



MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PATIENT TRAVEL

Effective Date: May 22, 2020

Policy: BS-04

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- I. PURPOSE:** To establish conditions and provide a system for issuance of Ticket Orders, Transportation Purchase Orders (Bus or Airlines), Contingent Fund Checks and/or Patient Funds for the purpose of patient travel.
- II. POLICY:** Montana State Hospital (MSH) will provide transportation and no more than thirty dollars and fifty cents (\$30.50) for meals or, in certain circumstances, a sack lunch for indigent patients traveling within the State of Montana. Indigent patients traveling outside the State of Montana will be provided transportation and no more than fifty dollars (\$ 50.00) for meals per day. Patients responsible for their own travel expenses can make travel arrangements through their social worker or designee. These amounts are adjusted to correspond with Title 2, Chapter 18, Part 5- Travel, Meals and Lodging of the Montana Code Annotated (MCA).
- III. DEFINITIONS:**
 - A. **TICKET ORDER:** Transportation Funds Request Form. This form is used by the Social Worker to obtain Greyhound Bus Lines ticket vouchers (paid for by the MSH) from Business Office. (Attachment A).
 - B. **TRANSPORTATION PURCHASE ORDER:** Business Office will purchase the ticket via state credit card. Receipt will be emailed to Business Office by the Bus Depot. The ticket will be kept at Bus Depot where the patient will obtain with MSH staff assistance.
 - C. **CONTINGENT CHECK REQUEST:** MSH form used to obtain a check issued from the MSH Revolving Cash Account to cover travel expenses when a patient is traveling via his/her own vehicle (Attachment C).
- IV. RESPONSIBILITIES:**
 - A. **Social Worker:** Determining if the patient is to pay travel expenses, initiating the Special Withdrawal Request Form, and obtaining the Hospital Administrator's approval.
 - B. **Chief Financial Officer:** Ensures an accurate and timely patient travel process according to the Montana Operations Manual (MOM).
 - C. **Patient Accounts:** Managing the accuracy of patient account information.

D. **Purchasing Agent:** Making travel arrangements when airlines, hotels, or automobile rentals are needed.

V. **PROCEDURE:**

A. When a patient is authorized to be released from the MSH, it must be determined if the patient or MSH will be responsible for the travel expense. The patient’s social worker or designee makes this determination. The basis for the determination is the patient’s current Patient Accounts (checking) balance, financial resources, travel destination, financial requirements of the patient upon reaching his/her destination, and other factors relative to each individual Patient’s situation.

If the travel is at the patient’s expense, a Request for Approval to Release Funds from Patient Accounts (Long Form, Attachment D) is to be completed and forwarded to Patient Accounts. Travel costs and the balance of the patient’s account will be disbursed as requested on the Request for Approval to Release Funds from Patient Accounts (Long Form). The patient will be provided cash for travel costs (transportation and meals) and a check for the balance of their patient account.

B. **Indigent Patients** will be provided transportation and meal money. A Transportation Purchase Order can be used to obtain all commercial transportation tickets. A Transportation Funds Request Form is utilized when travel is on Greyhound Bus Lines. The patient’s social worker, or designee, will make the request on a Transportation Funds Request Form (Attachment A). Money for meals will be based upon the following schedule:

IN-STATE TRAVEL	OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL
Length of Trip Meal Allowance*	Up to \$ 50.00 based on length of trip
Up to \$ 30.50	
Breakfast \$ 7.50	Breakfast \$ 13.00
Lunch \$ 8.50	Lunch \$ 14.00
Dinner \$ 14.50	Dinner \$ 23.00

*Additional funds may be requested based upon the special requirements of the patient.

When airline travel is involved, a MSH teamster must take the Transportation Purchase Order Form to the travel agent as stated by the Department of Public Health and Human Services policy. The ticket is issued, as previously described, and the MSH Teamster returns the Transportation Purchase Order and the airline ticket to the Business Office personnel who, in turn, will issue the ticket to the Patient’s Social Worker, or designee.

If an indigent patient has his/her own vehicle at MSH, a Contingent Check can be issued from the Revolving Cash Account (Imprest Cash) in the amount of the price of the bus ticket that the patient would have received if he/she had traveled by bus plus meal money. The social worker, or designee, requests a Contingent Check by using a Contingent Check Request Form and forwarding to the Business Office. The Contingent Check will be issued in the name of the patient and delivered to the patient's social worker, or designee. The patient is required to sign for the Contingent Check. The Contingent Check can be cashed at the Business Office, if funds are available.

- C. **TIME FACTORS; REQUESTS:** All requests must be submitted to the Business Services Department, when possible, 24 hours prior to the time the patient is to depart. In the event Ticket Orders, Transportation Purchase Orders, meal money, and/or balance of the patient's account are required sooner; the request may be processed sooner.
- D. **LUGGAGE; ON BUS LINES:** Patients who have luggage must check his/her luggage. The amount of luggage is limited to *two* pieces weighing no more than 100 lbs. each. A small bag may be carried onto the bus and stored in the luggage area over the seat. If a patient has excess baggage, by number and/or weight, special arrangements for shipment must be made through the social worker, or designee, and the Business Office. This must be accomplished prior to the patient's withdrawal of the balance of his/her patient account and departure from MSH.
- E. **LUGGAGE; ON AIRLINES:** Patients who have luggage must check their luggage. The amount of luggage is limited to *one* piece-weighing no more than 50 lbs. each. A small bag can be carried onto the airplane but must fit in the overhead compartment or under the seat. If a patient has excess baggage, by number and/or weight, special arrangements for shipment must be made through the social worker, or designee, and the Business Office. This must be accomplished prior to the patient's withdrawal of the balance of his/her patient account and departure from MSH.
- F. **AIRPORT; PATIENT ARRIVAL TIME:** It is recommended patients be at the airport and checked through the airline agent at least **one** hour prior to departure time.
- VI. **REFERENCES:** State of Montana Operations Manual.
- VII. **COLLABORATED WITH:** Chief Financial Officer, Accountant.
- VIII. **RESCISSIONS:** BS-04, *Patient Travel* dated January 7, 2019; BS-04, *Patient Travel* dated May 6, 2015; BS-04, *Patient Travel* dated December 1, 2007; BS-04, *Patient Travel* dated November 17, 2004; BS-04, *Patient Travel* dated May 15, 2001; BS-04, *Patient Travel* dated February 14, 2000; H.O.P.P. 12-02T.111888, *Patient Travel*, August 8, 1990.

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- IX. DISTRIBUTION:** All hospital policy manuals.

- X. ANNUAL REVIEW AND AUTHORIZATION:** This policy is subject to annual review and authorization for use by either the Administrator or the Medical Director with written documentation of the review per ARM § 37-106-330.

- XI. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY:** Chief Financial Officer.

- XII. ATTACHMENTS:** For internal use only.
 - A. Transportation Funds Request Form
 - B. Transportation Purchase Order /Authorization
 - C. Contingent Check Request
 - D. Request for Approval to Release Funds from Patient Accounts (Long Form)

Signatures:

Kyle Fouts
Interim Hospital Administrator

Tracey Thun
Chief Financial Officer