

**STRONG FAMILY HEALTH CENTER (SFHC)
PURCHASED AND REFERRED CARE TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

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SUBJECT: **CLIENT TRANSPORTATION**

Purpose:

To help with the burden of transportation cost for our lowest income and medically fragile clients to seek specialty healthcare.

1.0 Client Transport

Indian Health Services (I.H.S.) limits the use of client transport funds to clients without adequate travel capability. Clients eligible for free transportation may be individuals or families who meet one of the following criteria areas:

- A. Do not have vehicle(s)
- B. Have undependable vehicle(s)
- C. Are unable to drive (elderly, handicapped, or without a valid driver's license)
- D. Significant financial burden to transport themselves
- E. The client will be having a procedure that they are unable to transport themselves and have no other available transportation.
- F. Must have Medi-Cal with a share of cost less than \$500.
- G. Referral from client's primary provider
- H. Service is not locally available

Medical, vision, dental or mental health related transportation requests will be honored, provided clients meet the above eligibility and there is staff available. Requests must be made two (2) working days in advance of the appointment. Same day acute emergency appointments will be done only if staff and a vehicle are available.

I.H.S. funds for medical and dental transport cannot be used for the following purposes:

- I. Court appearance/ Probation
- J. School or job related activities
- K. Taxi service

2.0 Social Service Transport

Funding for social service transport is limited and therefore, restricted to the following:

- A. Social Service case management
- B. Substance Abuse case management
- C. Substance Abuse prevention activities

In general, only SFHC program related activities qualify for client transport.

All requests for transportation must be made at least two (2) working days in advance of the requested transport. Requests for transport must be made through the Purchased and Referred Care (PRC) Department.

3.0 Seat Belts/Child Safety Seats

It is the policy of SFHC that employees and clients will be transported by SFHC only when a reasonable degree of protection is assured. To this end, every child transported will be secured in an age/weight/size appropriate child safety seat or child booster seat. All adults will use a seat belt for the duration of the trip. Every employee will be secured with a safety belt. Under no circumstances will any person be allowed to drive, ride, or otherwise be transported without such devices in use.

Every vehicle used to conduct SFHC business shall have a safety belt installed for each seating position. No vehicle shall be operated while carrying more passengers than available safety belts.

Each motor vehicle operator and all occupants shall be secured with the safety belt or child safety seat whenever the motor vehicle is under power or in motion.

The driver of the vehicle shall ensure that each occupant is properly restrained before beginning any trip, regardless of the length or duration, until the motor is shut off. Every motor vehicle which transports children under eight years of age or under eighty pounds, shall be equipped with a child safety seat. Children under 4'9" in height will be required to use a child booster seat.

4.0 Smoking

- A. Drivers and clients in transport are prohibited from smoking/chewing tobacco or use of electronic cigarettes while being transported. Reasonable rest stops will be provided.

5.0 General

- A. Anyone being transported will be required to wear a seat belt, or in the case of infants/children, will be restrained in a child safety seat/booster seat. Transportation will be refused if the client/patient will not use the seat belt/child safety/booster seat.
- B. Anyone transporting on behalf of SFHC has the right to refuse to transport anyone who is intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- C. Any child must be accompanied by a parent or guardian when being transported. The only exception to this rule is for Youth Group Activities. Exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Executive Director, when the parent/guardian is unable to accompany the child, but it is generally requested that a parent/guardian attend appointments with their children.
- D. All children being transported are expected to behave and follow the guidelines given to them by the transporter. If the child(ren) do not behave and do not obey the transporter, the parents will be contacted and advised. If the child(ren) repeatedly misbehaves, parents will be advised that either (1) the parents must accompany the child during transport or (2) the child(ren) will no longer be transported.
- E. Transportation is provided only for appointments at the nearest local facility.
- F. Clients are expected to be ready at the appointed time for transportation. In cases where a client is repeatedly late for transportation appointments, the client will be reminded of the need for punctuality. If the behavior continues, the Executive Director may advise the client that they are no longer eligible for transportation services.
- G. When transportation is being provided to a client for an appointment and another individual requests incidental transportation at the same time, transportation may be provided on a space available basis under the following circumstances:
 - a. The individual is a SFHC client.
 - b. No additional mileage or out of the way excursions, i.e., transport will be provided to and from the points, the primary client is being transported and nowhere else.
 - c. The individual is otherwise complying with all policies, i.e., seatbelt, sobriety, etc. Without prior authorization, transportation will not be provided to an individual who is not a SFHC client. Incidental transport is at the discretion of the transporter and the transporter may refuse to provide such services.

