

Lodging and Meal Reimbursement

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<u>Effective Date</u>	1/12016
<u>Next Review Date</u>	4/2025
<u>Coverage Policy</u>	Medical 169
<u>Version</u>	5

Member-specific benefits take precedence over medical policy and benefits may vary across plans. Refer to the individual’s benefit plan for details*.

Purpose:

This policy addresses Lodging and Meal Reimbursement.

Description & Definitions:

Sentara Health Plan Medicare products offer reimbursement of meals and lodging in some situations as part of their core benefits.

Reimbursement for Sentara Health Plan Medicare:

- For Sentara Health Plan Medicare members who are approved for a transplant outside of the service area, Optima will arrange or pay for appropriate lodging and transportation for the member and one companion.
- Meals for the member in addition to one family member who is acting as the attendant will be reimbursed at up to \$50.00 per person per day. The member is responsible for the initial payment of meals. Once the member provides meal receipts to the Plan, the receipts will be processed, and the member reimbursed.

Criteria:

Lodging and meal reimbursement is considered medically necessary and thus a covered benefit with **ALL** of the following:

- Individual has been approved for an out of area transplant
- Travel and lodging for the member and one companion is needed

Lodging and meal reimbursement is considered **not medically necessary** for uses other than those listed in the clinical criteria, to include but not limited to:

- Supplements, snacks, and meals in addition to breakfast, lunch, or dinner are not considered medically necessary and are not considered medical expenses.
- Amounts paid for a trip or vacation taken for a change in environment, improvement of morale, or general improvement of health, even if recommended by a doctor, are not eligible medical expenses.

- Early relocation to other geographical region while awaiting transplantation without supporting medical necessity documentation is not covered.
- Relocation expenses to be near a treatment facility are not covered (rent, cable, internet, transportation not related to medical services)

All meal and travel expenses that do not meet the guidelines in the Clinical Indications for Procedure section are considered not eligible medical expenses.

Coding:

Medically necessary with criteria:

Coding	Description
	None – this is a member reimbursement from receipts submitted

Considered Not Medically Necessary:

Coding	Description
	None

U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) - approved only products only.

Document History:

Revised Dates:

Reviewed Dates:

- 2024: April
- 2023: May
- 2022: May
- 2021: June
- 2020: July
- 2019: August
- 2018: August
- 2017: December

Effective Date:

- January 2016

References:

Specialty Association Guidelines; Government Regulations; Winifred S. Hayes, Inc; UpToDate; Literature Review; Specialty Advisors; National Coverage Determination (NCD); Local Coverage Determination (LCD).

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Special Notes: *

This medical policy expresses Sentara Health Plan's determination of medical necessity of services, and they are based upon a review of currently available clinical information. Medical policies are not a substitute for clinical judgment or for any prior authorization requirements of the health plan. These policies are not an explanation of benefits.

Medical policies can be highly technical and complex and are provided here for informational purposes. These medical policies are intended for use by health care professionals. The medical policies do not constitute medical advice or medical care. Treating health care professionals are solely responsible for diagnosis, treatment and medical advice. Sentara Health Plan members should discuss the information in the medical policies with their treating health care professionals. Medical technology is constantly evolving and these medical policies are subject to change without notice, although Sentara Health Plan will notify providers as required in advance of changes that could have a negative impact on benefits.

Keywords:

Optima Family Care, OFC, lodging, meals, reimbursement, medical 169, SHP Lodging and Meal Reimbursement, SHP Medical 169