

**NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA**

June 29, 2022

**PI 23-09**

**TO:** Human Service Zones  
Division of Juvenile Services  
Tribal Social Services  
Field Service Specialists  
Nexus-PATH

**FROM:** Kelsey Bless, CFS Licensing Unit Administrator  
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**SUBJECT:** Irregular Payment Specific to Placement Setting 623-05-25-05  
Category 50 - Transportation Costs 623-05-30-25  
Charts 623-05-65  
Irregular Payment Categories & Codes Family  
Nexus-PATH Payment Chart

**PROGRAMS:** Foster Care Maintenance – Irregular Payments

**RETENTION:** Until Manualized

**EFFECTIVE:** July 1, 2022

Children and Family Services updated policy manual 623-05 Foster Care Maintenance Payments to include additional clarification for allowable travel for a child in foster care to the school they are enrolled in at the time of placement and reimbursement of excess transportation through Nexus-PATH to maintain family connections.

Reimbursement for travel expenses will require planning and approval by the case manager. The **SFN 1042**, Irregular Foster Care Payment form should be completed and provided to the foster care eligibility worker prior to payment when transportation reimbursement limitations apply such as maximum number of miles, maximum number of times per day/week/month, if receipts or a travel log will be required for reimbursement, etc. Calculated mileage is subject to the current state rate. Travel for sporting events and after school activities are not eligible for separate reimbursement and are inclusive in the standard maintenance rate.

Policy updates are in [red & blue/underline](#). If you have questions or need technical assistance, please contact Deb Lachenmeier, [dlachenmeier@nd.gov](mailto:dlachenmeier@nd.gov) or Kelsey Bless, [kmbless@nd.gov](mailto:kmbless@nd.gov).

# Irregular Payment Specific to Placement Setting 623-05-25-05

## Irregular Payments Family Foster Care:

~~Foster~~ ~~c~~Children in foster care placed in a licensed or approved ~~(Tribal Affidavit)~~ family foster home are eligible for irregular maintenance payments.

## Irregular Payments for a Non-Foster Care Placement:

~~Foster~~ ~~c~~Children in foster care placed in a non-foster care setting, with an unlicensed provider, at the hospital, or in relative/kinship care do not qualify for irregular maintenance payments.

## Irregular Payments in Other Approved Foster Care Settings:

### ~~1. Intensive Treatment Foster Care~~

~~a. Code 53: Travel for foster parents to transport to school, and~~

~~b. Code 71: If the foster child has their own child~~

### 1. Nexus PATH Treatment Foster Care (ITFC or TFC): Only 2 codes allowed.

#### a. Code 53:

- i. ~~Travel for foster parents to transport to school,~~ Transportation by a foster care provider of a child to their school of origin, when the school is located outside the school boundaries of the provider's residence,
- ii. Transportation to maintain family connections as approved by the custodial case manager, and

#### b. Code 71: If the foster child has their own child

### 2. Nexus-PATH Regular Foster Care

- a. All irregular payments for family foster care placements apply, with the exception of ~~Categories 30 and 60~~ code 31. Category 60 is allowable, but the payment system does not allow for the entry of codes 61, 62, 63, or 64 as a separate irregular payment. Therefore, when a code under category 60 is billed, the amount must be included in the standard maintenance payment amount when the monthly standard payment is authorized.

## Irregular Payments in Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP):

The irregular payment policy has very limited application to children in group and residential care. ND QRTP's have an established fee for service defined in N.D.A.C. 75-03-15. Children placed in an QRTP are only eligible for:

- Category 10 – [codes 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16](#)
- Category 20 – [codes 21 and 22](#)
- Category 50 – [codes 51 and 52 only](#)
- Category 80 – [code 80](#)

### Irregular Payments in Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF's):

Foster care funds cannot [be used to reimburse pay](#) for any portion of a child's cost of care in a PRTF, including irregular payments. Irregular payments may be included in the PRTF's direct rate based on historical costs as outlined in N.D.A.C 75-02-09-06 reimbursed by ND Medical Services.

### **Category 50 - Transportation Costs 623-05-30-25**

Transportation for a [foster-child-child in foster care](#) is necessary to maintain family connections and assist with reunification efforts. Arranging for and paying costs of necessary transportation for a child to be placed in a foster home or a QRTP facility is the responsibility of the custodial agency (Human Service Zone, Division of Juvenile Services or Tribe).

Transportation reimbursement is specific to a [foster-child-child](#) placed with a licensed [or /approved](#) ~~(Tribal Affidavit)~~ foster care provider. The foster care case manager is responsible to identify transportation needs that support the case plan. Transportation costs must be evaluated based on family need, family contribution, and travel schedule. [The SFN 1042, Irregular Foster Care Payment form should be completed and provided to the eligibility worker prior to payment when transportation reimbursement limitations apply such as maximum number of miles, maximum number of times per day/week/month, if receipts or a travel log will be required for reimbursement, etc.](#) The foster care case manager must submit receipts (tickets and lodging) and other supporting documentation (mileage calculations and per diem) to the CFS [FCSA](#) Eligibility Unit for payment authorization to the foster parent.

When a child is placed in a QRTP facility, the team must consider what a facility will provide to a parent or guardian upon arrival for visitation at the facility (Ex: lodging and meals). ~~In order to~~ To claim reimbursement for travel, transportation costs must be calculated, documented, and provided to the CFS [FCSA](#) Eligibility Unit eligibility worker for reimbursement. Reimbursement cannot exceed the current state rate for mileage and per diem.

