

Chapter 9: Services for Children in Care

Section:
9.5 Financial Information for Children in Care

Issue Date:
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Subsection:
9.5.7 Maintenance Expenditures for Children in Care (Policy 94)

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PURPOSE

While children are in care, the Minister or agency acts as the “wise and conscientious parent” to ensure that their needs are met. Maintenance Expenditures for Children in Care identifies and sets financial rates for a range of items, services and activities required to meet children’s needs.

SOURCES OF AUTHORITY

Name of Legislation or Regulation	Location within source
<i>Children and Family Services Act</i>	
<i>Children and Family Services Regulations</i>	

POLICY

All children in care, regardless of placement, are eligible to receive funding that addresses their developmental and other needs. All decisions regarding purchases for children in care must be consistent with ongoing planning for the child and reviewed/supported during the case planning process involving the social worker, casework supervisor, the child, as appropriate, and the child’s caregiver.

If a child’s need exceeds financial limits or is not identified in this policy, approval from the Director, Child Protection is required for an exception to policy.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Children in care social workers must adhere to approved expenditures listed below.

All items identified below as automatic payments must be set up on the ICM child’s placement screen for all children placed in foster care, as detailed below. If a situation arises where a child’s social worker determines that the automatic payment should not be considered, this must be reviewed in consultation with their casework supervisor and Child Welfare Specialist and the reasons documented on the child’s file.

The following outlines approved expenditures for Children in Care:

1. Baby Needs

- (a) For infants 0-3 years inclusive;
- (b) Includes formula, bottles, nipples, diapers, wipes and other infant care needs;
- (c) The following rates are **automatically paid**, monthly and in advance, for baby needs. When expenditures exceed the amount provided by automatic payment, receipts for the entire month are required, and payment will be made for the difference between automatic payment amount and receipts provided for entire month's expenses;
- (d) Rate for infants aged 1-3 years: \$100/month paid automatically; if claiming for more, receipts provided for entire month's expenses;
- (e) Rates, paid monthly in advance:

Age	Monthly Rate
0-1	\$150.00
1-3	\$100.00

2. Babysitting

- (a) Babysitting is child care that is short term and provided to allow foster parents time for recreational activities for themselves; care to children (foster children and birth children) while a foster parent tends to the needs of children in care or their own children, such as medical/therapy appointments; school appointments; and other needs of a child where it is not possible for the foster parent to attend to these needs with other children present.
- (b) Rate: \$4 per hour, per child;
- (c) Based on prior approval by the social worker, casework supervisor and/or Service Delivery Manager upon review of the agency's maintenance budget.

3. Board Per Diem

- (a) Covers food, lodging, hot water, laundry detergent, etc.
- (b) Daily Rates, paid monthly:

Age	Per Diem
0-9	\$17.50
10+	\$25.43

4. Camps, Club Memberships and Recreation

- (a) Includes fees for registration and membership, associated costs;
- (b) Rate: Up to a maximum of \$500 per year;
- (c) Based on prior approval by the social worker, casework supervisor and/or Service Delivery Manager upon review of the agency's maintenance budget;

- (d) Consideration to exceed limit must be reviewed at a case planning meeting and requires a formal request to the Director, Child Protection for an exception to this policy;
- (e) Includes camps and clubs, uniforms, recreational activities, sports equipment, bicycles, etc.

5. Child Care/Day Care

- (a) Day Care/Child Care is a long term, formal arrangement between the foster parent and a child care organization or provider, and is used when foster parents work or attend educational programs and require day care for the child. Day Care/Child Care could also include involvement by a child care organization where the child's needs for stimulation/socialization or to enhance child development is identified in the child's case plan or assessment of needs;
- (b) Agency pays full costs.
- (c) When day care/child care is provided in the foster parent's home for the purposes described in 5(a), the agency pays the day care rate for this service and this includes child care provision for shift work.

6. Clothing

- (a) Careful consideration of the parents' views regarding clothing should fully be discussed at the time of placement. Evaluate with the family that there may be a possibility that their child will return home with a higher level expectation of dress than the parents can afford. Where a child is placed pursuant to a Temporary Care Agreement or a Special Needs Agreement and the initial contract is for less than four months, the clothing subsidy will be omitted. The only exception to this policy is in special circumstances where there is a demonstrated seasonal/or obvious need. In this case, social workers have discretion up to \$200 for the purchase of immediate clothing needs when a child first enters care.
- (b) Quarterly rates, paid automatically in January, April, July and October:

Age	Quarterly Rate
0-4	\$125.00
5-9	\$194.00
10+	\$272.00

7. Emergency Needs When Entering Care

- (a) When a child is first taken into care, the social worker will provide the foster parent with \$200 per child to meet emergency needs arising as a result of entering care, i.e. clothing, toothbrushes, toys, etc.

8. Damages

- (a) When a child in care damages property in a licensed child caring facility outstanding costs not covered by the insurance will be paid from the facility's maintenance and repair budget. In the case of damage to a staff person's personal property, outstanding costs not covered by a staff person's personal insurance, may be submitted to the agency and

any payments, with prior agency approval, will be issued from the appropriate agency budget depending on the child's care status.

