



Custom-made footwear benefits

Alberta Aids to Daily Living
Program Manual Section F



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Policy F – 01

Custom-Made Footwear Benefits Background

Policy Statement

Alberta Aids to Daily Living (AADL) provides funding for custom-made footwear to eligible clients who require custom-made footwear for first, second or third degree deformity, including matching custom-made footwear for the unaffected foot, custom-made footwear modifications and partial foot replacements.

Clients must meet AADL general and benefit-specific eligibility criteria to qualify for AADL-funded custom-made footwear.

Custom-made footwear benefit providers must hold qualifications stipulated under Policy F – 08 Custom-Made Footwear Provider Roles and Responsibilities and be employed by a facility that has an agreement with AADL to provide custom-made footwear benefits.

The maximum funding amounts for custom-made footwear benefits is listed in Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List F – Custom-Made Footwear.

Authorizations and claims for custom-made footwear benefits must be entered on the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal.

Policy F – 02

Process for Obtaining Custom-Made Footwear Benefits

Policy Statement

Clients and custom-made footwear providers must follow AADL general and benefit-specific policies and procedures for obtaining and providing custom-made footwear benefits.

Custom-made footwear specialty assessors/suppliers are responsible for ensuring a client is eligible to receive custom-made footwear benefits prior to providing custom-made footwear to the client.

The service date used for submitting claims for custom-made footwear benefits is the date the client actually receives the custom-made footwear.

AADL and/or Alberta Blue Cross conducts audits of claims. Claims will be reversed if there is not sufficient evidence to support client eligibility.

Clients must meet AADL general and benefit-specific eligibility criteria to qualify for AADL custom-made footwear benefits. Any exceptions must receive prior approval from AADL.

Albertans with private insurance that covers 100 per cent of the cost of the benefit are not eligible for the same benefit under AADL. Once the private insurance coverage has been ruled out or exhausted, the client may become eligible under Policy GN – 16 Client Eligibility in AADL Program Manual Section GN – General Policies and Procedures.

Procedure

Clients:

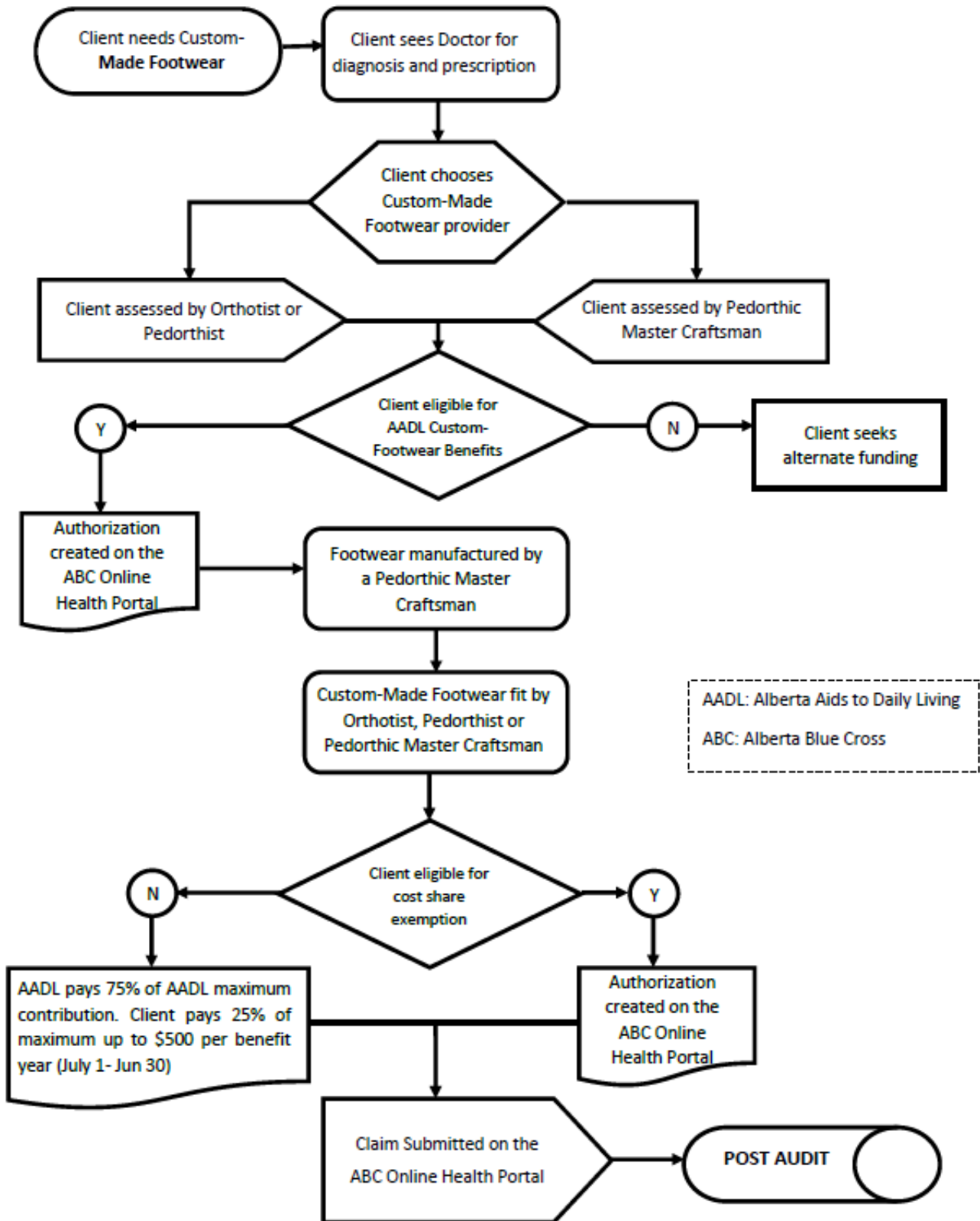
- Follow the procedure(s) and process for obtaining custom-made footwear benefits as described in AADL general and benefit-specific policies and procedures, as outlined in Figure 1.

