

DEPARTMENT: Legal	POLICY DESCRIPTION: Discharge Transportation Services Program
PAGE: 1 of 5	REPLACES POLICY DATED:
EFFECTIVE DATE: February 1, 2025	REFERENCE NUMBER: LL.031
APPROVED BY: Ethics and Compliance Policy Committee	

SCOPE: This Policy applies to HCA Holdings, Inc. (the “Company”) and all of its Affiliates operating in the United States and providing inpatient services, including but not limited to, hospitals, inpatient rehabilitation facilities, and skilled nursing facilities (each a “Facility”).

Other capitalized terms used in this Policy and not otherwise defined have the meaning given to them below in the Definitions section.

PURPOSE: To ensure, through the implementation of prudent and reasonable controls, that Facilities may provide or facilitate the provision of complimentary Discharge Transportation Services to eligible Discharged Patients in a manner that complies with federal law and regulation.

POLICY:

- A. Discharged Patients who are discharged following inpatient admission or released from the Facility following emergency department evaluation and treatment, which may include observation services, are eligible for the Discharge Transportation Services if needed. The Facility may provide or facilitate Discharge Transportation Services to transport such a Discharged Patient to their residence or Alternate Location if the Discharged Patient lacks reliable transportation to leave the Facility following discharge.
- B. Discharge Transportation Services may be provided by taxi, van service (including non-ambulance wheel chair van), ride share service (Lyft/Uber or similar), or public transportation (collectively, such taxis, van services, or rideshare companies are referred to as “Transport Vendor”).
 - i) Discharge Transportation Services provided pursuant to this Policy shall not include air, ambulance or luxury transportation.
 - ii) In no event should Facility personnel transport a Discharged Patient in a personal vehicle.
 - iii) Transport Vendors shall not market the Facility’s health care items or services during the course of the transportation of a Discharged Patient or at any time.
 - iv) Facility Transport Coordinators, Transport Vendors and drivers for such Transport Vendors shall not be paid on a per-Federal healthcare program beneficiary-transported basis.
- C. This Policy and the provision of Discharge Transportation Services will at all times be applied in a uniform and consistent manner, and the determination of a Discharged Patient’s eligibility to receive transportation under this Policy must not be determined in a manner related to the past or anticipated volume or value of Federal healthcare program business, including Medicare and Medicaid.

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- D. A Facility may designate one or more individuals to assist in facilitating Discharge Transportation Services, including but not limited to Case Managers, Emergency Department staff, and Nursing personnel ("Transport Coordinators").
- E. The Discharge Transportation Service must not be publicly marketed or advertised by any party (including but not limited to the Facility or any Transport Vendor), and no health care items or services will be marketed or advertised during the course of the Discharge Transportation Services.
- F. The costs of the Discharge Transportation Service must be borne by the Facility; costs may not be shifted onto any Federal health care program, other payers, or individuals.
- G. There is no limitation on how many times an individual Discharged Patient may receive Discharge Transportation Services.

PROCEDURE:

- A. Determination of Need. At an appropriate time prior to discharge, a Facility Transport Coordinator may ask each prospective Discharged Patient whether they have a reliable mode of transportation from the Facility to their residence or to an Alternate Location. If the Discharged Patient does not have a reliable mode of transportation, the Transport Coordinator may offer the Discharge Transportation Service.
- B. Family Member/Caretaker. If the Discharged Patient requests the Discharge Transportation Service, the Transport Coordinator will ask the Discharged Patient whether they require a family member or other caretaker to assist in transport. If a caretaker is required, that individual may accompany the patient for the discharge transportation ride, but the Facility will not provide the caretaker with any separate complimentary transportation.
- C. Method of Transport.
 - 1. The Facility may provide Discharge Transportation Services by facilitating transport through:
 - i) the Facility's owned or operated transportation program;
 - ii) a local taxi company, van service, and/or ride share company (Lyft/Uber or equivalent ride share service with which the Facility may contract); or
 - iii) public transportation.
 - 2. Discharge Transportation Services shall not be provided by air, ambulance or luxury vehicle.
 - 3. Facility shall not pay Transport Coordinators, Transport Vendors or drivers of vehicles transporting Discharged Patients based on a per-federal healthcare program beneficiary-transported basis. Fixed-rate, mileage-based, or similar payment mechanisms may be

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permitted. Marketing of healthcare items or services during the transport of a Discharged Patient or by drivers of vehicles transporting Discharged Patients is prohibited.

