



INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Complete information on the Travel Assistance Program may be found online at: www.gov.bc.ca/travelassistanceprogram

The Travel Assistance Program (TAP) helps alleviate some of the transportation costs for eligible BC residents who must travel within the province for non-emergency medical specialist services not available in their own community.

TAP is a corporate partnership between the Ministry of Health and private transportation carriers who agree to waive or discount their regular fees.

PATIENT ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for TAP:

- you must be a BC resident and be enrolled in the Medical Services Plan;
- you must have a referral from a physician or nurse practitioner for medical specialist/specialty services which are not available locally;
- your travel expenses must not be covered by third party insurance, such as an employer plan, extended medical plan, Insurance Corporation of BC, WorkSafeBC or federal government program (e.g. Veterans' Affairs).

The referral must be to the closest location for non-emergency medical specialist services not available in your community.

ESCORT ELIGIBILITY

An escort is eligible for TAP only when accompanying a patient who is:

1. 18 years of age and under; or
2. incapable of travelling independently for medical reasons.

An escort is not eligible for TAP when driving a vehicle on behalf of a patient who does not qualify under (1) or (2) above, or when travelling alone to pick up a patient.

Your physician or nurse practitioner must indicate on the TAP form that an escort is required for one of the two reasons cited above. Please note that transportation partners have the right to refuse an incomplete or altered TAP form.

TAP does not provide direct financial assistance to patients for travel costs – meals, accommodation, mileage, fuel and local transportation expenses are not included in TAP and are the responsibility of the patient. It is the responsibility of the patient to make their own travel and accommodation arrangements.
Please note that there is NO reimbursement after travel.

Other medical travel and accommodation programs:

HEALTH CONNECTIONS

A regional medical travel assistance program implemented by four Health Authorities which provides transportation options to help defray costs for rural residents. www.gov.bc.ca/healthconnections

BC FAMILY RESIDENCE PROGRAM

Accommodation assistance when a child attends BC Children's Hospital or Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children, and air transportation assistance for patients of all ages. www.bcfamilyresidence.gov.bc.ca

HOTELS OFFERING DISCOUNTED ACCOMMODATION

A number of hotels in BC provide discounted accommodation rates for individuals and families who must be away from home to obtain medical care. <http://csa.pss.gov.bc.ca/medicaltravel>

TAP BC: HOW TO APPLY

TAP forms are valid for three months after the appointment date on your completed TAP form. This allows for the rescheduling of specialist appointments without having to obtain another TAP form.

STEP 1: FILL OUT YOUR TAP FORM

- Your physician's office, nurse practitioner or specialty clinic will provide the TAP form and complete most of it for you.
- Print your address, including postal code and telephone number, in the spaces provided.
- Sign the declaration on the front of the form confirming that your medical travel expenses are not covered by a third-party insurance plan or another government program.

STEP 2: OBTAIN A TAP CONFIRMATION NUMBER

- Telephone TAP before you make travel arrangements to verify your eligibility and receive a confirmation number. ***Please don't wait until the night before your day of travel to contact TAP.***
- The TAP automated application service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
BC (toll-free): 1 800 661-2668
- When you call TAP, you will be asked for your Personal Health Number (PHN) on your BC Services Card/CareCard and the information provided by your physician or nurse practitioner on the TAP form.
- Please have your BC Services Card/CareCard and the TAP form ready. Once your TAP request is accepted, enter the TAP confirmation number in the space provided on your form.

STEP 3: PRESENT YOUR COMPLETED TAP FORM

- To receive your discount, present the completed TAP form (including the TAP confirmation number) at the time you make air, rail, and northern ferry reservations.
- If you are traveling by BC Ferries on southern routes, present the completed TAP form ***at least one hour prior*** to your planned departure time.
- For northern ferry routes, present your completed TAP form ***at least 24 hours before*** scheduled sailing.

TRANSPORTATION PARTNERS *(see the TAP web site for available discounts and additional contact information)*

Air Transportation

Angel Flight	250 818-0288
Central Mountain Air	1 888 865-8585
Harbour Air	1 800 665-0212
HawkAir	1 800 487-1216
HeliJet	1 800 665-4354
Orca Airways	1 888 359-6722
Pacific Coastal Airlines	1 800 663-2872
Seair Seaplanes	1 800 447-3247
West Coast Air	1 800 665-0212

Ground Transportation

VIA Rail *	1 888 842-7245
	* Refer to discount PR6145

Ferry Transportation

BC Ferry Services – see www.bcferries.com for schedule and contact information

CONTACT US

For more information about the Travel Assistance Program please visit the website at www.gov.bc.ca/travelassistanceprogram or contact Health Insurance BC at 604 683-7151 (Lower Mainland) or 1 800 663-7100 (Rest of BC).