- H. Transportation is a service provided on an “as needed”, transporter available basis and is not necessarily an entitlement, it is a privilege. Any client refusing transportation by a specific transporter or vehicle or refusing to share transportation with another client may be refused transportation. SFHC cannot afford to unnecessarily duplicate transportation services due to individual preferences.
- I. Transportation requests specific to liquor and tobacco outlets are prohibited. No alcohol will be transported in SFHC vehicles.
- J. Food and beverages are allowed in the vehicles per the driver’s discretion. If allowed, SFHC has a closed lid container policy.
- K. No transport of intoxicated or under the influence of any substance is allowed.

6.0 Out of Town Medical Appointments

Out of the area transportation is only provided in cases where a referral has been made by a local provider. Elective use of facilities and providers outside of the local area in these instances, the client will provide their own transportation and be responsible for all associated costs.

Procedures:

- A. Mileage is for health care appointments that are more than 30 miles round trip from the client’s primary residence address. (Modoc County).
- B. Mileage is not available for elective/cosmetic health care.
- C. Mileage is not available for client’s/patient’s request for a second medical opinion.
- D. Mileage is given from the client’s primary address, not the SFHC Office. Using the shortest route on google maps.
- E. Mileage will be at current Internal Revenue Service Medical Mileage Rate plus \$.10, to accommodate increased gas cost of fuel in our rural area.
- F. SFHC reserves the right to request written verification of the referral from the provider prior to authorizing the appointment.
- G. Requests for mileage should be made as soon as possible, but no less than two (2) working days prior to the appointment.

- H. For clients requesting transportation assistance, referrals must be made to the provider nearest the residence of the patient, who accepts that patient's insurance coverage (Medicare, Medi-Cal, Private Insurance, etc.).
 - a. Every SFHC client has the right to go to a provider of their choice outside the SFHC Service Area. However, in doing so, the client should attempt to select the nearest provider who accepts their insurance coverage. The client will also be responsible for any associated travel costs.
 - b. Reasonable attempts will be made to schedule out of town appointments during the middle part of the day in order that travel to and from the appointment can be made in one day.

- I. Requests for assistance of overnight lodging and meals require pre-authorization by the Executive Director.
 - a. If the child is the patient or the adult patient is deemed unable to transport themselves, per diem costs may be allowable for one adult person to accompany the patient.
 - b. If other resources are unavailable for lodging, SFHC will book and pay for a hotel room.
 - c. Meal per diem will be at the current General Services Administration (GSA) rate for overnight appointment(s).

- J. Clients found to have received mileage for an appointment that was canceled or not attended will return the full amount of the mileage and all lodging and per-diem within 5 business days. Failure to do so will result in the loss of privilege to receive mileage reimbursement prior to appointments.

- K. Clients are responsible for all other costs involved in a trip, i.e., meals, lodging, incidental expenses, etc. Transporters do not have funds to pay for these costs. Individual clients under specific, pre-authorized circumstances may be eligible to receive funds for these types of costs. Prior approval must be obtained from the Executive Director.

- L. A 15- minute shopping limitation is imposed on all client transport assignments. Violations may result in the loss of transportation privileges.

7.0 Client Code of Conduct

It is the intent of SFHC to ensure the safety of staff, clients and the general public. This includes at the time of pick up, in the transportation vehicle, at the medical facility or during any other stops made throughout the duration of the transport.

Violence, verbal assaults, threatening behavior, intimidating behavior, excessive use of foul language, destruction of property, theft and any other disruptive or inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated during transports.

Weapons such as firearms, knives or any other device or material capable of being used to cause bodily injury will, under no circumstances, be allowed in SFHC vehicles.

Any infraction to this Client Code of Conduct will result in termination of the client's transportation privileges for a duration of time determined by the Executive Director.