Providers:

- Follow the procedure(s) and process for obtaining custom-made footwear benefits as described in AADL general and benefit-specific policies and procedures, as outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1

Process for Obtaining Custom-Made Footwear Benefits



Policy F – 03

Eligibility Criteria

Policy Statement

Clients are eligible for custom-made footwear benefits if they meet the general AADL program eligibility criteria and the following:

- Clients must have a first, second, or third degree structural bony deformity of the foot or feet – such as talipes equinovarus, severe arthritis and resultant deformity – neurological damage to the foot with resultant deformity or stabilized gross edema and cannot wear a modified, or special off-the-shelf shoe for these reasons.
- Clients must be ambulatory.
- Clients must obtain a generic prescription (free of any vendor advertising) for custom-made footwear benefits from a physician who is a member in good standing of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta. The generic prescription must state the:
 - specific custom-made footwear benefit that is being requested, and
 - other information related to foot problems and/or specific instructions

AADL does not provide custom-made footwear benefits for:

- non-ambulatory clients
- clients only able to pivot and/or stand for transfers
- clients who refuse to try off-the-shelf footwear
- clients presenting with first, second, or third degree structural bony deformity of the foot or feet who can wear a modified, or special off-the-shelf shoe(s)
- edema management
- short-term post-operative healing or conditions
- exclusive use for sports, recreation or rehabilitation purposes
- clients having problems finding the appropriate off-the-shelf footwear for any of the following reasons:
 - oversized or undersized feet
 - requiring footwear with extra width/depth needs
 - a split footwear size requirement
 - problems with edema and/or foot lesions
 - acute post-operative healing or conditions, or
 - a leg-length discrepancy that warrants the need for a shoe elevation(s) and not custom-made footwear

It is recognized that some orthotic devices (such as ankle foot orthoses) may cause fitting problems, but this does not indicate a need for custom-made footwear nor does it qualify clients for custom-made footwear benefits.

Clients are eligible for one pair of custom-made footwear benefits every year based on clinical need.

