

**Alberta WCB  
Policies &  
Information**

Chapter:

**BENEFITS**

Subject:

**SERVICES FOR WORKERS WITH SEVERE  
INJURIES**

Authorization:

**BoD Resolution 99/09/53-57**

Date:

**September 28, 1999**

**APPLICATION 3: MEDICAL AIDS**

**1. *What are medical aids and when are they provided?***

Medical aids include any apparatus, appliance, medical, or non-medical supplies medically required to replace lost function or to serve as a preventive measure against future health complications.

WCB may maintain ownership of these and pay for their upkeep based on normal wear and tear. If there is a time when they are no longer required by the worker, they are to be returned to WCB.

**2. *Do medical aids include such items as beds, specialty chairs, etc.?***

When medically required, WCB will provide or pay for a specialty bed, chair, etc., if its purpose is to replace a worker's function or it serves to prevent additional medical conditions.

*Chairs*

For example, WCB may provide a chair if the worker is confined to a wheelchair and is subject to skin breakdown, or if the worker needs a “stand-up” reclining chair, etc.

*Beds and mattresses*

WCB may provide a mattress or bed when the worker is susceptible to bed sores, or for any other medical reason related to the compensable disability which requires a different bed than the one the worker previously used. When the worker needs a specialty bed, WCB may also pay for a compatible bed for the worker’s spouse or adult interdependent partner.

As well, WCB may replace mattresses when the disability results in increased wear and tear (for example, from bed transfers, bowel/bladder routines) which reduce the normal life span of the mattress.

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**September 28, 1999****APPLICATION 3: MEDICAL AIDS****3. *Does WCB pay for non-prescription drugs and non-medical supplies?***

WCB may pay for non-prescription drugs or substances if their use is recommended by the worker's physician and WCB's medical advisor confirms they are needed as a result of the compensable injury. Examples of non-prescription drugs and substances are such things as homeopathic and/or naturopathic medicine, herbs, cranberry juice, vitamins, etc.

Non-medical supplies such as home exercise equipment, Q-tips, wet-wipes, nutriderm, lubriderm, etc., may also be supplied by WCB if they are required as a result of the compensable injury.

WCB will pay for non-traditional treatments only as permitted under Policy 04-06, *Health Care*.

**4. *Does WCB provide assistance with family planning?***

WCB may provide assistance for family planning if the worker has a functional disability resulting from the injury. For example, WCB may pay for one or more of counselling, medical aids, and conception or fertility treatments.

**5. *When is this policy application effective?***

This policy application (Application 3 – Medical Aids) is effective January 1, 2000, except when noted otherwise in a specific policy section(s).

**Previous versions**

- [Policy 0407 Part II - August 2015](#)
- [Policy 0407 Part II - January 27, 2004](#)
- [Policy 0407 Part II - January 1, 2004](#)
- [Policy 0407 Part II - January 2000](#)
- [Policy 0407 Part II - February 1999](#)
- [Policy 0407 Part II \(consolidated manual 1st Issue\) - February 1997](#)