

Letter to local DSS offices re: NEMT

NC Medicaid COVID-19 Updated Guidelines for Non-emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)

“NC Medicaid COVID-19 Updated Guidelines for Non-emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT)” provides information to local Departments of Social Services (DSS) and NEMT providers on personal protective equipment (PPE).

Based on the current situation of COVID-19 and the availability of PPE, NC DHHS has issued guidance on PPE that addresses:

- The definition of PPE
- Who should wear PPE
- Who should not wear PPE
- Specific recommendation for NEMT providers

DHHS also emphasized “**PPE should only be worn by individuals that have been trained and observed to be competent in putting it on and taking it off appropriately.**” Training and competency must include, at a minimum, knowing:

- When to use PPE
- What PPE is necessary (based on the activity to be performed)
- How to properly put on, use and remove PPE in a manner that prevents self-contamination
- How to properly dispose of or clean/disinfect and maintain PPE”

This interim guidance may be found at <https://files.nc.gov/ncdhhs/documents/files/covid-19/NC-Interim-Guidance-for-PPE-in-Non-Medical-Setting.pdf>

As noted above, if they are to use it, all NEMT personnel must be trained in use of PPE to use it safely.

DHHS is aware of limited quantities of and difficulty acquiring PPE. NEMT vendors not able to acquire PPE through traditional methods should contact their local/county emergency management agency. Please note, local emergency agencies are prioritizing distribution to health care workers and first responders.

For additional steps that NEMT vendors can take to reduce workers’ risk of exposure, please see guidance that has been published by the Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) found <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>. Engineering controls, like installing physical barriers, such as clear plastic sneeze guards, may be appropriate.

Initial guidance on NEMT may be found at <https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/blog/2020/03/26/special-bulletin-covid-19-18-guidelines-non-emergency-medical-transportation>

Local social services staff may direct questions about NEMT-related issues during COVID-19 to, Eva Fulcher, NC Medicaid Eligibility Services, at eva.fulcher@dhhs.nc.gov or (919) 813-5343. Others may direct questions to medicaid.covid19@dhhs.nc.gov.