B.10: Funding for sensory aids

Unit: Disability Services	Effective date: October 30, 2026
Branch: Social Supports	Last updated: October 30, 2026
Policy number: B.10.	Review date: October, 2029

Purpose

This policy describes eligibility considerations and limits for funding of sensory aids.

Policy

1. Clients are eligible to receive funding for sensory aids if:
    - the client or the client's caregiver is not eligible for other funding to purchase eligible sensory aids;
    - the client's annual profile of needs assessment notes they are a level of service three, indicating that the client has significant care needs;
    - the client's occupational therapist or board-certified behaviour analyst recommends the aid in writing; and
    - the client's case plan identifies a disability-related sensory need, and the sensory aid is intended to support the client's:
        - self-regulation;
        - focus; or
        - ability to interact in their environment.
2. Funding for sensory aids does not include glasses or hearing aids.
3. Funding for sensory aids must not be approved for more than $300 per client per funding year.
4. The clinical supervisor must determine whether funding can be provided for the requested sensory aid based on the client's specific disability-related sensory needs.
5. The worker must administer the approved funding amount via reimbursement payment agreement.
    - Clients or client's caregiver must provide a receipt or proof of purchase to be eligible for reimbursement.

Definitions

Board Certified Behaviour Analyst (BCBA): An individual with a master's level of education in behaviour analysis and is certified by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board Inc.®. A BCBA

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works with a client and caregiver to identify desired skill acquisition and behaviour changes and develops a program to meet those goals.

Caregiver: A person or persons who are the primary unpaid (not receiving payment from other programs for providing care to the client) caretakers of the client. They may or may not have legal guardianship over the client.

Client: An individual with a disability who receives services from Disability Services.

Level of service: A three-level rating system called profile of need used by Disability Services to note the client's intensity of care needs. This system provides the basis for determining funding amounts for services. Level of service three is the highest most acute level, demonstrating that the client has significant care needs.

Occupational therapy: An allied health profession that helps to solve the problems that interfere with a person's ability to do the things that are important to them, such as self-care, being productive, and engaging in leisure activities.

Sensory aid: An item with a functional, or behavioural purpose to support a client's self-regulation, focus or inclusion. Examples include weighted vest to address anxiety, chewelry to address oral-motor needs, or wiggle cushions for clients requiring this movement to self-regulate, focus, or stay alert.

Sensory need: A disability-related need which may include needs related to vision, sound, touch, smell, oral, balance (vestibular), and proprioception (awareness of where one's body is in space and how it is moving).

Authorities

- *Financial Administration Act (Yukon)*
- *Health Act (Yukon)*

Related policies and other documents

- B.4 Discretionary allowance for clothing
- B.5 Funding for assistive technology or transportation

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B.10: Discretionary funding for sensory aids procedure

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Procedure

A. Annual eligibility elements: profile of need assessment and case plan

1. The social worker (worker) completes the annual profile of needs and assesses the level of service and whether the client has sensory needs due to the nature of their disability.
2. The worker captures identified sensory needs via the electronic case management system in:
    - the client's case plan; and
    - the client's profile of needs in the "sensory processing" section.
3. The worker records the need for referrals via the electronic case management system in:
    - the client's case plan; and
    - the summary section on the profile of needs adding "OT services" for referral to occupational therapist or "BCBA services" for referral to behaviour analysis services.
4. The worker explains eligibility of funding for sensory aid to the client or the caregiver as per policy statement 1.
5. The worker completes the annual profile of needs assessment and the case plan.
6. The worker asks the client or caregiver if they are eligible for other funding that supports purchase of sensory aid and records their reply in the client's case file in the electronic case management system (client's case file).
    - Email exchanges are saved under contact logs in the client's case file.
7. The worker prepares a contract and transfer agreement approval form and if initial eligibility is met, they:
    - note the need for referrals "OT services" for referral to occupational therapist or "BCBA services" for referral to behaviour analysis services;
    - note "reimbursement agreement funding: allowance – one sensory aid to a maximum of $300 based on actual cost and receipt of proof of payment" to the terms and conditions/deliverables section of the form; and
    - add $300 to the total annual amount.

