

WAC 182-546-5900 Nonemergency transportation—Meals, lodging, escort/guardian. (1) The medicaid agency may pay for meals and lodging for clients who must be transported to health care services outside of the client's local community. The agency's transportation brokers determine when meals and lodging are necessary based on a client's individual need.

(2) Brokers may authorize payment for meals and lodging for up to one calendar month. Extensions beyond the initial calendar month must be prior authorized by the broker on a month-to-month, week-to-week, or as-needed basis.

(3) Brokers may not authorize payment for alcohol, cannabis, or other nonfood items.

(4) Brokers follow the agency's guidelines in determining the reasonable costs of meals and lodging. The agency's guidelines are:

(a) The reasonable cost of lodging for short and extended stays is measured against state per diem rates.

(b) For short stays, the cost of meals may not exceed the state per diem rate.

(c) For extended stays, the reasonable cost of meals is measured against the state's basic food program. The maximum monthly allowable meal cost for extended stays is not to exceed the client's calculated monthly food benefit.

(5) The agency pays for the transportation of an authorized escort, including meals and lodging, when all of the following apply:

(a) The client is present, except as stated in subsection (5) of this section; and

(b) The broker determines the transportation costs of an escort is necessary based upon the client's age, mental state or capacity, safety requirements, mobility requirements, communication or translation requirements, or cultural issues.

(6) The agency may authorize and pay for the transportation of an authorized escort or guardian, with or without the presence of the client, if the broker determines, and documents, that the presence of the authorized escort or guardian is necessary to ensure that the client has access to medically necessary care.

(7) Lodging and meals for all out-of-state nonemergency transportation must be prior authorized by the agency. Border areas as defined by WAC 182-501-0175 are considered in-state under this section and subsequent sections.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 41.05.021, 41.05.160, 42 C.F.R. §§ 431.53 and 440.170. WSR 20-05-066, § 182-546-5900, filed 2/14/20, effective 3/16/20. Statutory Authority: RCW 41.05.021 and 41.05.160. WSR 15-03-050, § 182-546-5900, filed 1/14/15, effective 2/14/15. WSR 11-17-032, recodified as § 182-546-5900, filed 8/9/11, effective 8/9/11. Statutory Authority: RCW 74.04.057, 74.08.090, and 74.09.500. WSR 11-15-029, § 388-546-5900, filed 7/12/11, effective 8/12/11.]