



VHA Office of Integrated Veteran Care Ambulance Transportation

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has the authority to provide or reimburse land or air ambulance transport of certain eligible Veterans in relation to VA care or VA community care.

Authorized Ambulance Transport

Pre-authorized ambulance transport for eligible Veterans to or from a VA facility or VA-authorized community care facility is approved and arranged in advance of care. Veterans must meet the following administrative requirements to qualify for authorized transport:

- Have a service-connected (SC) disability or combined rating of 30% or more (travel for care relating to any condition), *or*
- Be in receipt of a VA pension, *or*
- Previous calendar year income does not exceed maximum VA pension rate, *or*

- Projected income in travel year does not exceed maximum VA pension rate, *or*
- Travel is in connection with care for a SC disability, *or*
- Travel is for a Compensation and Pension exam, *or*
- Travel is to obtain a service dog, *or*
- Travel relates to VA transplant care, *and*
- A VA clinician determines and documents that special mode transportation is medically required.

Note: Income related eligibility must be verified and on file with VA on or before the date of transport.

To arrange non-emergent transportation, contact the local VA [Beneficiary Travel Office](#).

Emergency Transportation

During a medical emergency, Veterans should immediately seek care at the nearest medical facility without delay. A medical emergency is an injury, illness or symptom so severe that without immediate treatment, an individual believes his or her life or health is in danger. If a Veteran believes his or her life or health is in danger, call 911 or report to the nearest emergency department right away. Veterans do not need to check with VA before calling an ambulance or going to an emergency department.

Notifying VA of the emergent transport within 30 days is required, and the best way to notify is through claim submission. If a claim for transport is unable to be submitted to VA within 30 days, notification can be reported to the Centralized Notification Center by calling 844-724-7842.

VA has three legal authorities under which emergency treatment in a community facility may be paid for, but specific requirements must be met. The legal authority under which the emergency treatment falls dictates eligibility requirements for associated emergent transportation.

Emergency Treatment	Associated Ambulance Transport	Eligibility Reference
Authorized Emergency Treatment - 38 CFR 17.4020(c)	Authorized Transport	Authorized Ambulance Transport
Unauthorized Emergency Treatment (Service-Connected) - 38 USC §1728	Unauthorized Transport (must meet authorized ambulance transport eligibility)	Authorized Ambulance Transport
Unauthorized Emergency Treatment (Nonservice-connected) - 38 USC §1725	Unauthorized Emergency Treatment (Nonservice-connected) - 38 USC §1725	Unauthorized Emergency Treatment (Nonservice-connected)



Unauthorized Emergency Treatment (Service-Connected) - 38 USC §1728

Ambulance transports associated with emergent treatment approved under 38 USC §1728 will be assessed in accordance with [Authorized Ambulance Transport](#) eligibility.

Unauthorized Emergency Treatment (Nonservice-connected) - 38 USC §1725

Ambulance transports associated with emergent treatment approved under 38 USC §1725 will be assessed in accordance with Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 17.1003 eligibility.

In accordance with 38 CFR 17.1003 VA must receive and adjudicate a claim for the emergency treatment received as part of the emergency transportation. If no claim is

received for the associated treatment, VA cannot pay for the emergency transportation unless one of the following two exceptions are met:

1. Other health insurance or a third party paid for the emergency treatment (leaving no liability for the treatment) excluding the emergency transportation itself; **or**
2. Death occurred during transportation to receive emergency care.

If VA cannot pay for emergency care outside of the above two exceptions, then it generally cannot pay for the associated emergency transportation.

To learn more about how emergency treatment eligibility determinations are made, visit <https://www.va.gov/COMMUNITYCARE/providers/info-EmergencyCare.asp>

Reimbursement Payment Rates

Ambulance Transport	Eligibility Reference	Payment Rate
Authorized Transport & Unauthorized Emergency Transport tied to 38 USC §1728 (Service-Connected)	Authorized Ambulance Transport	Generally billed charges
Unauthorized Emergency Transport tied to 38 USC §1725 episode of care (Nonservice-connected)	Unauthorized Emergent Transport 38 USC §1725 (Nonservice-connected)	Generally, 70% Medicare

To be considered for payment, all ambulance claims should be sent to VA using one of the following options:

Electronic Data Interchange (EDI): Payer ID is **12115**

Mail paper claims to:

VHA Office of Integrated Veteran Care
P.O. Box 30780
Tampa, FL 33630-3780

Ambulance claims should **always be submitted to VA and **never** to TriWest or Optum.*