

Claiming Transportation Costs

The purpose of this guidance is connected to children and youth agency foster care home expenditures that are processed for Title IV-E direct and administrative claiming.

The effective date for claiming costs as described below is January 1, 2009.

COSTS FOR TRANSPORTING CHILD TO REMAIN IN ORIGINAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

OCYF has historically directed counties to include transportation costs that are associated with clients transporting a child to and from the school that he/she was attending prior to placement in foster care as part of the administrative cost pool, in accordance with previous federal guidance. Recently, federal law changed to allow these costs to be a foster care maintenance expense (direct charge). After the change to the law, OCYF requested that ACF clarify whether these costs can be a separate placement maintenance expense, or if they must be included in the per diem (daily maintenance payment to the caregiver).

ACF has now informed us that the cost of reasonable travel to the child's original school district is allowable as a separate item of expense.

Therefore, payments specifically for transportation are only allowable as a separate item of expense for the child to be transported to a the school in which he/she was enrolled prior to placement and/or for the child to transported to his/her family for visitation. (Prior to this new guidance, the only transportation costs that were allowable as a separate item of expense were for the child to travel to visit with his/her family.) Agencies must be able to provide documentation to verify allowable expenditures.

CLIENT TRANSPORTATION COSTS – ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

Recently (Jan 2009), the Feds provided clarification around administrative claiming for transportation costs related to **client transportation costs for administrative activities**. (Reference Child Welfare Policy Manual (CWPM) Section 8.1B, Q/A # 28.) Per Q/A # 28, you may claim the costs of a worker, a foster parent, or a volunteer transporting a child or his or her family to various appointments, such as medical or counseling, or to court hearings and case reviews as a title IV-E **administrative cost**. These costs are considered to be related to case management activities and are therefore an allowable administrative cost. (All transportation costs for agency social workers may remain in the administrative cost pool.)

Effective January 1, 2009, if a county separately accounts for various foster parent transportation expenses and is able to isolate the transportation cost associated with a particular purpose, the county is encouraged to claim the client administrative transportation costs by including those expenses in the cost

pool. Transportation costs paid to a foster parent that can be included in the administrative cost pool include travel costs associated with the following:

- Medical appointments
- Counseling
- Court hearings
- Case reviews
- Foster parent trainings

If a county tracks the purpose for a particular transportation cost, costs associated with any of the above can be included in the administrative cost pool.

For Title IV-E QA review or audit purposes, for the transportation expenditures that are included in the cost pool, you must have **clear accounting records** with detail as to person or provider who is transporting the child and the purpose of travel so that we can ensure that the cost pool contains only those expenses that are claimable as a Title IV-E administrative cost. Further, the costs must be reported on the Act 148 invoice expenditure report in the appropriate cost center so that the Title IV-E admin claim is correctly calculated for children in foster care settings.

The links to the CW Policy Manual that details costs that are allowable as a direct Title IV-E maintenance claim, those that are allowable as a Title IV-E administrative claim, and those that are unallowable under Title IV-E are as follows:

8.1B TITLE IV-E, Administrative Functions/Costs, Allowable Costs - Foster Care Maintenance Payments Program

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/j2ee/programs/cb/laws_policies/laws/cwpm/policy_dsp.jsp?citID=36

8.3B.1 TITLE IV-E, Foster Care Maintenance Payments Program, Payments, Allowable costs

http://www.acf.hhs.gov/j2ee/programs/cb/laws_policies/laws/cwpm/policy_dsp.jsp?citID=46