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Springfield, Illinois 62763

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DATE: December 10, 2021

TO: All HealthChoice Illinois (HCI) Medicaid Managed Care Customers

RE: Change for Non-Emergency Ground Ambulance Services for Managed Care Customers
Effective January 1, 2022

This notice informs customers of a change with regard to requesting non-emergency ground ambulance services for customers covered under the Department's [HealthChoice Illinois](#) (HCI) managed care health plans. This change does not apply to customers covered under Medicare-Medicaid Alignment Initiative (MMAI) plans. MMAI customers will continue to request non-emergency ground ambulance services through their appropriate [MCO transportation broker](#).

As a result of [Public Act 102-0661](#), non-emergency ground ambulance services for HCI customers will no longer be processed by the managed care health plans effective with dates of service on and after January 1, 2022. For ground ambulance non-emergency transport services beginning January 1, 2022, MCO customers should contact First Transit, the Department's non-emergency transportation prior approval contractor, at 877-725-0569 (Monday through Friday, 8am to 5:00pm CST) to request non-emergency ground ambulance transportation services. Please note, only non-emergency ground ambulance transportation services will be moving from MCOs to First Transit for handling. All other transportation requests for other various types of transport (Air Ambulance, Medicar, Service Car, Taxi and Private Auto) will continue to be handled by the appropriate [MCO transportation broker](#).

It is important to note that First Transit is the Department's prior approval vendor and is not a transportation broker. When a customer or provider contacts First Transit to request non-emergency ambulance services, First Transit will initially verify the customer's eligibility and will ask a series of questions to determine if the customer meets the medical necessity criteria to support the usage of non-emergency ambulance transportation. If the customer is deemed eligible for non-emergency ambulance transport, First Transit will provide the customer with a list of local area ambulance providers to contact. ***It will be the customer's responsibility to contact each of these providers*** to locate a provider that has availability and is willing to do the transport. ***The customer will need to contact First Transit again to finalize the trip*** - whether a provider is located or to request additional assistance if no provider was located.

MMAI managed care customers will continue to go through their approved [MCO transportation broker](#) to request non-emergency ground ambulance services.

Questions regarding this notice may be directed to the Bureau of Professional and Ancillary Services at 877-782-5565 for fee-for-service issues, or to the applicable [HealthChoice Illinois](#) or [MMAI](#) managed care plan.