4. To the extent the Facility has a written agreement in connection with such Discharge Transportation Services with any Transport Vendor that employs or contracts with drivers of vehicles, the written agreement between Facility and Transport Vendor will ensure that the Transport Vendor complies with the relevant requirements of the Anti-kickback Statute Local Transportation Safe Harbor, set forth in 42 C.F.R. § 1001.952(bb), including requiring that drivers shall not be paid on a per-Federal healthcare program beneficiary-transported basis, and will not market healthcare items or services during the transport.
- D. Destination. The Discharged Patient may be transported to the Discharged Patient's residence or to an Alternate Location choice, without regard to the distance of the transport. There is no mileage limitation for the Discharge Transportation Service, but any trip that is of a distance of more than 50 miles must be approved in advance by the Facility Administrator-on-Call.
- E. Arranging Transport. A Facility Transport Coordinator shall contact the transportation provider to coordinate Discharge Transportation Services for the day of discharge from the Facility to the Discharged Patient's residence or approved Alternate Location:
1. If the Discharged Patient is transported by a Facility-owned or operated transportation service, a Transport Coordinator shall schedule the transportation.
 2. If the Discharged Patient is transported by a taxi or van service Transport Vendor, a Transport Coordinator shall call the taxi company/van service to request the transportation and provide the Discharged Patient with a voucher in a pre-established dollar amount to use as payment or otherwise arrange for the Facility to bear the pre-arranged cost of the transport.
 3. If the Discharged Patient is transported by ride share company Transport Vendor (Lyft/Uber or equivalent), a Transport Coordinator shall contact the ride share company and request the transportation using the Facility's log-in and account information on the Facility's account. The Transport Coordinator shall include the Discharged Patient's name and the address to which the patient is to be transported (patient's residence or Alternate Location) in the transport request.
 4. If the Discharged Patient will utilize public transportation to reach the patient's residence or Alternate Location following discharge, a Transport Coordinator shall provide the patient with a ticket or voucher sufficient to facilitate the transportation and information about the route as reasonably necessary.
 5. The Facility will advise Transport Vendor drivers that, in the event of an emergency, the driver should call 911 to ensure that appropriate medical care is furnished as quickly as

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possible to patients who utilize the Discharge Transportation Services and require emergency care.

F. Recordkeeping. The Facility will maintain a Discharge Transportation Services Log, Database or Spreadsheet (the "Discharge Transportation Services Log ") documenting the following information for each instance Discharge Transportation Services are provided to a Discharged Patient:

- Name of Discharged Patient;
- Date of Discharge Transportation Service;
- Destination address and whether it is the Discharged Patient's residence or an Alternate Location;
- Mode of transport (including name of Transport Vendor); and
- Cost of transport paid to Transport Vendor, taxi voucher amount, or public transport ticket cost, if applicable.

In the event that the Transport Vendor maintains the information above, the Facility may obtain a report from the Transport Vendor not less frequently than monthly and shall store such reports in, or along with, the Facility Discharge Transportation Service Log. Logs or spreadsheets created by multiple departments may be aggregated for purposes of recordkeeping.

Information required in the Facility Discharge Transportation Service Log shall be maintained for monitoring and audit purposes for a minimum of six (6) years following the date of discharge for each Discharged Patient for whom Discharge Transportation Services are provided.

G. Training. The Facility shall conduct initial and annual training for staff involved in the Discharge Transportation Services program, including all Transport Coordinators, to maintain awareness and understanding of compliance requirements.

DEFINITIONS:

Affiliate means any person or entity Controlling, Controlled by or under common Control with another person or entity.

Alternate Location: For purposes of this Policy, an Alternate Location is a residence, other than the patient's residence, that is chosen by the Discharged Patient. The Discharged Patient being transported must select the location without influence by the Facility. Examples of Alternate Locations may include a residence of a caretaker or a post-acute care center (provided that the center does not require medical transport).

Control means the direct or indirect power to govern the management and policies of an entity; or the power or authority through a management agreement or otherwise to approve an entity's

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transactions (includes **Controlled, Controlling**).

Discharge Transportation Service(s): The provision of free/complimentary transportation made available (and paid for) by the Facility to Discharged Patients (as defined below) in need of such transportation to their residence or Alternate Location.

Discharged Patient: A person who is discharged from a Facility following inpatient admission or released from a Facility following emergency department evaluation and treatment, which may include observation services.

REFERENCES:

1. 42 U.S.C. § 1320a-7b(b)
2. 42 CFR 1001.952(bb)
3. 42 U.S.C. 1320a-7a
4. 42 C.F.R Part 1001
5. 81 Fed. Reg. 88368 (Dec. 7, 2016)
6. 85 Fed. Reg. 77864; 77857-77864 (Dec. 2, 2020)