

VACATION COSTS FOR A CHILD OR YOUTH IN CARE OR CUSTODY TO ACCOMPANY A FOSTER FAMILY ON VACATION

Policy no.: 3.30

Effective Date: October 1, 2013

Date Revised: May 21, 2015; February 6, 2017

Policy Cross Reference: Travel Consent; Basic Foster Care Rate; Children's Special Allowance; Block Funding; Respite; Financial Services for the Child or Youth

Legislative References:

PURPOSE: To outline the process for assessing whether a child or youth in the care or custody of a manager should accompany a foster family on vacation, and to outline the process for assessing and approving funding requests to assist the foster parent(s) with travel costs specific to the child or youth in care.

POLICY:

1. Where a foster parent(s) is planning a vacation and requests to take a child or youth, the social worker shall discuss the itinerary with the foster parent, consult with the child or youth where age and developmentally appropriate, and consult with the child or youth's parent(s) about the child or youth's potential inclusion in the vacation.
2. The social worker shall refer to the *Travel Consent* policy to determine the type of consent required based on the travel plans and custody status of the child or youth.
3. The social worker shall refer to the *Basic Foster Care Rate; Children's Special Allowance; Block Funding* and *Financial Services for the Child or Youth* policies when assessing financial requests by the foster parent(s) to assist with the costs of including a child or youth in a vacation.
4. A zone manager may approve funding for one vacation per year for the costs specific to the child or youth's inclusion in a vacation with the foster family.
5. Financial requests and approvals shall be documented on the *Children, Seniors and Social Development (CSSD) Financial Request* and a copy shall be placed in the child or youth's paper file and the approval documented in the clinical CRMS file.

PROCEDURES:

1. When assessing a request for a child or youth to accompany a foster family on a vacation the social worker shall consider the following:
 - a) views of the child or youth’s parent(s);
 - b) views of the child or youth;
 - c) custody status of the child or youth;
 - d) potential impact for the child or youth;
 - e) plan for child or youth’s care and the potential impact on the plan;
 - f) destination including any travel advisories;
 - g) mode of transportation;
 - h) accommodations; and
 - i) planned activities.

2. If it is determined to be in the child or youth’s best interest to accompany the foster family on vacation, and the foster parent(s) requests financial support to contribute toward the child or youth’s participation in the vacation, the following factors shall be taken into consideration when assessing the funding request:
 - a) the difference in cost of travel for the family with or without the child or youth;
 - b) the amount of the basic foster care rate and Children’s Special Allowance that will be used toward the trip;
 - c) how the social recreational money allotted in block funding is being utilized and whether any of that money should be used toward the trip; and
 - d) the ability of the child or youth’s family to contribute to the cost of the trip.

3. The zone manager may approve one vacation per year for a child or youth to accompany a foster family on vacation and shall only approve the costs specific to the child or youth’s inclusion in the vacation.

4. The types of costs that may be considered for approval include:
 - a) increase in travel costs specific to the child or youth’s inclusion in the vacation, including but not limited to:

Travel Cost	Maximum Cost to be Reimbursed
Airfare	\$1500
Ferry ticket(s)	\$250
Train ticket(s)	\$500

Expensive Amusement Park/Entertainment Tickets	\$500
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- b) a portion of accommodations if extra space is required to accommodate a child or youth and this results in additional cost (e.g. if the foster family has to upgrade to a larger hotel room or get an extra hotel room to have adequate sleeping accommodations, etc.); and/or
- c) a per diem rate related to the additional cost of meals and incidentals incurred for the child or youth while on vacation. The maximum allowable rates are:

Age	Amount
0 – 12 years	\$15 per day up to a maximum of \$150
12 – 18 years	\$20 per day up to a maximum of \$200

5. Funding shall not be approved to cover costs that are not likely to increase due to the addition of the child or youth (e.g. car rental, gasoline, renting a home, campground fee, etc.).
6. A social worker may approve the cost of a passport and passport photos for the child or youth to the maximum cost of \$125. Please refer to the ***Financial Services for the Child or Youth*** policy. Where a passport is required for a child or youth, the social worker shall work with the foster parent(s) or residential staff person to complete the application as required by Passport Canada. Information regarding applications and requirements related to passports for children and youth in care can be found online at: <http://www.ppt.gc.ca/form/adoption.aspx?lang=eng>
7. If approval is not granted for a child or youth to accompany the foster family on vacation and vacation respite is required to enable the foster family to go on vacation, please refer to the ***Respite*** policy.

EXCEPTIONS TO POLICY: None

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS:

- ***CSSD Financial Request*** form
- ***Passport Canada:*** <http://www.ppt.gc.ca/form/adoption.aspx?lang=eng>