORIDA

Tampa Bay · Orlando · Medicaid health plans

How to book: rides are arranged through your Medicaid health plan.

Use the number on your card: each plan picks its own ride vendor, and vendors change, so skip old numbers from friends or the web.

Book early: morning appointment slots fill first in busy retiree areas.

IDAHO

Boise · Treasure Valley · Idaho Medicaid

Broker: MTM, 1-877-503-1261, scheduling 24/7, or the MTM Link app.

Notice: at least 2 business days; long-distance trips at least 10 calendar days ahead.

Gas reimbursement: family drivers can be reimbursed per mile with approval before the trip.

Winter tip: ask for doorstep help on icy days.

UTAH

Salt Lake City · Utah Medicaid

Who qualifies: Traditional Medicaid members without regular transportation.

Transit first: a UTA card covers medical trips on bus and TRAX (more rides: 1-844-238-3091).

Modivcare: 1-855-563-4403; requires a doctor's mobility form; book 3 business days ahead.

Paratransit (Salt Lake & Davis): 801-287-7433. Mileage reimbursement is also available.

GENERAL RULE OF THUMB

Whatever the metro, confirm three things before the day of the appointment, not the morning of: the mobility level, the booking window, and who is paying.

CONTACT SHEET

MEDICAID RIDE CONTACTS

State / program	Who to call	Notes
Arizona · AHCCCS	Your health plan's member services	Number is on the member card; plan list at azahcccs.gov/healthplans.
California · Medi-Cal	Your Medi-Cal plan's member services	Fee-for-service: online request form on the DHCS transportation page.
Florida · Medicaid	Your health plan's transportation line	Vendor varies by plan; use the number in your plan materials.
Idaho · Medicaid	MTM · 1-877-503-1261	Scheduling 24/7; also mileage reimbursement approvals.
Utah · Medicaid	Modivcare · 1-855-563-4403	UTA transit card help: 1-844-238-3091.
Medicare Advantage	Number on back of card	Confirm remaining rides and the plan's ride vendor.

Contacts checked November 2026. Brokers and phone numbers change; confirm with your plan before booking.

SeniorMedRides.com

Find local, verified NEMT fleets by mobility level, insurance acceptance, and service area, wherever your family needs to be.

FIND VERIFIED FLEETS AT SENIORMEDRIDES.COM

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