



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

JOURNEYS

Welcome! Wytkp! Gilakas'la! Shhweenustham!

Happy New Year! Journeys is now in its fourth year. Thank you for your readership and support as we strive to provide helpful content and updates to support your community's Medical Transportation (MT) Benefits. We appreciate your partnership in delivering and transforming the MT Benefit.

We hope you enjoyed the [December issue](#) of the Journeys bulletin. 2024 was a year of transformation, filled with many improvements across the MT Benefit to better serve Clients. We are excited to continue this work in 2025. **Watch our [YouTube video here](#) to learn more about the MT transformation journey.**

The MT Shuttle Prototype - share your insights



As part of FNHA's MT Shuttle Prototype Prototype, we are gathering feedback from communities to explore new models for improving transportation.

Please take a few minutes to [complete our survey](#) by Thursday, February 6th. Your responses will remain confidential and will help shape future transportation models.

Upcoming mileage rate changes on April 1, 2025



As part of FNHA's commitment to continuously improving the quality of its programs and services, and to ensure responsiveness to fluctuating gas prices, fuel costs are monitored at multiple stations across all regions to prevent rising prices from hindering Clients' ability to attend medically necessary appointments when using their private vehicles.

In response to fuel price surges, temporary mileage rate adjustments were introduced on March 14, 2022. Several adjustments were made to ensure Clients did not have to cover additional costs when using private vehicles (a complete history of MT mileage rate adjustments can be [found here](#)). Now that fuel prices have stabilized, FNHB will be returning to permanent mileage rates.

Effective April 1, 2025, the Mileage Rates will be:

- **Standard rate: \$0.25/km.**
- **Special rate:** (for remote communities, as specified in Funding Agreements): **\$0.31/km.**

The standard mileage rate of \$0.25/km is equivalent to \$1.89/litre. The FNHB benchmarks against 10-year-old, large vehicles with high fuel consumption rates of 13.2l/100km, such as a Ford F150. Similarly, the special mileage rate of \$0.31/km equals fuel costs of approximately \$2.35/litre.

Funding opportunity for community transit projects

FNHA is raising awareness and encouraging communities to apply for the [Rural Transit Solutions Fund](#), managed by Housing, Infrastructure and Communities Canada. This fund supports the development and expansion of locally driven transit solutions for residents of rural, remote, Indigenous, and Northern communities. It covers a wide range of public transit models, including both fixed-route and on-demand services.

Eligible organizations representing these communities can seek support through two program streams depending on the nature of their project:

- **Planning and Design Projects Stream:** Grants of up to **\$50,000** are available to support communities in planning and designing new or expanded transit solutions.
- **Capital Projects Stream:** Eligible applicants can receive up to **\$10 million** in contributions for tangible capital assets primarily for public use, such as purchasing vehicles and building supporting infrastructure.

The **Capital Projects Stream** is now accepting applications. The deadline for submissions is **Tuesday, March 4, 2025, by 3:00 p.m. EST**. **Indigenous applicants** have until **Tuesday, April 8, 2025, by 3:00 p.m. EST** to submit their applications.

December 2024 benefit changes



The FNHB is committed to ensuring Clients can access essential health and wellness support as part of their healing journeys. As a reminder, the following updates were made to the MT Benefit effective December 2, 2024:

Expanded coverage for FNHA-funded trauma and recovery programs:

As of December 2, 2024, the MT Benefit supports travel for Clients attending FNHA-funded trauma and recovery programs, including:

- [Tsow-Tun-Le-Lum - Kwunatsustul trauma intensive program](#)
- [Kackaamin Family Development Centre - Rebuilding the Circle program](#)
- [Round Lake Treatment Society - Painted Turtle Lodge \(Support Recovery house\)](#)
- [Esk'etemc Recovery House - Letwilc Ren Semec Centre](#)

Additionally, travel to the new **Orca Lelum Youth Treatment Centre** is now supported under the “Travel to FNHA-Funded Treatment Centres for Substance Use Treatment” policy. Orca Lelum provides medically supervised withdrawal services and a residential wellness program for Indigenous youth ages 12-18. You can learn more at the link [here](#).

Meal rate changes:

MT meal rates have been adjusted to reflect the rising cost of food across BC and to ensure that Clients have access to healthy meals while receiving medical care away from home. The updated meal rates are shown in the table below:

Fee schedule for meal rates		
Rate type	Previous rate	Updated rate <i>effective December 2, 2024</i>
Daily rate for same-day trips lasting more than six hours.	\$17.00 per person	\$35.50 per person (5+ years)
		\$17.00 per person (under 5 years)
Nightly rate for trips up to six nights in duration.	\$68.00 per night per person (5+ years)	\$70.50 per night per person (5+ years)
	\$29.00 per night per person (under 5 years)	\$30.00 per night per person (under 5 years)
Weekly rate for overnight trips of seven nights or more.	\$283.00 per week per Client	\$283.00 per week per Client
	\$425.00 per week per Client and approved escort*	\$425.00 per week per Client and approved escort*

The **MT Benefits Schedule and MT Administrator Guide** have been updated to reflect the December 2024 MT Benefit changes. An up-to-date version of the MT

Benefits Schedule is available on our [MT webpage](#). For an updated copy of the MT Administrator Guide, please contact MT Operations at transportation@fnha.ca

The new meal rates have also been integrated into the *Kucén* system, streamlining calculations for travel arrangements. Please visit our [Health Benefits News page](#) for more details on these updates.

***Kucén*: transforming MT benefit administration**

Patient Travel (PT) clerks can now experience enhanced benefit administration with *Kucén* (pronounced koo-hen), meaning "to wander/travel far away/abroad" in *Secwepemctsin*.

To help interested communities successfully adopt the *Kucén* system, the MT Project Team has created a streamlined three-step onboarding process. This tailored approach ensures a smooth transition by offering personalized guidance and dedicated support at every stage, from initial planning to full implementation, empowering each community to thrive with confidence.



About *Kucén*:

- No cost to communities and organizations.
- Automates MT log submissions and MT reports to FNHB.
- Provides a searchable directory for medical and travel providers.
- Generates Purchase Orders, Confirmation of Attendance slips and more!
- Easily submit Benefit Exceptions directly through the application with no manual forms needed.
- Ability to look up a trip that has already been booked.

If your community is interested in adopting the new system, please participate in our [Kucén survey](#) or contact us at mtproject@fnha.ca.

Training for PT Clerks

The MT Operations team hosts regular training sessions throughout the year. If you or any member of your community would like to attend an MT training session, please contact transportation@fnha.ca to sign up. One of our team members will contact you about training dates and next steps.

Thank you