Procedure

Clients:

- Follow process for obtaining custom-made footwear benefits as outlined in Figure 1 above.
 - Obtain a prescription from a physician indicating clinical diagnosis and associated need for custom-made footwear.
- Select a specialty assessor/supplier of custom-made footwear benefit from the AADL approved vendor list, available on the AADL website.
- Provide prescription to and be assessed by an AADL custom-made footwear specialty assessor/supplier.
- Sign the Client Consent form.
- Must try off-the-shelf footwear such as extra width or extra depth before being deemed eligible for- custom-made footwear.

- Must seek alternative funding for custom-made footwear benefits if ineligible.

Custom-Made Footwear Specialty Assessors/Suppliers:

- Determine if client meets AADL eligibility requirements, and verify client's cost-share status and benefit consumption history via the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal.
 - Submit a quantity and frequency review request on the online health portal if early replacement benefit is required.
- Maintain accurate, up-to-date client files with clinical notes and required AADL and Alberta Blue Cross documentation including prescription(s), original signed Client Consent form(s), validation certificate(s) and patient claim statement(s).
 - Do not accept prescriptions greater than three months old or with vendor advertising.
- Document any patient encounter, which includes initial assessment, dispensing of benefits, and follow-up with clients.
- Complete authorization on the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal and upload the Client Consent form and any other required documentation.

Policy F – 04

Choice of Custom-Made Footwear Provider

Policy Statement

Clients have a choice of custom-made footwear specialty assessor/supplier. AADL will only provide funding to eligible clients who receive their custom-made footwear benefits from the Custom-Made Footwear Approved Vendor List.

A complete list of AADL-approved custom-made footwear providers is available on the AADL Custom-Made Footwear Approved Vendor List available at <https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/aadl/aadl-vendors-footwear-custom.pdf>

Procedure

Clients:

- Select an AADL custom-made footwear specialty assessor/supplier from the AADL Custom-Made Footwear Approved Vendor List available on the Alberta Aids to Daily Living website or upon request.

AADL:

- Maintain a list of AADL-approved custom-made footwear suppliers that clients may access for custom-made footwear benefit information and services.
- Provides support to Alberta Blue Cross as it pertains to the Custom-Made Footwear Approved Vendor List and associated custom-made footwear vendor roles and responsibilities in accordance with AADL regulation, agreements, policies and procedures, and operational need and best practices.

Policy F – 05

Changing Custom-Made Footwear Providers

Policy Statement

Clients have a choice of custom-made footwear specialty assessor/supplier. Clients must use only one custom-made footwear specialty assessor/supplier at a time, and must not switch custom-made footwear specialty assessor/supplier during the fabrication process of custom-made footwear unless prior approval is given by AADL.

Procedure

Clients:

- Choose a specialty assessor/supplier to provide custom-made footwear benefits that meet their basic clinically assessed needs.
- Contact Alberta Blue Cross Client Services regarding concerns on service or device.
- Submit a formal complaint to AADL if applicable, using the Complaint form available on the AADL website.

Custom-Made Footwear Specialty Assessors/Suppliers:

- Check Alberta Blue Cross online health portal to verify if a client has an active authorization for AADL-funded custom-made footwear or other competing benefits.
 - If no, may commence pertinent clinical and AADL eligibility assessment(s).
 - If yes, contact Alberta Blue Cross to identify the current custom-made footwear specialty assessor/supplier. Following discussion with the client, either:
 - Refer client back to original service specialty assessor/supplier for ongoing service and followup with custom-made footwear benefits.
 - If the client refuses to return to the previous specialty assessor/supplier, the provider must not provide service to the client unless the client is willing to fund the services privately.
 - If the client agrees, contact previous specialty assessor/supplier to discuss transferring care to the new custom-made footwear specialty assessor/supplier. Advise Alberta Blue Cross if agreement of a transfer of care is reached.
- Do not submit a quantity and frequency review request for a request to switch specialty assessor/supplier.
- Advise the client to submit a formal complaint to AADL if applicable, using the Complaint form available on the AADL website.
- Contact Alberta Blue Cross for advice as required.

AADL:

- Reviews complaints submitted via formal complaint process.
- Refers client to a multidisciplinary team for assessment if available.
- Recommends change of specialty assessor/supplier if appropriate.

Policy F – 06

Quantity and Frequency Limits

Policy Statement

Clients are eligible to receive custom-made footwear benefit per the benefit-specific quantity and frequency limits listed in Alberta Aids to Daily Living Approved Product List F – Custom-Made Footwear.