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8. The worker emails their clinical supervisor (supervisor) the contract and transfer agreement approval form noting that the profile of need and case plan are ready for their clinical review.
9. If the supervisor does not approve the case plan, the profile of need, or any of the noted budget items on the contract and transfer payment approval form, they explain their reasoning and share instructions with the worker.
10. If the supervisor approves, they sign the contract and transfer agreement approval form and email it to the manager for approval.
11. The manager signs the contract and transfer agreement approval form and emails the approved form to the admin for processing.
12. The admin drafts the schedules for reimbursement agreement ensuring the wording for the funding in schedule A appendix aligns with this policy.
13. Once the reimbursement payment agreement is created the worker informs the client or the client's caregiver that the funding agreement form is ready for their signature and coordinates a meeting.
14. Once the worker receives an electronic copy of the approved transfer payment agreement from the Department of Finance, the worker:
    - saves it on the client's case plan; and
    - advises the client or caregiver that they can now submit a written recommendation to request funding for sensory aids.

B. Screening a request for funding for sensory aid

1. If the worker receives a request from a client or a client's caregiver for funding to offset the cost of purchasing a sensory aid, the worker reviews the:
    - client's profile of need for level three service and the client's disability-related sensory needs;
    - written recommendation for the sensory aid from the client's OT or BCBA; and
    - current reimbursement payment agreements for funding for sensory aid budget line.
2. If the client's profile of need is level one or level two or does not speak to any sensory needs, worker informs the client that they are not eligible for funding for a sensory as per policy statement 1.

- The worker may share that the Whitehorse public library (Yukon Public Library-sensory kits) lends outs sensory kits.
- The worker may share that Autism Yukon offers access to a sensory room.

3. If funding for a sensory aid has already reached the maximum annual amount of $300 per funding year, the worker explains that the funding limit was reached.
    - The worker explains that this is an annual amount and that upon re-approval of this funding, the sensory aid funding will be set at $300 again next funding year.
4. The worker inquires what type of sensory aid the client or the client's caregiver is considering purchasing and how much it will likely cost.
5. If the client or caregiver notes they plan to purchase glasses or hearing aids, the worker explains that they are not covered under the policy.
6. The worker may provide additional information for other entities that might provide support.
    - If the client is First Nations or Inuit, the worker recommends contacting Health Canada's non-insured health benefits for First Nation and Inuit to inquire for support.
    - If the client is under 16 years of age, the worker recommends contacting the Chronic Disease and Disability Benefits Program to ask for help with purchase of hearing aids.
    - If the client is under 18 years of age, the worker recommends contacting the Children's Drug and Optical Program to inquire for help for low-income families purchasing eye care for a child.
    - If the client is 65 years of age or older, the worker recommends contacting the Pharmacare program for support.
7. If the client or caregiver notes they plan to purchase a sensory aid that costs more than $300, the worker:
    - flags that funding has a limit of maximum $ 300 per funding year; and
    - explains that any amount beyond that maximum amount would have to be covered by client or the client's caregiver.
8. If the client or caregiver notes they plan to purchase assistive technology or sensory clothing, the worker refers to policy B.4. and B.5 and discusses with the client or client's caregiver which funding would best match the identified item.

- If the client's profile of need and reimbursement agreement does not include funding under policy B.4 or B.5. the worker proceeds to procedure C1.

9. The worker explains that their request can be considered if their occupational therapist (OT) or board-certified behaviour analyst (BCBA) provides a written recommendation that clearly explains how the sensory aid addresses the client's disability related sensory need.
    - If the client does not have a written recommendation the worker tells the client or caregiver that they must connect with their OT of their BCBA to access one.
10. If the client has a written recommendation, the worker reviews it to ensure it clearly notes how the sensory aid would assist the client with their self-regulation, focus or ability to interact in their environment.
    - If the written recommendation lacks explanation connecting to the client's disability, the worker connects with the client or caregiver asking explaining that the recommendation requires more information.

C. Approval and processing of a request for funding for sensory aid

1. The worker emails their recommendation to their supervisor asking for approval for funding for sensory aid requested. The worker notes all the relevant information from screening the request.
    - The supervisor emails the
    - they agree with the worker's assessment and approve the funding for the sensory aid requested; or
    - they do not agree with the worker's assessment, noting the reasoning why funding cannot be provided.
2. Once the funding is approved, the worker contacts the client or the client's caregiver to advise that they can now submit proof of payment for the sensory aid along with a completed invoice form for reimbursement (invoice form) to access reimbursement.
3. Once the client or client's caregiver submits the invoice form with proof of payment, the worker forwards the documents to the admin for processing.
4. The admin tracks the expense on the client's financial tracking sheet and emails the scanned invoice and receipt to the Corporate Finance Branch for processing.

Related forms and documents

- Contract and transfer agreement approval form

B.10: Discretionary funding for sensory aids procedure

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- Funding Agreement form (YG 5707FIN)
- Invoice for reimbursement template
- Request for the release of funds template
- Yukon public libraries, rent a sensory kit

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