

Frequently Asked Questions: Prior Authorization for Non-Emergent Transportation

What is the new policy?

For dates of service beginning May 1, 2017 for our commercial products, Harvard Pilgrim is requiring prior authorization for all non-emergent transportation — including fixed-wing air and ground transportation (ambulance, wheelchair van, etc.). This change took effect for our Medicare Advantage Stride products on January 1, 2017. The policy applies to members in all our products in MA, NH, ME, and CT, with the exception of members in CT Open Access HMO.

Is prior authorization required for emergency transportation?

No, prior authorization is not required for emergency transportation that is reasonable and medically necessary to ensure the member’s safe transport to the nearest medical provider capable of furnishing covered services.

Where can I find more information about this policy?

For details on the policy, please refer to the updated [Medical Transportation Medical Review Criteria](#), which describes covered services and includes criteria and coding information. You can find the Medical Transportation Medical Review Criteria on our provider website (www.harvardpilgrim.org/providers). Click on the “Medical Management” tab in the left column and select the “Prior Authorization Medical Review Criteria” link. Additional information can also be found in the updated Ambulance Transport Payment Policy, which is also posted on the provider website (go to the *Provider Manual* and click on the “[Payment Policies](#)” link).

Under the new policy, which codes require prior authorization?

Under this policy, the following codes require prior authorization: A0130, A0426, A0428, and A0430. While the following mileage codes do not require prior authorization, Harvard Pilgrim will only provide reimbursement for them when a prior authorization has been obtained for the corresponding transport service: A0425, A0435, and S0209. The chart below provides descriptions for these codes.

Code	Description
A0130	Non-emergency transportation; wheelchair van
A0425	Ground mileage, per statute mile
A0426	Ambulance service, advanced life support, non-emergency transport level 1 (ALS1)
A0428	Ambulance service, basic life support, non-emergency transport (BLS)
A0430	Ambulance service, conventional air services, transport, one way (fixed wing)
A0435	Fixed wing air mileage, per statute mile
S0209	Fixed wing air mileage, per statute mile

Who is responsible for obtaining the prior authorization?

The member’s ordering provider is responsible for requesting the authorization with Harvard Pilgrim. In addition, the medical transport provider should confirm that the ordering provider has requested and obtained a prior authorization.

How do I request an authorization?

The standard authorization request procedure applies. To request prior authorization, please complete the [Transportation Prior Authorization Request Form](#) and submit your request to Harvard Pilgrim's Referral/Authorization Unit using one of the following methods:

- Electronically via *HPHConnect* or NEHEN
- Fax: 800-232-0816
- Telephone: 800-708-4414

You can find this form in the *Provider Manual*, which is posted on the provider website (www.harvardpilgrim.org/providers). Select the "Referral, Notification, and Authorization" section of the Provider Manual, and scroll down to "Prior Authorization and Exception Request Forms."

Can my organization submit its own non-Emergent Transport Authorization form?

You can use your own form if it provides the same information. If you choose to use your own form, Harvard Pilgrim may need to request additional clinical to complete the review.

What if non-emergent transportation is needed after Harvard Pilgrim's business hours or on the weekend?

If an authorization request occurs outside of normal business hours (M-F, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET), the medical transport provider may initiate services, but the authorization request should be submitted by the next business day.

Is there anything else to keep in mind?

It's important to use a Harvard Pilgrim contracted ambulance provider when coordinating ambulance services for our members. Using ambulance services that do not participate in Harvard Pilgrim's network can result in higher out-of-pocket costs for your patients, affect risk-sharing arrangements, and increase the overall cost of health care premiums. Harvard Pilgrim has a robust network of participating ambulance providers, which you can find in its entirety in our online [Provider Directory](#). When delivering care to Harvard Pilgrim members, please select an ambulance/transport provider from this directory.

Where can I find out more information?

There is more information about this policy on the HPHC website:
https://www.harvardpilgrim.org/portal/page?_pageid=253,10368074&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL

If you have any additional questions, please contact the commercial Provider Service Center at 800-708-4414 or the StrideSM (HMO) Medicare Advantage Provider Service Center at 888-609-0692. For questions on specific authorization requests or denials, you may also call 888-888-4742 and request the Utilization Management Department.