Clients are eligible for one pair of custom-made footwear every 12 months.

AADL recognizes that some clients may prefer to have two pairs of custom-made footwear at one time to accommodate for different seasons or environments. As AADL does not provide duplicate benefits, clients may elect to receive a future pair of footwear early. Therefore, a client may receive two pairs of footwear in a single year and no additional pairs in the following year. This is not considered over-quantity and therefore a quantity and frequency review request is not necessary.

For clients who have chosen the early second pair of footwear, further early replacement funding (third or fourth pair in the two-year period) will only be considered by a quantity and frequency review request that clearly demonstrates a significant and stabilized change in clinical condition.

AADL will not provide additional footwear funding (third or fourth pair in the two-year period) if the original two pairs of footwear are worn out within the two-year period.

AADL does not replace lost, stolen, or broken/damaged benefits. It is the client's financial responsibility to cover the cost of replacements in these instances.

AADL-approved custom-made footwear providers must submit a quantity and frequency review request for benefits that are over the quantity and frequency limit. A quantity and frequency review request authorization is submitted on the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal.

Procedure

Clients:

- Maintain care of custom-made footwear to prolong life of benefit provided through AADL and to prevent need for premature replacement of benefit.
- Consult with specialty assessor/supplier when replacement is required, or if the clients wants a second pair of footwear early.
- Ensure replacement footwear meets their basic need during fitting and when delivered.
- Seek alternate funding for equipment needs that fall outside the quantity and frequency limits. Clients are responsible for the cost of the benefit if the quantity and frequency review request is denied.

Custom-Made Footwear Specialty Assessors/Suppliers:

- Check client's previous consumption of benefits via the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal.
- Advise clients of quantity and frequency limits.
- Explain quantity and frequency review policy and procedure to clients.
- If clients elect to receive a second pair of AADL-funded custom-made footwear early, do not submit a quantity and frequency review request as this is not considered additional quantity or frequency of the benefit.
 - The new eligibility date for replacement of the AADL-funded custom-made footwear will be exactly two years from the service date of the first pair of AADL-funded custom-made footwear. See Figure 2 below for more details.
 - For a second pair of AADL-funded custom-made footwear that are issued early, "two years" until eligibility for replacement must be specified on the Custom-Made Footwear Validation Certificate when the client signs Section 2.
- If client requests a benefit over the quantity and frequency limit, submit a quantity and frequency review request authorization on the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal, including the following documents:

- Quantity and Frequency Review Request form
- Client Consent form
- other supporting documentation

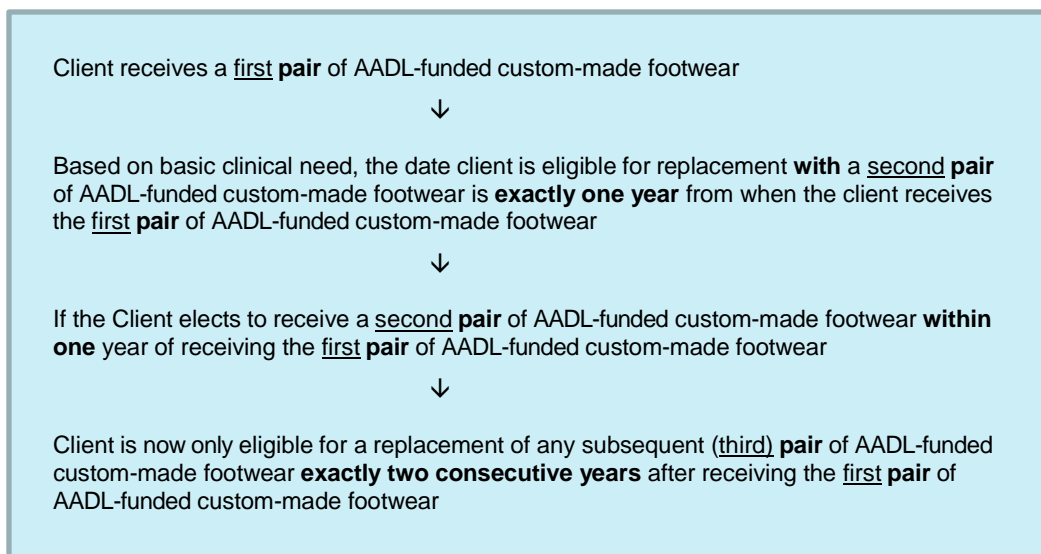
Alberta Blue Cross:

- Receives and logs quantity and frequency review requests.
- Forwards quantity and frequency review requests to AADL for adjudication.
- Updates quantity and frequency review status on the online health portal.
- Provides notification of quantity and frequency review request decisions authorizer, and client if necessary.

