

## **Purpose**

People living with spina bifida often require specialized medical treatment. Such treatment is often available only in certain locations, resulting in families incurring significant travel costs associated with obtaining this medical treatment. This Fund will help to offset travel costs for those who must travel away from home.

## **Eligibility Criteria**

- Travel expenses for a Canadian citizen or permanent resident with spina bifida traveling for medical treatment and one support person OR a person pregnant with a baby with spina bifida and one support person for appointments related to the baby's spina bifida.
- Treatment is related to spina bifida.
- Must be traveling at least 200km from home from a location in Canada to another location in Canada.
- Current members of the Spina Bifida Families of Canada (SBCAN) Board of Directors and their families will be ineligible for the Fund.
- An individual/family may apply more than once per year; however, preference will be given to new applications.
- Further/revised eligibility criteria and selection process will be determined in the future. SBCAN reserves the right to revise the criteria and structure of the Fund on an annual basis.
- Travel must have taken place between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022. Receipts/proof of travel must be received no later than January 31, 2023.

## **Eligible Expenses**

- Air, train or bus tickets
- Gas/Electric charging for vehicle
  - Approved applicants will receive 61¢ per kilometre for a round trip from home to the treatment centre.
- Car rental
- Taxi, ride sharing or public transit expenses (including accessible transit)
- Parking
- Overnight accommodations
  - Applicants are encouraged to contact Staywell, a national charity that provides access to accommodations for all patients, their caregivers and their families required to relocate for medical treatment. Their aim is to lower financial barriers to receiving life-saving care. To learn more and find out how Staywell can help, please visit <https://www.staywell.charity>.

## Fund Level

A maximum of \$300 per application for 2022 (an additional \$200 may be provided based on financial need).

## Application Process

Email completed Medical Travel Expenses Application and Medical Travel Support Fund Confirmation of Appointment forms to [hello@sbc.ca](mailto:hello@sbc.ca).

Information collected as part of the application process will include:

- A declaration of the impact of the treatment on the individual - how it will support development, quality of life, or overall well-being.
- A completed Medical Travel Support Fund Confirmation of Appointment form must be submitted with the Application indicating the nature and date of treatment.
- Estimates of travel costs (tentative or scheduled), but reimbursement will only occur on production of receipts and proof of travel.
  - For fuel/EV expenses, applicants must submit a screenshot of Google maps that displays the kms from home to the treatment centre.
- A declaration of other financial assistance sought and/or received for these expenses.

## Evaluation

- The review committee will be made up of two SBCAN Board members. Where a Board member has a close personal relationship with an applicant, they will recuse themselves from the evaluation of that individual/family's application, and another Board member will evaluate the application.
- Applications will be reviewed on a first come, first served basis. Once the pool of funds for the fiscal year has been allocated, applications for the year will be closed.
- If reviewers cannot come to a consensus regarding the decision on an application, the application will be brought to the full Board for a final decision.
- A service standard to review and respond to the applicant will be set at two to four weeks, with two weeks as the best practice. SBCAN will endeavor to review emergency applications in a timely manner.