



# MARYLAND Department of Health

Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Dennis Schrader, Secretary

## **Maryland Medicaid Coverage Criteria Specialized Car Seats**

Specialized car seats are safety and positioning devices specifically used for children with special needs who can no longer fit in a conventional car seat but continue to need special support or when conventional car seats are not medically appropriate.

### **Coverage Position**

A specialized car seat may be covered for participants when:

- The specialized car seat is prescribed by a licensed medical provider, enrolled in the Maryland Medicaid program, operating within their scope of practice in accordance with their Maryland State Practice Act who is knowledgeable in orthopedic, neurology, and/or pediatrics, who is knowledgeable about special needs equipment, and who provides medical care to the participant; and
- The clinical guidelines below are met.

### **Coverage Criteria**

A specialized car seat may be covered for participants who:

- Are not able to fit safely into a conventional car seat OR exhibit behavioral manifestations of a documented medical condition that out the driver or participant at risk of injury; and
- Are not able to be properly supported and safe in the vehicle during normal transport, including turns, accelerations, decelerations, or riding over rough terrain without the requested device; and
- Have successfully trialed the device or a close simulation in the participant's environment; and
- Exhibit one or more of the following medical condition(s):

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- Significant head and trunk instability and/ or weakness,
- Significant hypotonicity, hypertonicity, athetosis, spasticity, or muscle spasming which results in uncontrollable movement and positioning change,
- Absence or latency of protective reactions,
- Inability to maintain an unsupported seating position independently,
- Severe seizure activity that results in uncontrollable movement and position change (such as tonic-clonic seizures);
- Orthopedic disease processes resulting in significant bony fragility (for example: osteogenesis imperfecta) or significant contractures that would result in a child's inability to perform postural corrections due to vehicle motion ( for example: arthrogryposis);
- Behaviors that put the participant or driver at risk of injury.

#### **Other Information regarding specialized car seats:**

Some participants may need a car bed rather than a car seat (for example, a child with Pierre Robin sequence may need to be positioned in a prone position during car rides to maintain an open airway).

Many participants with special health needs can be safely supported in standard car seats or booster seats, which are not covered by Maryland Medicaid. The need for a specialized car seat must be demonstrated by a physician's certificate of medical necessity, and a physical or occupational therapy evaluation with supporting documentation.

A specialized car seat evaluation must address issues including:

- Airway integrity;
- Skin Integrity;
- Circulatory integrity;
- Allowance of voluntary movement where it does not negatively impact safety;
- Proper positioning;
- Type of release mechanism to ensure the safety of beneficiaries with behavioral and/or judgment issues;
- The ability of the device to support the participant properly despite seizure activity or muscle spasms;
- The ability of the device to support a growing child over time including growth in weight and height; and

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- Parent/caregiver ability to consistently and properly use the device for its intended purpose and according to manufacturer specifications.

#### **Clinical guidelines for repeat service and procedures**

- When the device has been outgrown, or
- When the device no longer meets the medical needs of the participant, or
- When the device is no longer functional through normal wear (expected to last at least 5 years), or
- When the device has been in a motor vehicle accident that may have compromised its ability to protect the participant.

#### **Type of service or procedure covered**

- Specialized car seats, including forward and backward facing seats, horizontal car beds and vest harnesses for beneficiaries with special needs. Specialized support components for car seats are also covered.
- The car seats acceptable for Maryland Department of Health coverage must meet Federal Safety standards, and must be able to accommodate safety adaptations, and must be able to accommodate a pediatric participant's growth.

#### **Types of service or procedure not covered (this list may not be all inclusive)**

- Specialized car seats for individuals without special needs as described above
- Conventional car seats and booster seats
- Vehicle modifications to accommodate car seats
- Multiple specialized car seats for one participant

Requests shall be submitted using HCPCS Code K0900. Prior authorization is required.

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