AADL:

- Receives quantity and frequency review requests and supporting documentation from Alberta Blue Cross.
- Adjudicates quantity and frequency review requests and provides decisions to Alberta Blue Cross.

Figure 2: Eligibility Dates for Custom-Made Footwear



Policy F – 07

Custom-Made Footwear Provider Qualifications

Policy Statement

Custom-made footwear benefit providers must be one of the following:

- a certified pedorthic master craftsman in good standing with the College of Pedorthics of Canada (includes the manufacturing of custom-made footwear)
- a certified pedorthist in good standing with the College of Pedorthics of Canada (excludes the manufacturing of custom-made footwear)
- a certified orthotist in good standing with the Canadian Board for Certification of Prosthetists and Orthotists (excludes the manufacturing of custom-made footwear)

The provider must be employed by a facility with a specialty assessor/supplier agreement with AADL and Alberta Blue Cross to provide custom-made footwear benefits.

Procedure

Custom-Made Footwear Specialty Assessors/Suppliers:

- Notify Alberta Blue Cross when changing employment location.

Alberta Blue Cross

- Updates employment location information of eligible providers.

Policy F – 08

Custom-Made Footwear Provider Roles and Responsibilities

Policy Statement

Custom-made footwear specialty assessors/suppliers are responsible for providing benefits and services to clients in accordance with the AADL policies and procedures.

Custom-made footwear specialty assessors/suppliers assess and fit clients for custom-made footwear benefits.

A certified pedorthist or certified orthotist is able to provide the following for AADL clients:

- assessment for custom-made footwear
- casting and measuring for custom-made footwear
- fitting of custom-made footwear

A certified pedorthic master craftsman is able to provide the following for AADL clients:

- assessment for custom-made footwear
- casting and measuring for custom-made footwear
- manufacturing custom-made footwear, including:
 - measuring, casting and making original shoe lasts
 - designing and making upper patterns
 - manufacturing fitting model of shoes
 - lasting and finishing of custom shoes
- fitting of custom-made footwear

Procedure

Custom Made Footwear Specialty Assessors/Suppliers:

- Assess clients who have a first, second, or third degree structural bony deformity of the foot – such as talipes equinovarus, severe arthritis and resultant deformity – or neurological damage to the foot with resultant deformity or stabilized gross edema.
- Ensure:
 - clients meet the general and specific custom-made footwear benefit eligibility criteria
 - clients cannot wear a modified or special off-the-shelf shoe; clients must try an off-the-shelf shoe such as an extra width, extra depth before being deemed eligible for custom-made footwear benefits. Clients must seek alternative funding for custom-made footwear if ineligible
 - clients are ambulatory
 - clients are advised of their responsibilities related to program benefits especially concerning custom-made footwear authorization(s)
 - clients sign the Client Consent form prior to provision of benefits, and
 - clients sign all sections of the Custom-Made Footwear Validation Certificate form prior to provision of benefits
- Obtain and accept an appropriate generic physician prescription(s).
 - Only accept a generic physician prescription. The prescription is valid for three months from the date on the prescription.
- Provide clients with information and answers regarding AADL general and benefit-specific custom-made footwear benefit eligibility criteria.
- Contact Alberta Blue Cross with concerns, questions, prior approvals and unusual requests. If eligibility is questionable, an authorization is not to be completed.
- Complete the authorization on the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal within 20 business days of the assessment.

