

County Connection

To: Board of Directors

Date: January 9, 2026

From: John Sanderson, Director of ADA & Specialized Services

Reviewed by: 

SUBJECT: Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) Update

Background:

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) is a Medi-Cal/Medicaid-funded transportation service mode that provides rides for Medi-Cal eligible individuals traveling to and from medical appointments and other health care related locations. NEMT service is provided under contract by a wide variety of operators, including public transit authorities and one-vehicle sole-proprietor enterprises. Medi-Cal pays the operator a fixed per-trip rate, plus mileage. NEMT riders are not charged a fare.

County Connection has been pursuing designation by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) as a Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT) provider. It is expected that enrollment as an NEMT provider will allow County Connection to recoup the cost of certain LINK paratransit trips, by transitioning those trips to the NEMT service mode.

NEMT Application & Review:

County Connection applied for enrollment as an NEMT provider with the DHCS Provider Enrollment Division (PED) on February 28, 2025. During the following months County Connection addressed some minor deficiencies to our application, submitted additional information and went through a “comprehensive review”. During the summer and early fall, DHCS conducted an on-site review and requested additional documentation. By mid-November, our application’s status was updated from “Received by Medi-Cal” to “Under Review” and, on December 12, 2025, we were notified that our application was approved.

Next Steps:

Approval as a Medi-Cal transportation provider is the most significant prerequisite for County Connection to establish a NEMT operation. Additional next steps include: identifying Medi-Cal eligible LINK riders, medical facilities and other health-related LINK destinations, flagging both in the paratransit booking and scheduling database, coordinating with the Managed Care Providers for Contra Costa County on a procedure for obtaining pre-approval for NEMT trips as efficiently as possible, establishing internal protocols to assign eligible trips to the NEMT mode and track the trips for billing and reimbursement. Staff anticipates that the NEMT program will begin full operations in 2026.

Financial Implications:

NEMT revenues could eventually grow to offset a significant proportion of overall LINK paratransit costs. Estimates are still being developed, however the NEMT program is expected to become revenue-positive virtually as soon as operations begin.

Recommendation:

None. Information only.

Action Requested:

None. Information only.

Attachments:

None