

Information Bulletin

December 13, 2021

Attention: Home Care Services Providers

Subject: Revised HCA Definition, Setting Care Services Expectations, & Medical Escorts

HCA Definition – Revised

In an effort to support the staffing challenges throughout BC, WorkSafeBC has revised the definition for HCA (“Health Care Assistant”) in order to broaden recruitment opportunities.

Effective December 15, 2021, the definition and qualifications required of an HCA are as follows:

“**Health Care Assistant**” or “**HCA**” means an individual who works under the direction and supervision of a Registered Nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse and who has either: (1) completed a Resident Care Aide or Home Support Worker Program at an accredited educational institution supplemented with on-the-job training, or (2) has basic health and medical care training including current CPR and first aid certification supplemented with on-the-job training/work experience acceptable to WorkSafeBC in its discretion and for whom WorkSafeBC approval is obtained. A Health Care Assistant may also be known as a Personal Support Worker, Community Health Worker, Residential Care Aide, Personal Care Attendant, Registered Care Attendant, Home Support Worker or Nurse’s Aide.

Please refer to the Contract Amendment (sent out on December 7, 2021) for more information.

Setting expectations for the provision of Care Services

Staffing challenges may be compounded by an injured worker’s (“worker”) desire to “pick and choose” the caregivers that deliver their Care Services. To mitigate this, we recommend setting expectations up front with the worker, with collaboration and support from the WorkSafeBC board officer, such as that:

- There is a caregiver staffing shortage in BC;
- Requests for specific personnel will be accommodated wherever possible, but may not be guaranteed;
- Care Services will attempt to be scheduled around the preferred times, but this may not always be possible (unless a specific time slot is clinically necessary);
- Discrimination based on age, race, ethnicity, gender, etc. will not be tolerated;

- Any service issues will be investigated and personnel will be educated/trained as necessary to improve their technique and delivery of services. This may not result in the immediate removal of a caregiver; and
- Requests to replace personnel will not be considered unless it is a valid reason (e.g., clinical issue/incident, caregiver/client trust has been broken and is irreparable, etc.).

If you encounter disputes related to the above, please reach out to the WorkSafeBC board officer for support in reinforcing this message with the injured worker.

Medical Escorts – Process & Reminders

Where an HCA is required to meet a worker at a surgical facility (or alternative care destination) and accompany them home, and where the HCA is using a vehicle to get to/from work (versus public transit), the HCA often requires a *one-way* taxi either back to the original destination or their vehicle.

The worker will be provided with a return taxi voucher for their travel to and from the care destination, so Contractor personnel accompanying the worker from this pick up point to the worker's residence/hotel will be using that voucher for that leg of the trip. Vouchers are unable to be issued by WorkSafeBC directly to the Contractor's personnel, so the HCA will be required to pay out of pocket for the other leg of the trip.

The recommended process is:

- The HCA drives to the final destination (Worker's home/hotel) and takes a taxi to the care destination to meet the Worker, paying for that leg of the journey. The HCA then travels back to the home/hotel with the Worker using the Worker's taxi voucher provided by WorkSafeBC. The HCA's vehicle is there ready for them at the end of their shift.

The process is similar for the reverse (i.e., HCA drives to the care destination, leaves their vehicle there and takes a taxi back to their vehicle after the shift); however, there may be parking challenges and expenses with this option.

The *one-way* taxi expense is reimbursable under the Pre-Authorized Travel Expenses fee code 1137408. Please be reminded that a copy of the taxi receipt must be attached to the WorkSafeBC Provider Portal invoice for the expense to be paid.

- Note: gratuities are not billable to WorkSafeBC and as such are not to be included in the invoiced amount.

For more information regarding invoicing for reimbursement of Pre-Authorized Travel Expenses, please refer to Schedule B (Fees) and the following sections of the Reference Manual: Additional Travel Expenses (pages 30 and 31) and Appendix G – Guidelines for using Schedule B.

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