



MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PATIENT TRAVEL

Effective Date: December 1, 2007

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:** The Montana State Hospital will provide transportation and no more than ten dollars (\$10) 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 thirty dollars (\$30) for meals. Patients responsible for their own travel expenses can make travel arrangements through their Social Worker or designee.
- III. DEFINITIONS:**
 - A. TICKET ORDER - Transportation Voucher Request Form. This form is used to obtain Greyhound Bus Lines tickets (paid for by the Montana State Hospital) from ticket agents at depots where Greyhound Bus Lines tickets are for sale (Attachment A).
 - B. TRANSPORTATION PURCHASE ORDER - State of Montana Form used to obtain tickets (paid for by the Montana State Hospital) from ticket agents/travel agents for the purpose of Patient travel (commercial bus, commercial airlines, etc.; Attachment B)
 - C. CONTINGENT CHECK REQUEST - Montana State Hospital Form used to obtain a check issued from the Montana State Hospital Revolving Cash Account to cover travel expenses when a Patient is traveling with his/her own vehicle (Attachment C).
- IV. RESPONSIBILITIES:**
 - A. The Social Worker is responsible for determining if the Patient is to pay travel expenses and initiating the Special Withdrawal Request Form.
 - B. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for ensuring an accurate and timely Patient travel process according to the Montana Operations Manual (MOM).

- C. The Patient Accounts Office is responsible for managing the accuracy of the Patient Travel Account.
- D. The Purchasing Agent is responsible for making travel arrangements when airlines, hotels, or automobile rentals are needed.

V. PROCEDURE:

- A. When a Patient is authorized to be released from the Montana State Hospital, it must be determined if the Patient or Montana State Hospital 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 Special Withdrawal Request 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 Special Withdrawal Request 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 Voucher Request 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 E). Money for meals will be based upon the following schedule:

IN-STATE TRAVEL		OUT-OF-STATE TRAVEL
Length of Trip	Meal Allowance*	Up to \$30.00 based on length of trip
0-3 hours	no allowance	
3-6 hours	\$ 5.00	
6-9 hours	\$10.00	

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

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When Transportation Purchase Order is used, it is picked up at the Business Services Department and taken to the ticket agent/travel agent by a designated Montana State Hospital employee. The agent who issues the ticket will retain the **white copy** of the Transportation Purchase Order. The Montana State Hospital employee receiving the ticket will deliver the ticket to the Patient.

When airline travel is involved, a Montana State Hospital 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 Montana State Hospital Teamster returns the Transportation Purchase Order and the airline ticket to the Business Services Department 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 Montana State Hospital, a Contingent Check can be issued from the Revolving Cash Account 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 Services Department. 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 Services Department, 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 (2) 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 Services Department. This must be accomplished prior to the Patient's withdrawal of the balance of his/her Patient account and departure from Montana State Hospital.
- E. **LUGGAGE - ON AIRLINES** - Patients who have luggage must check their luggage. The amount of luggage is limited to two (2) pieces weighing no more than 70 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

SPECIAL WITHDRAWAL REQUEST FORM

DATE _____

_____ is allowed withdrawal
Patient ID# Unit

_____ to be used for _____
Amount Reason

Patient Signature or Approval Signature

Unit Supervisor Signature