

Transportation Assistance to Access Professional Services

BRANCH/DIVISION:

Children's disABILITY Services/
Community Service Delivery

RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITY:

Assistant Deputy Minister, Community Service Delivery
Department of Families

POLICY OWNER:

Director, Children's disABILITY Services

DATE APPROVED

October 2018

APPLICABLE TO

Children's disABILITY Services

NEXT REVIEW DATE

DATE REVIEWED:

April 2019

DATE REVISED

April 2019

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

Children's disABILITY Services supports families raising children with developmental or lifelong physical disabilities, to meet some of the additional transportation needs they may have to access disability-related professional services.

2.0 BACKGROUND/CONTEXT

As many professional services are not available in every community, travel is often required to access services needed by children with disabilities. Children's disABILITY Services may support caregivers by subsidizing eligible transportation expenses incurred to bring children open to Children's disABILITY Services to disability-related professional services unavailable in their community.

3.0 PURPOSE

To ensure equitable access to professional services by subsidizing eligible transportation expenses to bring children open to Children's disABILITY Services to disability-related services that are not available in their communities.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

CAREGIVER: Person responsible for the care and custody of the child open to Children's disABILITY Services such as a parent, grandparent or legal guardian.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION: Intra and intercity transit, accessible transit services, taxicab, motor coach, passenger train and airplane.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES: Medical and therapeutic services from physicians, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, speech-language therapists, behavioural specialists, etc.

COMMUNITY: City, town or rural municipality where the child open to Children disABILITY Services resides.

5.0 POLICY

5.1 ELIGIBILITY

Transportation assistance may be provided when all the following criteria are met:

- Professional services are related to the disabilities that qualified the child for Children's disABILITY Services.
- Professional services are not available within 40km (one way) of the child's residence.
- Other funding sources such as other government programs, private insurance or workplace benefits are not available.

5.2 ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Travel-related expenses incurred by a child and one accompanying person such as:

- Mileage for travel by private vehicle
- Actual fuel and parking costs for travel by private vehicle
- Fares on public transportation
- Meals during travel days exceeding eight hours or requiring an overnight stay
- Accommodations in the destination city or while in transit, when required

5.3 INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

- Expenses to attend professional services unrelated to the disabilities that qualified the child for Children's disABILITY Services
- Expenses to attend services in another community when they are available in the child's community
- Expenses that can be or have been covered by another government program, private insurance or workplace benefits
- Expenses for unapproved persons travelling with the child
- Expenses related to repairing, maintaining or insuring a private vehicle including roadside assistance fees
- Ambulance or other emergency medical transportation

6.0 STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

6.1 STANDARDS

The needs and abilities of the child and their caregivers are the primary considerations when determining an appropriate mode of transportation and approving other travel-related expenses. Consideration should also be given to limiting disruptions to households.

Approved expenses should be the minimum necessary to ensure access to professional services. When higher-cost transportation is chosen by caregivers over an appropriate, lower-cost mode, reimbursement up to the amount of the lower-cost mode of transportation may be provided.

Original and detailed receipts are required for all invoiced expenses to be eligible for reimbursement.

Confirmation of the child's attendance at the appointment may be required prior to reimbursing expenses.

To make a reimbursement claim, caregivers must submit a completed departmental invoice along with any related receipts within 10 business days following their travel.

6.2 GUIDELINES

6.2.1 TRAVEL BY PRIVATE VEHICLE

One of the following methods may be used to reimburse travel in a private vehicle.

Option A – Mileage

Mileage is reimbursed at the Employment and Income Assistance [medical transportation rate](#) for the region where the travel originates. Mileage rates are intended to cover the costs of fuel and parking fees.

An online mapping system should be used to calculate mileage unless it cannot accurately calculate distance. In such cases, the vehicle odometer may be used or an appropriate distance may be agreed upon. While the child's home address will typically be used as the starting point for calculating distance, another address may be used when appropriate.

Option B – Actual Costs with Receipts

The actual cost of fuel and parking may be reimbursed with receipts corresponding to the dates of travel and locations of appointments. Only fuel purchased in transit and upon return can be reimbursed.

Actual fuel and parking costs should not exceed the amount of Option A.

6.2.2 TRAVEL BY PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

The actual cost of fares for travel by the most appropriate and cost-effective mode of public transportation can be provided for travel on intercity and local public transit.

6.2.3 ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations may be approved for children and their accompanying caregiver when same day return travel is not feasible due to the distance of travel, the nature of the appointment, the child's or caregivers' suitability for additional same day travel. Prior approval from Children's disABILITY Services is required for reimbursement.

6.2.4 MEALS

Meals consumed out of the home during days away from home exceeding eight hours can be reimbursed for the child open to Children's disABILITY Services and any approved accompanying persons up to the corresponding [Employment and Income Assistance rate](#) for the region where the travel originates. Prior approval from Children's disABILITY Services is required for reimbursement.

Meals included with accommodations should not be reimbursed except when the child's schedule does not match with the availability of the meal or when the meal would be inappropriate for the child or caregiver due to their dietary restrictions.

6.2.5 ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Alternative transportation arrangements may be required where common transportation methods are unavailable or cannot meet the child's or the accompanying caregiver's needs. The actual costs for alternative transportation arrangements may be approved when the child would not otherwise be able to access professional services.

6.2.6 ADDITIONAL HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS

Transportation assistance is typically provided for the child and one accompanying caregiver only. Expenses for an additional caregiver may be approved when the nature of the child's disability requires an additional person to assist the accompanying adult or when the nature of the appointment demands an additional caregiver to attend.

Expenses incurred for additional household members such as siblings and dependent adults are not typically reimbursable. Expenses for other dependent household members may be reimbursed on an exceptional basis when:

- informal supports are not available or cannot meet the care need due to length of time the accompanying caregiver will be away; and
- the child would otherwise be prevented from attending their appointments due to their caregiver's care responsibilities for other dependent household members.

Adults living with the accompanying caregiver may be considered a dependent adult when they meet one of the following criteria:

- they are participants of Community Living disABILITY Services
- they meet the eligibility criteria for the Primary Caregiver Tax Credit (requires Care Levels 2, 3, or 4)
- the Community Support Worker is knowledgeable of their exceptional care needs and dependency on the accompanying caregiver such as an elderly family member or adult with disabilities

6.2.7 TRAVEL WITHIN 40 KILOMETERS

Transportation assistance may be provided for travel less than 40 km (one way) from the child's residence when exceptional circumstances warrant and all other eligibility criteria are met.

6.2.8 OTHER FUNDING SOURCES

Caregivers are expected to make use of any other resources that they may have access. Support from other resources may be supplemented up to Children's disABILITY Services rates when that support is less than what is provided by Children's disABILITY Services.