- (b) When a child in care damages property in a foster home, the foster parent submits their claims directly to Risk Management Services (see [Section 8.6.1 – Claims for Property Damage or Losses, Foster Care Policies](#)) at Internal Services, who apply insurance industry processes and standards.
- (c) When appropriate, the child should make restitution for the damage (i.e., from their spending money or doing chores).

9. Dental

- (a) Costs paid to a dentist for routine examinations, cleaning and preventative care including fillings not covered by provincial health care. Other dental services necessary for the child's health and well-being must be supported by documentation from the involved dentist and reviewed as part of the plan for the child's care. Prior financial approval is required, consistent with the established approval process.
- (b) Orthodontic services only apply to long-term placements, children in permanent care and custody or placed pursuant to a Section 18 care agreement.
- (c) Orthodontic services are based on prior approval by the social worker, casework supervisor and/or Service Delivery Manager, consistent with the established approval process.

10. Driver's Education

- (a) Requests to be reviewed at a case planning meeting with child in care, which must include discussion of the child in care's possible contribution.

11. Driver's License/Insurance

- (a) Cost paid for driver's license;
- (b) Insurance costs are the responsibility of the child. However, should the child in care have an opportunity to be insured on a reliable vehicle, such as their foster parent's car, consideration may be given to covering or assisting the child in covering this cost. This exceptional expense must be submitted for approval by the Director, Child Protection.

12. Equipment, Furniture & Replacement of Bedding

- (a) Equipment (including furniture such as cribs, high chairs, strollers, car seats, beds, dressers, etc.) are expected to be provided by the foster parent, but may be covered by the agency with prior approval, specifying cost and supporting rationale. As necessary household and childcare items can become unsafe or worn out over time, these types of requests may be considered to ensure the child's needs are met (e.g. child has outgrown the car seat, its expiry date is past, or is no longer considered safe per Health Canada). If the foster parent requires equipment or furniture to accept placement of a child of a different age/stage than they normally foster, items may be purchased as required. Should foster parents(s) not have access to a safety approved car seat, the agency will provide one. Decisions to cover the costs of these items should be communicated to the assigned foster care social worker to ensure they are aware of

supports provided. Purchases that are specific to a child's needs will remain with the child if they move to a new placement. Replacement of bedding may be provided based on the special needs of the child.

13. Glasses/Contacts

- (a) Eye examinations (10+ years of age);
- (b) Based on prior approval by the social worker, casework supervisor and/or Service Delivery Manager within the established financial approval threshold;
- (c) Up to a maximum of \$300 every other year; consideration to exceed this limit must be reviewed at a case planning meeting.

14. Hair Care

Rate: \$37.50/quarter, **paid automatically** in January, April, July and October

Consideration to exceed this limit, including identification of why additional resources are required and for what purpose must be reviewed at a case planning meeting and reflected in the *Child's Plan of Care*.

15. Independent Living Costs

The cost of furniture to establish a child in an independent living situation requires prior approval. Consideration must be given to obtaining these furnishing in a cost-effective manner, in compliance with independent living guidelines as with Child Welfare Specialist. Please see the [Independent Living Framework](#).

16. Medical Equipment

The cost of equipment not covered by MSI as recommended in writing by the appropriate specialist (i.e., wheelchair, prosthesis, etc.) and with the approval of the Regional Service Delivery Manager within the established financial approval threshold.

17. Non-prescription Items

- (a) Includes cold remedies, basic acne remedies, skin creams, pain/fever medication, band-aids, tooth brushes, sanitary products, deodorant, razors, shaving cream, etc.
- (b) Rate: \$30/month, **paid automatically**; Requests to exceed this limit must be reviewed and supported via a case planning meeting, consistent with the child's plan of care.

18. Post-Secondary Education

- (a) See [Section 9.2.3 – Post-Secondary Education - Educational Bursary Program, Child Protection and Children in Care Policies](#) and [Section 9.2.5 – Extension to the Educational Bursary Program, Child Protection and Children in Care Policies](#).

19. Prescriptions

- (a) Prescriptions for children in care who are placed outside of their parents' home will be covered by Pharmacare. Pharmacare provides prescription drug coverage for those drugs listed in the Nova Scotia Formulary. Pharmacare generally covers generic drugs. If there is a need for a drug that is not listed, the physician may be able to obtain

approval by contacting Pharmacare. Alternate medication that is covered by Pharmacare should be explored with the child's physician. If there is no acceptable alternative, a request for exception to policy must be submitted to the Director, Child Protection, or their designate. Consideration will include whether the drug is classified as narcotic, illegal, experimental or an unproven treatment, and/or is required to relieve a child's pain or infection and whether it is needed urgently.

- (b) In extraordinary circumstances, Pharmacare benefits may be extended to children in care whose placement is with a parent or other party, i.e. when a child is placed with a parent or third party under Section 48(8) (c) and (d). This is intended to ensure that all children in care receive necessary medication. However, this is intended only in circumstances when planning is in place for the child to return to the care of their parent and consultation with the child welfare specialist is required. This consultation must be documented on the child's file.

