
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Anna Caballero, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1328 (Michelle Rodriguez) - Medi-Cal reimbursements: nonemergency ambulance and other transportation

Version: July 17, 2025

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 18, 2025

Policy Vote: HEALTH 10 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Agnes Lee

Bill Summary: AB 1328 would require the reimbursement rates for Medi-Cal nonemergency ambulance transportation services to be in an amount equal to 80 percent of the amount set forth in the federal Medicare ambulance fee schedule, as specified.

Fiscal Impact:

- Unknown ongoing costs, likely low hundreds of thousands, for the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to seek federal approvals and update policies and guidances (General Fund and federal funds).
- Unknown ongoing costs, potentially low tens of millions, to fund the reimbursement rates (General Fund and federal funds).

Background: The non-emergency medical transportation services Medi-Cal benefit is transportation by ambulance, litter van, wheelchair van, or air to get to and from covered Medi-Cal services. These services are provided only in situations when the enrollee cannot utilize ordinary means of public or private transportation (such as bus, passenger car, or taxicab) due to their medical, mental health, or physical condition. Non-emergency medical transportation services are subject to prior written authorization by a licensed practitioner. The provider must submit a treatment authorization request that includes: a) the purpose of the transportation; b) the frequency of medical visits/trips or the inclusive dates of the requested transportation; and, c) the medical, mental health, or physical condition that makes normal public or private transportation inadvisable. Once requests are approved, Medi-Cal plans are required to authorize the lowest cost type of transportation that is adequate for the member's medical or mental health needs.

Proposed Law: Specific provisions of the bill would:

- Require, subject to an appropriation made by the Legislature to fund, in whole or in part, the reimbursement rates for Medi-Cal nonemergency ambulance transportation services to be in an amount equal to 80 percent of the amount set forth in the federal Medicare ambulance fee schedule, as specified.
- Provide that, whenever the medical necessity of nonemergency ambulance transportation services needs to be certified for purposes of Medi-Cal coverage,

either a physician or a nonphysician authorized pursuant to federal regulations, as specified, may complete that certification.

- Provide that, for purposes of documenting mileage in their records under the Medi-Cal program, medical transportation providers may utilize any of the following mechanisms:
 - Odometer readings at each pickup and delivery location.
 - Vehicle Global Positioning System (GPS) tracking.
 - Digital mapping software or applications, whether or not installed in the vehicle transporting the patient.
 - Any other mechanism identified by DHCS, as deemed reasonable based on ongoing technological updates.

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