**NOTE:** The basic foster care maintenance rate issued to the foster care provider includes the costs of transporting a [foster-child in foster care](#) locally to and from

sporting events, extra-curricular activities, school functions, etc. An irregular payment cannot be authorized to accommodate day-to-day transportation needs.

## Codes under Category 50

- ~~51—Travel for foster child: Home visits/reunification or other visitation to maintain family connections.~~
- ~~52—Travel for parent/guardian to residential facility/QRTP: Visits to the foster child placed in a Qualified Residential Treatment Program or approved out of state foster care facility only.~~
- ~~53—Travel for foster parents: To transport a foster child to school in which the child is enrolled at the time of placement.~~

**Code 51: Travel for Child in Foster Care** ~~(Travel for foster child only) can be applied when:~~

1. The child in foster ~~child-care~~ travels to a home visit, or
2. The child in foster ~~child-care~~ travels to another location to visit their parents, siblings, relatives, or other caretakers for reasons of reunification or maintaining family connections.

### Code 51 Documentation

Transportation costs must be calculated and determined by planning the trip for the child. Receipts (tickets and lodging) and other documentation (mileage calculations, [travel log](#), and per diem) must be provided to the CFS [FCSA](#) Eligibility Unit for payment authorization. Meal and mileage reimbursement must follow North Dakota guidelines and cannot exceed the established in-state per diem rates, even if the travel is to another state. The foster care case manager is expected to seek the lowest possible rate when public or commercial transportation (flight, bus, etc.) is required.

**Code 52: Travel for Parent/Guardian to a QRTP** ~~can be applied when:~~

1. The parent/guardian/other designee may be eligible for financial assistance for transportation costs. Visitation to visit a foster child in foster care placed in a Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) or approved out of state foster care facility. by the child's parent/guardian/other designee. Visits should be planned and approved by the case manager with agreement by the facility to reimburse the party at the time of the visit for the approved reimbursement amount. The facility must bill the travel expenses on their monthly invoice for reimbursement back to the facility. to maintain family connections or achieve

~~permanency. This Visits~~ may include participation in treatment activities (Ex: family week) provided by the facility requiring attendance from the family/designee to achieve the permanency goal and to maintain family connections.

2. The costs for additional family members to participate in the facility visit with the ~~foster~~ child are not reimbursable.

#### Parent Responsibility- Travel Costs limited to a QRTP placement:

Parents, if able, have a responsibility to be involved in their child's case plan and pay their own travel expenses related to visitation of their child placed in a residential facility (QRTP). This is separate from any amount they pay to child support. Foster care case managers must work with the parent to review the need for financial assistance by completing the SFN 1023, "Foster Care Transportation Reimbursement Budget Sheet." The form is designed to determine eligibility for transportation reimbursement. Based on the information on the completed form, the parent(s) are either "eligible" or "not eligible" for transportation reimbursement. Parents may reapply if their financial status changes or they are experiencing a financial hardship.

#### Code 52 Documentation

Transportation costs must be evaluated based on family need, travel schedule, and understanding of what the facility will provide upon arrival. If determined eligible for reimbursement, transportation costs must be calculated by planning the trip for the approved parent/s or guardian. The facility and foster care case manager are expected to seek the lowest possible rate when commercial transportation is required. Reimbursement for meals and mileage must follow North Dakota guidelines and cannot exceed the established in-state per diem rates, even if the travel is to another state. The QRTP/facility must attach receipts (tickets and lodging) and other documentation (mileage calculations and per diem) to the monthly service bill/invoice to the CFS FCSA Eligibility Unit for payment authorization.

#### **Code 53: Travel for Foster Care Providers** ~~can be applied when:~~

1. ~~The foster parent provides reasonable travel for the child to remain in their school of origin upon placement into the provider's home, located outside the established school boundaries\*.~~ A foster care provider may be reimbursed for transportation costs when a child placed in their home requires transportation to a school of origin that is located outside of the established school boundaries that apply to the foster care provider's residence.

2. Travel provided by Nexus-PATH providers to maintain family connections as approved by the custodial case manager.

Code 53 Documentation

Documentation for approved transportation costs must include mileage calculations or receipts for the cost of public transportation (ex: bus tickets) and must be submitted to the CFS FCSA Eligibility Unit for payment authorization. Reimbursement cannot exceed the current state rate for mileage or the established school/city bus transportation costs. Foster care irregular payment reimbursement for ~~excess~~ school transportation is available for children placed into a licensed or approved ~~(Tribal affidavit)~~ foster home. If the child is placed in an unlicensed home, transportation reimbursement to the school of origin cannot be accommodated with foster care funds. ~~\*Reimbursement of expenses to transport a foster child to and from school located within the established school boundaries of the foster parent's home is part of the standard foster care maintenance rate. The foster child's school of origin may change depending on their foster care placement.~~ If a foster child's placement changes, the school of origin would be considered the school in which the child was enrolled at the time of the placement change.

**Travel for Foster Child's Medical**

Transportation costs for medical services and appointments are not allowable expenditures with foster care funds. Medical travel may be covered by ND Medical Services if the foster parent can enroll as a Non-Emergent Medical Transportation (NEMT) provider. Medical Services information and applications for enrollment can be located at <http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/medicalserv/medicaid/> or by calling 701-328-2321.