



Memorandum

Date: May 9, 2002

To: Directors
Employment and Income
Assistance

From: Pam Goulet and John Petersen
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Employment and Income Assistance
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Telephone:

Subject: **Paying Taxi Invoices –
Wheelchair Transportation**

This directive sets out the criteria for approving payment of an invoice for taxi trips.

HEALTH TRANSPORTATION

EIA staff must ensure that:

- each one-way trip charged on the invoice is substantiated by either an approved chit from the office's taxi-book chit or by verifying that it was approved as a standing order (or until further notice, "UFN"), or that it was approved by After Hours Services, and each entry on the invoice is initialled to signify approval;
- each one-way trip is initialled as approved for payment only after:
 - 1) verifying the authorization number, the date, the participant's name, and the originating and final destinations against the authorization;
 - 2) verifying the pick-up and drop-off points are either a medical facility (including a pharmacy) or the person's home;
 - 3) verifying that there is a return trip for the same day;
 - 4) determining that the fare billed is reasonable by:
 - (a) comparing the fare charged on the outward bound trip with the return trip,
 - (b) comparing, in Winnipeg, the fare charged to sample fares; (the samples can be used to gauge trips based on distances),
 - (c) comparing, outside of Winnipeg, the fare charged to an office list of sample fares in its boundaries, and
 - (d) ensuring that any waiting time billed was pre-approved.

When the invoice includes a trip that, using the above criteria, cannot be approved for payment, further verification is required before forwarding the invoice to Central Accounts for payment.

If the verification is regarding the destinations being something other than a medical facility and the person's home, the staff that authorized the trip should be consulted. If there is no apparent explanation, the case coordinator may need to contact the participant to determine if the trip was appropriate for health transportation. If it was not, an overpayment may be appropriate since the trip was pre-authorized with the taxi company.

Other types of queries will likely necessitate a senior staff person calling the taxi company to discuss the trip and, if required, asking for supporting documentation, such as the driver's daily log for the trip. In most cases it is assumed that the discussion will lead to a mutually acceptable decision. If this is not the case, the invoice must be referred to the Director who may approve paying the balance of the invoice, and either adjusting the cost of the trip in question, or severing the trip for his/her further review and disposition. The decision, of course, must be communicated to an appropriate contact within the company that submitted the invoice. Any significant or re-occurring problems should be brought to the attention of the appropriate Director of Field Services.

SOCIAL OUTINGS FOR PARTICIPANTS WHO USE WHEELCHAIRS

The review and approval process is the same as for health transportation except for the following:

- each one-way trip on the invoice must be accompanied by a completed "Authorization for Wheelchair Transportation (social)" chit, including the participant's signature;
- the attached chit must not be one that has been reported as lost or stolen (this requires offices to have in place a system of tracking such reports within and across offices);
- the trip must be within Winnipeg;
- each outward bound trip should have a return trip; it is anticipated that the chit for the return trip will be the next numbered trip to the outward bound trip, and will be for the same day;
- waiting time would only be approved in rare situations where it is clear that the trip was to conduct an errand and a return chit verified a direct return.

The process to follow on trips that raise questions when judged against these criteria are the same as for health transportation. Depending on the query, it may be appropriate to contact the participant (e.g. to confirm the participant took the trip, but forgot to sign the chit).

Your early attention to, and communication of this directive to all relevant staff is appreciated.