- Retain on file:
 - authorizations
 - assessments
 - physician's generic prescription
 - pedograph
 - photograph
 - AADL Custom-Made Footwear Criteria Documents A and B
 - documentation, including provider signature, of all AADL client encounters
- Adhere to the AADL Specialty Assessor/Supplier Agreement, Alberta Blue Cross Health Provider Agreement and both the AADL General and Custom-Made Footwear Benefits Policies and Procedures.
- Honour manufacturer warranties.
- Ensure that a certified pedorthic master craftsman approves the end product of each stage of fabrication of custom-made footwear:
 - casting
 - last making
 - pattern making
 - upper making
 - lasting
 - finishing
- Provide instructions to clients on the care, operation and maintenance of any custom-made footwear
- Use all reasonable efforts to supply the custom-made footwear benefits at the lowest possible cost.
- Provide clients with a patient claim statement from the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal indicating AADL's cost-share portion and the client's cost-share portion if applicable.
- Inform the client that they are responsible for all repairs to their custom-made footwear.
- Provide advice to clients and appropriate followup. Promptly resolve all errors relating to the provision of a client's benefits, such as duplication of benefits, client's eligibility status and assessment errors.

AADL:

- Maintains and updates the Custom-Made Footwear Approved Vendor List in accordance with AADL regulation, agreements, policies and procedures, and operational need and best practices.
- Provides support to Alberta Blue Cross as it pertains to the Custom-Made Footwear Approved Vendor list and associated custom-made footwear provider roles and responsibilities in accordance with AADL regulation, agreements, policies and procedures, and operational need and best practices.

Policy F – 09

Client Roles and Responsibilities

Policy Statement

Clients who receive custom-made footwear benefits must meet the current AADL custom-made footwear eligibility criteria for the benefits they are receiving, must comply with AADL policies and procedures and acknowledge their roles and responsibilities.

Clients who receive custom-made footwear benefits are required to adhere to the AADL's general client responsibilities as well as the responsibilities listed below.

Procedure

Clients:

- Select a custom-made footwear specialty assessor/supplier from the AADL Custom-Made Footwear Approved Vendor List.
- Provide the custom-made footwear specialty assessor/supplier with a generic physician's prescription for custom-made footwear benefits.
- Sign the AADL Client Consent form.
- Adhere to AADL client roles and responsibilities as stipulated in both the AADL General and Custom-Made Footwear Benefits Policy and Procedures manuals.
- Are aware that if off-the-shelf specialty footwear, such as extra width or extra depth, will meet their clinical needs, they are not eligible for custom-made footwear benefits via AADL.
- Are aware that off-the-shelf footwear must be trialed prior to visiting a specialty assessor/supplier to determine eligibility for custom-made footwear benefits via AADL.
- Are aware that custom-made footwear benefits provided by AADL are to serve basic needs; specifically "function" and not "cosmetics."
- Are aware that it is their responsibility to repair and maintain their AADL-funded custom-made footwear. Clients are eligible for up to two pairs of custom-made footwear per two-year period based on basic clinical and functional need. Replacement of AADL-funded custom-made footwear is based on basic need as determined by the specialty assessor/supplier in conjunction with AADL general and custom-made footwear eligibility criteria.
- Are aware that AADL does not provide early replacement of lost, stolen or damaged custom-made footwear.
- Are aware that AADL will not assist with replacement of worn custom-made footwear unless no longer economically feasible or safe to repair, or when there is a significant change in associated clinical condition of their foot/feet. In these cases, the specialty assessor/ supplier must submit a quantity and frequency review request.
- Comply with specialty assessor/supplier policies regarding abuse-free facility environments. Failure to comply may result in the specialty assessor/supplier declining further services.

Policy F – 10

Custom-Made Footwear Validation Certificate

Policy Statement

The Custom-Made Footwear Validation Certificate is intended to ensure accountability and clarify expectations for all parties involved in the provision of custom-made footwear benefits.

The validation certificate is a two-part form that the client will sign on two separate occasions:

- At time of assessment for AADL custom-made footwear benefits. By signing Section 1 of the validation certificate, clients and specialty assessors/suppliers acknowledge their agreement to the type of AADL custom-made footwear benefits being provided.
- After final provision of AADL custom-made footwear benefits. By signing Section 2 of the validation certificate, clients and specialty assessors/suppliers acknowledge their agreement that the fitting, trial and receipt of the custom-made footwear benefit has been completed.

