



Policy: Vehicle Assistance	Approval Date: 5/10/23 Date Revised: 3/7/23
Section:	Responsible Official: Tribal Member Benefit Department Staff
References: General Welfare Assistance Guide	Policy Type: Departmental

Purpose: To establish guidelines regarding transportation assistance

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Tribe to allow direct payments to a seller or service provider, or a reimbursement to effectively meet the transportation needs of Tribal Citizens which have been deemed necessary for daily living, while meeting the guidelines set forth by the General Welfare Exclusion Act of 2014.

II. SCOPE

A. This policy applies to the Tribal Citizen, Qualified Nonmembers, and Tribal Member Benefits Department.

III. AUTHORITY

A. Under the direction of the Senior Director of Operations, the RAP Administrator and the Tribal Member Benefits Department are responsible for the management and enforcement of this policy based on the Revenue Allocation Plan, General Welfare Ordinance, and General Welfare Guide.

IV. DEFINITIONS

- A. Tribe – Match E Be Nash She Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians (Gun Lake Tribe)
- B. Tribal Citizen – an enrolled Citizen of Gun Lake Tribe which may also be referred to as Citizen.
- C. Required Documentation -Vehicle title or registration documenting the vehicle is titled to the Qualified Member/Nonmember, itemized billing statement or invoice, and proof of payment in the case of reimbursement request.
- D. Plan Year- Program Plan year – October 1 through September 30.
- E. Exigent circumstances – As defined in the General Welfare Guide.
- F. Program - means the General Welfare Program established by or under authority of the Tribal Council, including the current General Welfare Program.
- G. Qualified Member – means the Tribal Citizen or program participant listed on the Qualified Member/Nonmember Designation Form who is eligible to receive assistance under the General Welfare Program.
- H. Qualified Non-member – means a spouse, certified domestic partner in accordance with Tribal law, parent, legal guardian or Dependent of a Tribal Citizen who must be listed on the Citizen’s Qualified Member/Nonmember Designation Form.
- I. Vehicle Repair - means to restore the vehicle to proper operating condition.

J. Vehicle Maintenance –refers to a practice where an automobile is serviced on a regular basis to prevent a major breakdown or the need for major repair.

V. PROCEDURE

A. Vehicle Purchase

- i. Payments for actual costs incurred by a Qualified Member/Nonmember for loan repayments for a vehicle that is titled in the name of Qualified Member/Non-member not to exceed five hundred and fifty dollars (\$550.00) per month, are eligible for reimbursement with the submission of a claim form and required supporting documentation.
- ii. Down payment assistance for purchase of a vehicle. The down payment assistance amount may not exceed \$15,000, this amount is available for use by the Qualified Member/Nonmember once every plan year. The down payment assistance must be for a vehicle that is titled in the name of a Qualified Member/Nonmember.
- iii. Payments directly to established automotive dealerships, private sellers or reimbursements to the Qualified Member/Nonmember for actual costs incurred for a vehicle purchased outright, for a principal payment on a vehicle loan or a down payment. The vehicle must be titled in the name of a Qualified Member/Nonmember.
- iv. Payments for actual costs incurred by a Qualified Member/Nonmember for payments of vehicle insurance.
- v. Payments for actual costs incurred by a Qualified Member/Nonmember for payments made for vehicle license plate purchase, and renewal tags for vehicles titled to individuals listed on the Qualified Member Non-Member form on file with Tribal Member Benefits Department.
- vi. The monthly payment amount of \$550 and the annual down payment assistance amount of \$15,000 are exclusive of the other. The Qualified Member/Nonmember may utilize both the monthly loan repayment and the down payment assistance option. The amounts are no longer totaled together over a three year time period.
- vii. Tribal Citizens may request reimbursement for all vehicles of Qualified Member/Nonmembers.

## B. Vehicle Repair and Maintenance

- i. Vehicle repair costs will be covered on a reimbursement or provider payment basis. The use of the General Welfare Program's debit card is not allowed.
- ii. Only actual costs incurred for repairs or maintenance are eligible for reimbursement. An itemized statement of the repairs/maintenance that was completed must be provided.
- iii. Vehicle repair or maintenance costs incurred must be for a vehicle used by a Qualified Member/Non-Member. By submitting a claim reimbursement or provider payment request, the Tribal Citizen certifies the cost incurred is for a vehicle used by a Qualified Member/Nonmember and promotes the Tribal Citizen's general welfare and safety needs.
- iv. Vehicle repairs that are not completed by a mechanic or repair facility are only eligible for the cost of the replacement parts/supplies. The reimbursement may not exceed \$500 annually.
- v. Vehicle repairs and maintenance costs are eligible as long as they are required for the safe operation of the vehicle. These costs include all common repairs necessary for the safe operation and use of the vehicle.
  1. Examples of eligible vehicle repair costs may include the repair or replacement of the frames and bodies, engines, transmissions, power trains, body and fender repair, etc.
  2. Examples of eligible vehicle maintenance costs may include manufacturer recommended inspections, maintenance and services such as oil changes; transmission services; replacement of air filters & cabin air filter; brake service (pads, discs, rotors, fluid); tire inspections/repairs/replacements; radiator services & coolant replacement, replacement of auto parts & fluids (battery/wipers/bulbs/belts/spark plugs) and other similar services.
- vi. No modifications to original vehicle specifications will be permitted unless the modifications are to accommodate a disability or they are required to maintain the safe operation of the vehicle's current specifications.
- vii. The intent of the General Welfare Program is to only fund the repair costs that are necessary for the safe operation of the vehicle. Nothing lavish or extravagant will be considered.