

TITLE: INTAKE, ELIGIBILITY AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE – TRAVEL AND TRANSPORTATION	SECTION: ONTARIO WORKS
DATE: September 9, 2004	POLICY NO.: KDSB-OW-IV-18
APPROVED BY: Resolution No. 2004-75	REVISED:

REFERENCE:

Directive 31.0 – 16, 24 & 39

POLICY:

Travel and transportation costs are a major part of conducting necessary business in the district of Kenora as the geography is vast and communities are separated by distance. Clients often have to travel substantial distances for medical and office appointments, educational opportunities, employment and training opportunities. Therefore, as a delivery agent, we have recognized the necessity of travel and addressed such in the following policy.

PROCEDURE:

Local travel between communities and offices is provided for the reasons which follow. Maximums for travel are defined by the type of benefit and the amounts permitted for under legislation/directives. Generally, the amount provided for is based on the equivalent of bus fare. The Ontario Works staff must access the bus fare rate from their local depot. In areas where there is no bus travel, reasonable amounts must be determined.

All requests and approvals for travel and transportation should be recorded under the appropriate SDMT note type and category dependent upon the type of request.

Travel can be provided for the following reasons:

Mandatory Benefits – Travel & Transportation for Medical Purposes

Workers must obtain medical verification, where appropriate, for requests to assist with costs associated with travel to attend medical appointments, rehabilitation (therapy), a healing lodge, or psychological counselling (e.g. AA meetings, family counselling, 12-step meetings). This may include the cost of meals and accommodation en route, if necessary, and must be the most cost-effective method. The worker must ascertain if transportation coverage is available from the programs themselves.

Eligible northern Ontario residents must apply for the "Northern Health Travel Grant" for health related travel expenses and complete 2 forms, an Agreement to Reimburse, form #2208 and an Assignment and Direction, form #2209.

A monthly payment equivalent to a transportation pass can be issued if the participant is required to attend on-going medical appointments.

Participants who cannot use the usual mode of transportation due to physical limitations may use handi transit, be provided with taxi fare, or other more appropriate methods.

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Medical transportation does not include travel costs associated with court, appointments, child care, repatriation or school programs.

Breakfast - \$7.00 per day

Lunch - \$10.00 per day

Dinner - \$15.00 per day

Overnight Accommodations - \$100.00 per night in district and \$125.00 per night out of district.

At all times the most reasonable accommodation should be sought. Advance payment for extensive travel can be made to a client if they are in a position to detail their associated costs. Receipts must be provided upon their return with the exception of travel (if based on equivalent to bus fare) and minor incidentals.

Should a client not be in a position to provide receipts for all items i.e. coffee, etc., they must detail the costs; any amount not accounted for over \$25.00 should be reimbursed to the agency. Reimbursements are posted in SDMT to the appropriate month and item issued. Individuals who have on two occasions not provided receipts with the exception of incidentals or returned their signed Northern Health Travel Grant should be reviewed with a Supervisor/Manager. It may be determined that advance issuances will not be made.

For travel within the district, appointment cards can be accepted as appropriate verification and receipts are not required. In a situation where the individual is required to be away for a full day or over a period that necessitates meals, they should be covered as per the above chart.

SDMT – Select Mandatory Benefits, MSM – Medical Transportation (break down for accommodations, meals and transportation)

Mandatory Benefits - Employment Related Expenses

The delivery agent may issue funds in addition to the mandatory employment start-up benefit to eligible participants to cover ongoing costs associated with participation in employment assistance activities. Participation related expenses are covered in order to support participants as they move along the service path.

- necessary transportation

Travel to appointments with Caseworkers, where the distance and cost is prohibitive, to conduct assessments or update their participation agreement should be paid under this item in addition to those circumstances outlined in the Employment Related Expenses policy. Please note – travel to appointments for Intake Verification, CVP or ERO appointments should not be paid under ERE.

Receipts are required or, in the event of a mutually agreed upon daily rate to attend an employment assistance activity, confirmation of attendance must be received. In these situations, receipts may be waived. Decisions related to waiving receipts and documentation of such should be in SDMT Notes.

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*Please see Employment Related Expenses policy

SDMT – Select Employment Assistance Benefits, ERE–Transportation or CPE–Transportation.

Discretionary Benefits – Transportation - Non-Health Related

Travel and transportation that is not undertaken for health related purposes must be paid under Discretionary Benefits – Non-Health Related.

This covers any cost of travel and transportation that is not undertaken for health related purposes and that the Administrator considers reasonable and necessary. (For general information related to the issuance of discretionary benefits – non-health related please see the discretionary benefits policy.)

Examples:

1. Transportation for a participant to return to his/her home outside of Ontario.

Repatriation to another province or country is provided at the discretion of the Administrator and is considered at the request of the participant and if the move is in his/her best interest.
2. Transportation of a participant to another municipality, if it has been verified that the relocation is in his/her best interest (e.g. the participant has obtained employment).
3. Transportation of a participant going to court to obtain support from his/her spouse or same-sex partner.

LP – provided for based on equivalent to bus fare rates and meal allowance structure noted above. Verification of the appointment must be obtained and on file prior to issuing. In extreme situations, an advance may be issued, however such requests should be justified and documented in SDMT notes. The policy noted in respect to failure to provide verification/receipts under medical travel should be adhered to for these purposes as well.

4. Transportation costs for hospital visits or funeral attendance of next of kin.

LP – provided for on a case by case basis for hospital visits, no provision for funeral attendance.

Other exceptional circumstances in which a client may require travel may be reviewed with the Supervisor/Manager. Decisions related to approval will be based on current budget allocations. It should always be conveyed to the client that funds issued for these purposes are discretionary and is not a mandatory benefit. The Supervisor should confirm with the Manager the current budget allocation.

SDMT – Select Discretionary, Travel and Transportation