

Travel Policy for Parents with Students in Residential Placement

RESIDENTIAL TRAVEL POLICY FOR PARENTS WITH STUDENTS IN RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENT

Visits by family members (parents, siblings, or other relatives) to students placed in residential treatment centers through a District generated IEP

The student District of Residence shall pay for actual and necessary expenses, so that a parent/guardian of a student placed in Residential Treatment Centers by a District generated Individualized Education Program (I.E.P.) decision can make therapeutically necessary trips to visit the student.

The district of residence shall fund expenses for up to two (s) ***individual trips*** per year (including extended school year summer school). This would be inclusive of any combination of district direct per diem to parent for travel or built-in residential treatment contract. An individual trip is defined as up to two family members making a trip. This ***individual trip*** applies to a round trip, or a one-way trip. Additional trips may be authorized due to therapeutic need, as determined by the IEP (Individualized Education Program) Team, or Superintendent's Designee.

A Travel authorization form, (see attached) must first be sent to the residential facility for approval of a visit by a therapist and then sent to the District for secondary written approval by a District Administrator, before travel arrangements can be authorized.

Expenses shall be reimbursed within limits established by the IEP team. The Superintendent or Designee shall establish procedures for the submission and verification of expense claims.

- Car Rental. If parent travels by plane, reimbursement may be claimed for a compact vehicle rental during a parent visit to the placement as described above. The claim may not exceed two days rental, the period of the overnight visit.
- Airfare. Reimbursement may be claimed for the least expensive tickets, purchased 30 days in advanced.
- Documentation of actual costs and payment through bank statements, credit card statements, and/or receipts with date and time of purchase, are required for all reimbursements.
- If student's Residential Treatment Center provides airfare, transportation to and from treatment center and/or accommodations, those costs may be deducted from the District's financial obligations.

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PROCEDURES

- 1) **General:** It is the intent of the District to allow for necessary expenses involved with trips to visit students placed in Residential Treatment Centers (Non-Public Residential Placements) by the IEP team, that are therapeutically necessary for the student to progress in his/her treatment plan. Limits and regulations have been established, and are enumerated below, that allow for reasonable reimbursement of expenses. The list below is not exhaustive and charges determined to be unreasonable or unnecessary may be denied for reimbursement at the discretion of the District Superintendent or Designee. It is suggested that, if a charge or service is not covered below, and there is any doubt as to it being appropriate, parent should discuss the request with the District Superintendent or Designee before expending the funds. Travel is to be paid for by the family, (unless otherwise arranged in advance) with receipts submitted to the district within 60 days of return. Reimbursement will be made by the district within 60 days and following the conditions listed in this policy.
- 2) **Pre-Authorization for Visit:** At least 30 days before a planned visit begins Parent/Guardian must complete a Travel Authorization Form that can be obtained on the-SELPA Website under "Miscellaneous Forms." Please note that the form must be approved by both District of Residence and the residential placement. The placement will need to certify to the District of Residence that the visit is therapeutically necessary and that up to two family members visiting individually need to be part of the trip. Also note that estimates are required for airlines, lodging, and rental cars. If any of these amounts are determined to be more than is customary for any of these items, the District or Residence may ask the parent to attempt to find more reasonable arrangements. It is important that trips be booked far enough in advance so that availability and reasonable rates can be assured.
- 3) **Airlines:** Parents should book only the least expensive tickets, 30 days in advance, and fly in the most direct and economical route possible for the location being visited. The District will not allow auto or other ground transport in lieu of flying if it is determined that this would increase the costs significantly. Airfare will be reimbursed at an amount not to exceed \$400 per person per visit.
- 4) **Lodging/Car Rental:(Lodging is defined as hotel and meal costs)** Parents will be given a maximum reimbursement per trip of \$300 per visit for lodging and car rental expenses if appropriate. District policy requires submission of itemized receipts for reimbursement of expenditures.
- 5) **Emergency visits:** It is understood that there may be rare instances where a visit to a student, or a home visit by the student, needs to be made under emergency conditions. Severe crises, accident or injury, and other unforeseen events can occur. The District will reimburse for charges made during these times as long as a legitimate attempt was made to travel in the most cost-effective manner possible. These cases, due to their variable nature, must be handled on a case-by-case basis. The District will make a reasonable attempt to be flexible in these cases, but they must be reviewed before

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reimbursement will be authorized.

