



Good afternoon,

We hope you had a wonderful summer and were able to take some time off to recharge. We sincerely appreciate all the work you do to support Island families in accessing the Bear Essentials program. Due to an increase in applications, and to allow us to continue supporting as many families as possible, we are sharing a few updates and reminders:

### **Accommodation requests:**

When traveling for health care we aim to have families stay in one of our Home Away from Homes whenever possible:

- Qwalayu House in Campbell River
- Jeneece Place in Victoria

When a family is staying in Vancouver, we ask that families access complementary accommodation programs in that region:

- Ronald McDonald House
- BC Family Residence Program and
- Easter Seals House

If there isn't room in one of these programs Bear Essentials may provide funding for a hotel. Please reach out to the Bear Essentials team before booking a room - we can supply a list of hotels that provide a reasonable medical rate.

### **Travel requests:**

Travel funding is intended to support the primary caregiver who is traveling with the child.

While we appreciate applications being submitted in advance, please submit travel applications no more than 30 days prior to the travel date. For families to receive funding prior to their travel, a completed application must be received a minimum of 10 business days to guarantee funding on time.

### **Equipment requests:**

Equipment applications are held and reviewed at regular intervals throughout the month. Approvals are based on available funding and the urgency/essential nature of the request. If funding is unavailable an application may be deferred or declined.

**iPads:** iPad applications must be for the primary purpose of assisting with communication and must be trialed by the child in advance of the application. We have recently updated our iPad guidelines and processes which are emailed upon receipt of an application. Please let us know if you would like to see them in advance of submitting an application.

**Breast Pumps:** Please note that funding for breast pumps is only available when there is a specific health related issue impacting an infant's ability to feed.

**Safety Equipment:** Equipment requests specific to safety do not meet the criteria for the Bear Essentials program. If the equipment has a secondary purpose of safety and a primary purpose that addresses a medical or health condition, the application may be considered.

**Please note:** The Bear Essentials program is intended to help fill the gaps where government funding sources aren't available. Please be sure to explore complementary funding sources wherever possible.

Please contact us if you don't receive confirmation immediately once you submit your application.

As always, we welcome the opportunity to speak with you, hear your feedback and answer your questions. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to island families.

Sincerely,

Cheryl & Kris  
Program Navigators  
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