

<p style="text-align: center;">STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SENIOR AND DISABILITIES SERVICES</p> <p style="text-align: center;">POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL</p>	SECTION: 3 Waivers	Number: 3-1	Page: 1	
	SUBJECT: Home and Community-Based Waiver Services during Temporary Absences			
	APPROVED: /s/ Duane G. Mayes, Director		DATE: 5/10/12	
	<i>Replaces policy signed 4/10/08</i> <i>Effective May 14, 2012</i>			

Purpose

To provide a process for requesting authorization for services during a temporary absence.

To define responsibilities for travel preparation and accountability for services provided to a participant during a temporary absence.

Policy

SDS recognizes that participants may need home and-community based waiver services during temporary absences for specified purposes, whether participants travel to another location within the state or to an out-of-state destination. If the services are necessary to maintain a participant's current level of functioning or to prevent placing the participant at risk of institutionalization, SDS may reimburse for a limited range of services for a participant during a temporary absence from the participant's community for up to 30 days in any Plan of Care (POC) duration. The care coordinator and the providers rendering services must prepare for travel in collaboration with the participant and the participant's representative, and must remain accountable for the duration of the temporary absence.

Authority

7 AAC 100.064 Temporary absence from the state

Definitions

"Participant representative" means a parent, guardian, or other individual with legal authority to act on behalf of a participant.

Responsibilities

- A. **SDS** is responsible for
 1. reviewing requests for services during temporary absences;
 2. approving or disallowing those services; and
 3. indicating approval by signing the participant's POC or POC Amendment.
- B. The **participant** and the **participant's representative** are responsible for contributing, as part of the needs/risk assessment team, to the plan to meet the needs of the participant during a temporary absence.
- C. The **care coordinator** is responsible for
 1. submitting a request for services during a temporary absence in the participant's POC or as a POC Amendment;
 2. contributing, as part of the needs/risk assessment team, to the plan to meet the needs of the participant during a temporary absence; and

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3. monitoring the health and welfare of the participant, and the quality of services provided, for the duration of the temporary absence.

D. The **provider** is responsible for

1. contributing, as part of the needs/risk assessment team, to the plan to meet the needs of the participant during a temporary absence; and
2. limiting services provided to those allowed in the POC or POC Amendment; and
3. maintaining oversight of services provided by direct service staff for a participant during a temporary absence.

Procedures

A. Planning for travel.

1. Determining need for services during a temporary absence. The care coordinator discusses the purpose of travel with the participant and the participant's representative to determine whether
 - a. the temporary absence can be justified as
 - i. a medical necessity documented by a licensed physician,
 - ii. an educational opportunity of limited durations that is not available in the participant's community or in the state, and that will enhance the participant's capacity to attain the goals outlined the participant's POC, or
 - iii. a vacation; and
 - b. services during the temporary absence are necessary to maintain the participant's current level of functioning or to prevent placing the participant at risk of institutionalization.
2. Funding limitations. The care coordinator informs the recipient, the recipient representative, and the provider that
 - a. Medicaid funding is not available
 - i. for transportation, room and board, or any other expenses for individuals providing services for a participant during a temporary absence, or
 - ii. for services provided outside the United States;
 - b. services during a temporary absence are permitted only when the purpose for travel allows for continuation of services approved in the POC, and are limited to
 - i. day habilitation services,
 - ii. supported living habilitation services,
 - iii. in-home support habilitation services, and
 - iv. hourly respite services; and
 - c. reimbursement for services during temporary absences
 - i. is available only for prior authorized travel plans, and
 - ii. may not exceed 30 days in any plan of care duration except that SDS may approve a temporary absence of more than 30 days if

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- (A) a licensed physician justifies a longer absence as a medical necessity, or
- (B) SDS determines that the benefits to the recipient of an educational opportunity justify a longer absence.

3. Needs/risks assessment.

- a. The care coordinator, the participant, the participant's representative, and the provider form an assessment team.
- b. The assessment team considers how to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the participant during a temporary absence by addressing:
 - i. specific needs or concerns related to travel by the participant;
 - ii. filling prescriptions prior to travel;
 - iii. durable or specialized medical equipment needed for travel;
 - iv. plans in case of emergency, including development of contact information; and
 - v. availability of medical resources at the travel destination.

B. Requests for services during temporary absences.

- 1. Timeframes. The care coordinator submits a request for services, no later than 30 days prior to travel, in the participant's POC or in a POC amendment.
- 2. Content. The care coordinator provides detailed information regarding plans for travel and services during a temporary absence in the participant's POC or a POC Amendment, including
 - a. dates of departure and return;
 - b. destination;
 - c. justification for the temporary absence;
 - d. services needed during the temporary absence;
 - e. special circumstances which support the need for services during the temporary absence; and
 - f. when requested by SDS, additional information to justify services during the temporary absence.
- 3. Review of requests. SDS
 - a. approves services during travel and temporary absence
 - i. as outlined in the POC when the POC is signed, and
 - ii. as outlined in a POC Amendment when the amendment is signed;
 - b. requests additional information for review when necessary; or
 - c. disallows services during temporary absence if after discussion and review of any requested additional information, the need for services is not established or the requirements for requesting such services are not met.

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C. Accountability for services during travel.

1. Care coordination. The care coordinator
 - a. describes in the POC or POC Amendment how he/she will continue to coordinate care, including monitoring the health, and welfare of the participant, and the quality of services;
 - b. describes in the POC or the POC Amendment how oversight of services rendered by the provider will be maintained during the temporary absence; and
 - c. submits a Request for Waiver of Monthly Care Coordination Face-to-Face Visit when the duration of travel will not permit a scheduled visit to the participant.

2. Direct services. The provider
 - a. understands that the signing, by a provider representative of a POC or POC Amendment that includes a request for services during a temporary absence, constitutes agreement to provide those services;
 - b. continues an employer/employee relationship with direct service staff traveling with the participant; and
 - c. agrees to render only the services routinely provided when the recipient is in his/her community and at the level approved in the POC or POC Amendment.