- 6) **Duration of visit:** Unless the residential clinical staff provides evidence in advance of a need, duration of visit will be authorized for no more than two nights. If the visit lasts longer than the time indicated on the authorization form, the reason must be stated in writing and signed by the District Superintendent Designee and authorized staff member at the facility. The District reserves the right to investigate extended visits and deny reimbursement if a compelling reason is not present.

Policy Information

Guidelines for Reimbursement:

- **PARENT** must submit a Travel Authorization Form 30 days prior to planned departure which is located on the SELPA Website under “Miscellaneous Forms.”
- **PARENT** is responsible for making travel arrangements.
- **PARENT** is responsible for submitting **original** itemized receipts for Allowable Expenditures.

To obtain reimbursement for pre-approved travel expenditures, the student's parent must submit the documentation evidencing payment as follows:

- For cash expenditures, the original itemized receipt
- For check expenditures, original itemized receipt and a copy of the front/back of the check
- For credit card or debit card expenditures, the itemized credit card or debit card receipt, a copy of the monthly billing statement indicating the charged amounts (with other charges and personal account information redacted).

Claim form (attached) and documentation are to be submitted to the attention of:

District of Residence
Special Ed Director
Address
City, State, Zip

Allowable Expenditures:

- **Airfare/** Not to exceed \$400 per ticket, per visit. 30-day advance purchase required. Submit itemized passenger ticket receipts for students/parents/guardians only.
- **Lodging/Car Rental Agreement/ Not to exceed \$300** allowance per visit for **combined** hotel and car expenses. Rental car must be the least expensive class of vehicle.

Itemized **original** payment documentation required.

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Non-Allowable Expenditures:

- Travel expenses for siblings
- Expenses which exceed regular/customary fees such as:
 - Luxury hotels/accommodations
 - Luxury vehicles
 - Parking fees
 - Shuttle/taxi services
 - First class/Business Class airfare
 - Alcoholic beverages
 - In room movies
 - All meals
 - Tips
 - Phone call charges
 - Excess baggage fees
 - Ticket change fees
 - Tobacco
 - Other extraordinary expenses as determined by District

Shasta County Special Education Local Plan Area
Travel Policy for Parents with Students in Residential Placement

TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT CLAIM FORM

Person Submitting Claim: _____

Address: _____

Person(s) Traveling: _____

Beginning Date of Travel: _____ Ending Date of Travel: _____

Name of Student: _____

Expenditure	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Transportation			
Airfare: List actual cost of airline ticket Not to exceed \$400 per person per visit (Not to exceed 2 trips per year) Original receipt(s) must accompany claim form	\$	\$	\$
Hotel: Car Rental: *Not to exceed \$300 per visit* Original receipt(s) must accompany claim form	\$	\$	N/A
TOTAL EACH COLUMN	\$	\$	\$

TOTAL REIMBURSEMENT \$ _____

Return completed form with original receipts to: _____

Shasta County Special Education Local Plan Area
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TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION FORM

To be completed 30 days prior to travel:

Parent/Guardian(s) Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

Student's Name: _____

Person(s) traveling:

1. Name: _____
Relationship to student: _____

2. Name: _____
Relationship to student: _____

Travel Arrangements

Beginning Date of Travel: _____ Ending Date of Travel: _____

Return from: _____ To: _____

Airlines: _____ Estimated Amount: _____

Lodging: _____ Estimated Amount: _____

Rental Car: _____ Estimated Amount: _____

District of Residence: _____

Superintendent or Designee: _____

Conditions of Approval : _____

Residential Placement Facility: (To be completed by Facility Director)

Purpose of Visit: _____

Agency Representative: _____ Print Name and Title: _____

Return to: _____

***Receipts and Travel Claim Form must be submitted within 60 days of completions of trip**