

Client Eligibility

Policy:

The CARTS program is a non-emergency, door-to-door, medical transportation service designed for Columbia County residents in need of transport to and from their medical appointments. This program was initiated to ensure that everyone, especially low-income individuals and families, and those residing in rural areas, have access to quality healthcare.

Committee Approval Date: 01/13/2000; 1/3/2024

Board Approval Date: 01/19/2000, 12/3/2025

Effective Date: 01/20/2000

Revision Date: 12/17/2010, 01/22/2014, 03/19/2014, 1/3/2024, 12/3/2025

Procedure:

The following procedure will be utilized to determine the eligibility of persons wishing to avail themselves of CARTS

- Clients must be a resident of Columbia County.
- A parent or guardian must accompany any minor under the age of 18. Special arrangements can be made with other organizations to transport youth in conjunction with an approved activity.
- Clients who are not enrolled in Medicaid may request transportation services by calling our CARTS Program Office directly at 518-822-8020. Clients who are enrolled in Medicaid and are eligible for Medicaid transportation should be immediately referred to Medical Answering Service, LLC. (MAS) at 1-866-883-7865. Authorization for our agency to provide Medicaid transportation will come directly from Medical Answering Service (MAS) via a Trip Authorization Form.
- All attempts will be made to accommodate trip requests. In the event that our agency is unable to accommodate a request for transportation, non-Medicaid clients will be referred to other available modes of transportation, i.e.; local bus service, taxi services, etc. In the event that our agency is unable to accommodate a request for Medicaid authorized transportation, MAS will be notified as soon as possible so the trip can be reassigned to another Medicaid transportation vendor.
- The CARTS program does have a limited capacity to transport individual using wheelchairs or mobility chairs via our Mini-Bus, which is equipped with a platform lift. Requests will be accepted based upon the availability of the Mini-Bus, on a first-come, first-served basis.

- Clients will be entitled to have an aide accompany them to their respective appointments. No more than one aide per client will be allowed unless previously authorized by the CARTS Program Director or CARTS Program Coordinator.
- Clients will be provided assistance beyond the curb on an individual, case-by-case basis when a client's disability or other factors, such as adverse weather, make it necessary to reach their destination, ensuring clients can actually complete their trips.
- Children will be allowed to accompany parents or guardians to their appointments when necessary. It is the responsibility of the client to provide car seats for children required by law to use them.
- There may be times when a client may be disqualified from using our service. Repeated abuses of our service are the primary cause for these disqualifications. Reasons for disqualification include but are not limited to the following:
 - Failure to meet the transport at the appointed place of pick up without an attempt to contact this office and provide details after transportation has been scheduled is a major reason for disqualification from future use of the service.
 - Drivers are not authorized to make unscheduled stops other than at a pharmacy to pick up a prescription previously called in by a physician or dentist (time permitting). Abuse of this privilege will result in disqualification from future service use of the service.
 - The blatant disrespect of any Healthcare Consortium employee or equipment will not be tolerated and will be reason for disqualification from future use of the service.

Executive Director Approval Date: 01/22/2014; 1/3/2024; 12/3/2025