Alberta Blue Cross should be contacted if the client is unable to complete the final fitting/trial, or is unable or refuses to sign the validation certificate.

Procedure

Clients:

- Read the validation certificate fully prior to signing it.
- Request clarification from the specialty assessor/suppliers, if needed, prior to signing it.
- Sign all sections of the validation certificate.
 - Clients who are unable to return for followup may sign and submit the final section of the validation certificate by alternate methods (i.e., fax or mail).
- Obtain a copy (if requested) of the signed validation certificate.
- Contact Alberta Blue Cross client contact centre if they:
 - have any unresolved questions about the validation certificate, or
 - are unable to sign the validation certificate

Custom-Made Footwear Specialty Suppliers/Assessors:

- Provide all eligible clients with a copy of the Custom-Made Footwear Validation Certificate to read/review.
- Discuss/resolve all questions clients may have regarding eligible client roles and responsibilities pertaining to the provision of AADL-funded custom-made footwear benefits.
- Ensure eligible clients sign all required section(s) of the validation certificate.
 - Section 1 of validation certificate must be signed by eligible clients prior to fabricating the custom-made footwear benefit. Offer the client a copy of the validation certificate and retain the original on the client's file.
 - Section 2 of the validation certificate must be signed by eligible clients once the custom-made footwear benefit is fabricated, fitted, trialed and accepted by the client. Offer the client a copy of the validation certificate and retain the original on the client's file.
- The specialty supplier must not submit a claim for the final components or procedures until all sections of the validation certificate are signed by the client; this is considered the service date for the custom-made footwear benefits.
 - If the client is unable to complete the final fitting/trial, or is unable or refuses to sign the validation certificate, AADL may consider a specialty supplier's request to claim a portion of the cost of the procedure and/or components, as follows:
 - Provide Alberta Blue Cross with a copy of the Client Consent form, Custom-Made Footwear Validation Certificate, a valid prescription, and other supporting documentation. Provide evidence of attempts to contact client for followup and/or to resolve issue(s).

- Provide catalogue numbers and cost(s) for unclaimed items to Alberta Blue Cross. AADL will adjudicate in terms of potential billable amount.

Alberta Blue Cross:

- Responds to questions from client and/or specialty assessor/suppliers regarding the Custom-Made Footwear Validation Certificate.
- May request copies of the completed validation certificates.
- In consultation with AADL, reviews cases and addresses client and/or specialty assessor/supplier concerns pertaining to client inability to complete the final fitting/trial, or inability or refusal to sign the validation certificate.

AADL:

- Maintains and updates the Custom-Made Footwear Validation Certificate in accordance with AADL regulation, agreements, policies and procedures, and operational need and best practices.
- Provides support and direction to Alberta Blue Cross as it pertains to the Custom-Made Footwear Validation Certificate.

Policy F – 11

Patient Claim Statement

Policy Statement

Custom-made footwear specialty suppliers must provide every client with a patient claim statement for each custom-made footwear benefit invoiced to the AADL program. The statement can be printed from the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal, and must include general information such as statement details, Alberta Blue Cross contact information and client data.

The patient claim statement is comprised of three sections: statement information, claim summary and claim details.

The claim summary displays the overall breakdown of how much each client is responsible for against the total claimed amount for all claims submitted:

- Total amount claimed – The sum of claimed amounts for all claims submitted.
- AADL will pay – The total amount that AADL will cover for all claims submitted.
- Client will pay – The total amount the client is responsible to pay for all claims submitted. This amount is the sum of any cost-share amount the client owes and upgrade charges that are not covered by AADL.

Procedure

Custom-Made Footwear Specialty Assessors/Suppliers:

- Provide clients with a patient claim statement for AADL benefits. The patient claim statement must be printed from the Alberta Blue Cross online health portal.
- For cost-share clients, identify the AADL contribution and the client's cost-share contribution for each benefit.
- For cost-share exempt clients, identify AADL's contribution for each benefit.
- Retain a copy of the patient claim statement on the client's file.

Alberta Blue Cross:

- Provide vendors with a patient claim statement through the online health portal as required.