20. Respite and Temporary Short-Term Placement

- (a) Provides relief to foster parents;
- (b) Respite is defined as overnight care for a maximum of four consecutive nights;
- (c) Providers can be other approved foster parents, foster parent respite exclusive, or conditionally approved respite foster parents (see [Section 8.3.2 – Payment for Alternate Care, Foster Care Policies](#));
- (d) Foster parents receiving temporary short-term placement services will receive the basic board per diem, along with any assessed special needs rates, up to 14 days per year. In extraordinary circumstances (i.e. family illness) the foster care social worker may request approval for a further extension, to a maximum of 30 days for the continuation of the children in care per diem, only. This must be submitted as an exception to policy request for approval by the Director, Child Protection.
- (e) Rate: \$56 per night per child for each 24 hour period; additional hours to be paid at \$14 for any quarter day or part thereof;
- (f) For temporary short-term placement, 4-14 nights, the first four nights are paid at the respite rate, and the remainder are paid at the per diem plus any assessed special needs.

21. School Activities & Items

- (a) The cost of approved school related items such as class and school trips, school pictures, additional supplies, special equipment, etc.;
- (b) Rate: \$100 semi-annually, paid automatically in January and September;
- (c) Consideration to exceed this limit must be reviewed at a case planning meeting.

22. School Supplies

- (a) For those items, such as pens, pencils, crayons, paper, math sets, calculators and other items required for the classroom;
- (b) Annual Rates, paid automatically in August:

Grade	Annually
P-6	\$120.00
7+	\$150.00

23. Special Occasion Costs

(a) The following special occasions costs are paid automatically:

Special Occasion	Rate	Timing
Birthday	\$125.00	Child's birthday
Grading	\$50.00	June
Religious	\$20.00	March

(b) Christmas funding is paid as follows, automatically in November

Age	Amount	Comments
0-5	\$150.00	Paid to foster parent or caregiver
6-10	\$195.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$175 to foster parent or caregiver to purchase child's gifts \$20 for child to purchase gifts
11+	\$240.00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$200 to foster parent or caregiver to purchase child's gifts \$40 for child to purchase gifts

(c) Graduation Costs

- (i) Graduation photos, school ring, prom outfit, etc.
- (ii) Based on prior approval by the social worker, casework supervisor and/or Service Delivery Manager upon review of the established financial approval threshold;
- (iii) Up to maximum. (Senior - \$400, Junior - \$200);
- (iv) Consideration to exceed this limit must be reviewed at a case planning meeting;
- (v) Clothing is cost shared from clothing allowance with certainty of a successful school completion.

24. Spending allowance for children

(a) Monthly rates, paid automatically

Age	Monthly	Paid to
0-5	\$10.00	Foster parent or caregiver
6-11	\$15.00	Foster parent or caregiver
12-15	\$25.00	Child
16+	\$40.00	Child

25. Telephone

(a) May be used to maintain contact with birth family and significant others determined by child's worker and caregiver;

- (b) Rate: \$30 per month, paid automatically;
- (c) Based on prior approval by the social worker, casework supervisor and/or Service Delivery Manager upon review of the established financial approval threshold;
- (d) Consideration to exceed this limit must be reviewed at a case planning meeting.

26. Transportation

- (a) Transportation will be reimbursed for any event or activity related to the *Child's Plan of Care* or the following :
 - (i) Child's medical appointments;
 - (ii) Child's counselling appointments;
 - (iii) School-related meetings/activities;
 - (iv) Legal: attending court hearings with the child, attending legal counsel or guardian ad litem appointments. If called to testify in court; attending child protection hearings if required;
 - (v) Access visits;
 - (vi) Case conferences;
 - (vii) Transportation to and from child's employment/volunteering;
 - (viii) Transportation to cultural and religious events where the child participates where this is not an event the care giver would normally participate;
 - (ix) Travel for informal recreation that is outside what would be considered regular family activities or for activities for the child in care that the foster parent wouldn't otherwise participate in; e.g. foster parent with no birth children at home taking a child in care to the playground;
 - (x) Transporting children to school must be part of the child's plan with rationale for why there is no other option and requires prior approval.
- (b) At the current provincial government rate, with no drop in rate at 16,000 km;
- (c) When children are required to travel long distances with their foster parents to attend medical appointments, therapeutic appointments or access events, meals for both foster parents and children in care will be reimbursed at the approved government rate.

27. Vacation

- (a) Based on prior approval by the social worker, casework supervisor and/or Service Delivery Manager upon review of the maintenance budget;
- (b) Rate: \$150 semi-annually, **paid automatically** in January and June;
- (c) Consideration to exceed this limit must be reviewed at a case planning meeting.

EFT Payments – Potential Privacy Breaches

In instances where a client indicates they did not get their expected payment information by email and the email in ICM is incorrect, a potential privacy breach must be reported. To report a potential privacy breach, send an email to CS_Privacy@novascotia.ca and include name of client, incorrect and correct email address, and payment information from Payment History page.