



EXTENDED HEALTH BENEFITS POLICY 49.07 MEDICAL TRAVEL BENEFITS

Eligible Persons under the *Extended Health Benefits Policy 49.07* (Policy) are eligible for Medical Travel Benefits when travel is required to access Insured Health Services or Benefits not available in the Eligible Person's home community. Pursuant to section 5(2)(b)(vii) of the Policy, the following Medical Travel Benefits for Eligible Persons are established by the Deputy Minister.

1. Escorts

(1) Benefits

- (a) At the recommendation of a Health Care Prescriber or community health nurse, an Eligible Person may have one Escort authorized to accompany them on medical travel when:
 - (i) the Eligible Person is under the age of 19;
 - (ii) the Eligible Person is breastfeeding an infant up to 12 months of age;
 - (iii) the Eligible Person is pregnant and must travel outside of their home community to deliver their baby;
 - (iv) the Eligible Person has a mental or physical disability of a nature that they are not able to travel unassisted;
 - (v) the Eligible Person is travelling for an initial diagnosis or an initial appointment for a life-threatening illness, and requires an Escort to assist with understanding plan of care and/or treatment options;
 - (vi) the Eligible Person requires interpretation during the travel; or
 - (vii) the attending health care provider at the treatment facility provides a written request for an Escort to participate in a treatment program to learn how to care for the Eligible Person following discharge.
- (b) At the recommendation of a Health Care Prescriber or community health nurse, an Eligible Person may have an additional Escort accompany them on medical travel under the following circumstances:
- (c)



- (i) The Eligible Person is under 19 years of age and requires additional support for serious, life-threatening, or complex medical needs during travel.
- (ii) The Eligible Person is 19 years of age or older and an additional Escort is required to ensure the safe transport of the Eligible Person.

(2) Terms and Conditions

- (a) If the Eligible Person is authorized to travel with one or more Escort(s), their Escort(s):
 - (i) must accompany the Eligible Person to all appointments, when applicable.
 - (ii) must stay at the same facility for accommodation, when applicable.
 - (iii) is required to assist the Eligible Person with their needs, which may include but is not limited to, physical mobility assistance and/or personal care, unless otherwise advised by a Health Care Prescriber or community health nurse in writing.
 - (iv) where authorized under 1(1)(a)(vi), is required to assist with interpretation during travel and may be required to translate/interpret between the Eligible Person's language and that of treatment and care providers.
 - (v) must, in writing, attest to their ability and agree to fulfill all applicable obligations in their role as Escort.
- (b) Should an Escort only be authorized to travel with the Eligible Person to the Nearest Centre and not for the entire stay, they are expected to return home on the first available flight.
- (c) Should an Escort be required to accompany an Eligible Person for a period of 21 consecutive days or longer, the Eligible Person may request authorization for a replacement escort.
- (d) Eligible Persons receiving Medical Travel Benefits in accordance with 2(2)(d) of this Process are not eligible for an Escort.

2. Travel for Eligible Persons and their Escort(s)

(1) Benefits



- (a) Eligible Persons and their Escort(s) are eligible for one of the following travel Benefits:
 - (i) Scheduled airfare to and/or from the Nearest Centre, less the co-payment established under 5(2)(a)(ii) of the Policy, if applicable;
 - (ii) Ground transportation to and/or from the Nearest Centre, including bus or taxi fare, less the co-payment established under 5(2)(a)(ii) of the Policy, if applicable, when the fare is a reasonable and cost-effective alternative to air travel between communities;
 - (iii) Private vehicle mileage to and/or from the Nearest Centre when claimed at the Government of the Northwest Territories' "individual's convenience rate" for recognized distances between communities. Such claims may not include fuel, parking, insurance, repairs, vehicle rental, meals, accommodation, loss or damage. The maximum reimbursement will not exceed the cost of round-trip air travel for the Eligible Person, reduced by the co-payment, if applicable. Mileage can only be claimed by the Eligible Person or one Escort, not both; or
 - (iv) Emergency ground and/or air ambulance, from a facility listed in Schedule A of the *Hospital Insurance Regulations (Hospital Insurance and Health and Social Services Administration Act)* to the Nearest Centre.
- (b) Notwithstanding the requirements for a referral and Prior Approval under 2(1) of Schedule 5 of the Policy, Eligible Persons are eligible for emergency ground ambulance from a location within a Northwest Territories community to the Nearest Centre, where the Eligible Persons is:
 - (i) Assessed below the low-income Threshold; or
 - (ii) 60 years of age or older.
- (c) For greater certainty, 2(1)(b) excludes:
 - (i) highway rescue and remote site medevacs; and
 - (ii) transport to a long-term care facility.
- (d) Eligible Persons are eligible for ground ambulance and/or air ambulance to:



- (i) transport the Eligible Person from their place of accommodation to the Nearest Centre; or
- (ii) transfer the Eligible Person between Nearest Centres.

(2) Terms and Conditions

- (a) When the Nearest Centre is in the Northwest Territories and the Eligible Person chooses to travel to another centre within the Northwest Territories:
 - (i) The maximum travel Benefit under 2(1)(a) of this Process will not exceed the cost of a return commercial airfare to the Nearest Centre for the Eligible Person and their Escort(s), less any applicable co-payment; and
 - (ii) The referral must confirm services are available in the other centre.
- (b) When the Nearest Centre is in the Northwest Territories and the Eligible Person chooses to travel to another centre outside of the Northwest Territories, no Medical Travel Benefits under the Policy are provided.
- (c) When the Nearest Centre is outside of the Northwest Territories and the Eligible Person chooses to travel to another centre outside of the Northwest Territories, the maximum travel Benefit under 2(1)(a) of this Process will not exceed the cost of a return commercial airfare to the Nearest Centre for the Eligible Person and their Escort(s), less any applicable co-payment.
- (d) When travel is required to originate outside of the Northwest Territories, Benefits up to the cost of travel had the travel occurred under 2(1)(a) of this Process will be provided, excluding Escort Benefits, if:
 - (i) the Eligible Person has a referral or clinical need that was established prior to being temporarily absent from the Northwest Territories, and the travel is related to continuity of care/treatment plan; and
 - (ii) the Eligible Person has a current [Northwest Territories Health Care Plan Temporary Absence Form](#) on file with Health Services Administration.
- (e) Travel Benefits for Escorts will only be provided from the Eligible Person's community of origin, unless it is more cost effective for travel Benefits to be provided to the Escort from a different community and the Escort is still able to satisfy applicable terms and conditions under 1(2)(a) of this Process.



3. Accommodations, Meals, and Incidentals for Eligible Persons and their Escort(s)

(1) Benefits

(a) Eligible Persons and their Escort(s) are eligible for accommodation, meals, and local transportation provided by a Boarding Facility where the Eligible Person:

- (i) Has an assessed income below the established low-Income Threshold; or
- (ii) Is receiving Medical Travel Benefits for the purpose of accessing eligible Drug Benefits or Medical Supplies and Equipment Benefits established under 6(2)(a)(ii) and (iv) of the Policy; or
- (iii) Is 60 years of age and older.

(b) Eligible Persons assessed above the low-Income Threshold and their Escort(s) are not eligible for the Benefits listed in 3(1)(a). Each eligible person will receive a daily allowance at the following rates:

- (i) \$50 for accommodations; and
- (ii) \$18 for meals and incidentals.

(2) Terms and Conditions

(a) Boarding Facilities are approved by the Deputy Minister.

(b) If a Boarding Facility for an Eligible Person and their Escort(s) under 3(1)(a) of this Process is not available, the Eligible Person and their Escort(s) will each receive:

- (i) Cost of hotel accommodations; and
- (ii) A maximum of \$90 for meals per day, payable directly to the service provider, not the client.

(c) If an Eligible Person under 3(1)(a) of this Process chooses to refuse stay at boarding home, or commercial accommodation under 3(2)(b), the Eligible Person and their Escort(s) will each be reimbursed at the rate specified in 3(1)(b), regardless of whether the Eligible Person and their Escort(s) elect(s) to stay in private or commercial arrangements.



- (d) When local transportation is not provided by a Boarding Facility for an Eligible Person and their Escort(s) under 3(1)(a) of this Process, the Eligible Person will be reimbursed:
- (i) With proof of payment, for taxi and bus fares for travel between the following locations up to the following maximum rates per one-way trip:
 - A. Up to a maximum of \$100 per trip between the airport and city in which the Nearest Centre is located;
 - B. Up to a maximum of \$30 per trip between accommodations, appointments, and pharmacies.
 - (ii) Without proof of payment, taxi and bus fares shall be reimbursed at a rate of \$12 per trip for travel between each of the locations listed in 3(2)(c)(i) A and B.
 - (iii) Car rentals will be reimbursed at a rate of \$50 per day, provided that claims are substantiated with receipts. Reimbursement shall not include fuel costs, insurance, mileage costs, parking charges, or taxi expenses.

4. General Terms and Conditions

- (1) When an Eligible Person is covered under an employer or comparable plan that provides Medical Travel Benefits, Medical Travel Benefits will not be coordinated. Benefits under this Policy will be payable only after the employer or comparable plan benefits have been fully exhausted in accordance with 6(2)(c) of the Policy.
- (2) Where the duration between scheduled appointments or treatment requiring medical travel is such that the Eligible Person's medical travel trip may be extended in lieu of multiple separate medical travel trips where more cost effective. In such cases, applicable Benefits will continue to be provided.

Alan Doody
Deputy Minister
Health and Social Services

Date