

Travelling and State Education Allowance procedure

This is a mandated procedure under the operational policy framework. Any edits to this procedure must follow the process outlined on the [creating, updating and deleting operational policies](#) page.

1. Overview

This procedure details the department's position on providing travelling allowances and state education allowances to students.

It provides relevant information about:

- eligibility for parents to receive a travelling allowance reimbursement on behalf of their children from the department
- types of travelling allowance reimbursements available
- the travelling allowance application process for families
- eligibility for parents to receive a State Education Allowance payment from the department
- the State Education Allowance application process for families.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all staff involved in the provision of student travelling and state education allowances.



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4. Detail

The conditions under which travelling allowances and state education allowances may be paid are outlined in the [Education and Children's Services Regulations 2020 \(SA\)](#):

- travelling allowances are covered in regulations 34 to 36
- state education allowances are covered in regulation 37.

4.1. Travelling allowances

4.1.1. Eligibility criteria for a travelling allowance

For students to be eligible for a travelling allowance, they must fit the following criteria based on their circumstances.

4.1.1.1. Government students

Government students may be eligible for a travelling allowance if they:

- are enrolled in a primary or secondary school and their usual place of residence is in South Australia
- reside 5 kilometres or more from the nearest government school or department-provided school bus service, by the shortest practicable all-weather road route
- regularly attend school.

4.1.1.2. Non-government students

Students attending non-government primary or secondary schools may be eligible for travelling allowances if they meet the eligibility criteria.

The travelling allowance application considers the distance to the nearest government school or department-provided school bus service by the shortest practicable all-weather road route, whichever is closer.

4.1.1.3. Students with 2 residential addresses

For students with 2 residential addresses (for example, split families), the '5 kilometres or more' rule applies to the residential address provided on the student's enrolment form. However, each situation will be assessed by the Transport Services Unit (TSU) on a case-by-case basis.

4.1.2. Applying for a travelling allowance

Parents may apply for a travelling allowance for their children in primary and secondary schools if the eligibility criteria are met. The process to apply is as follows:

1. A parent must complete an [ED226: Application for student travelling allowance form \(PDF 171 KB\)](#) and provide it to the Principal for approval.

2. The Principal submits the approved form to [TSU](#) for assessment.
3. TSU will calculate the distance from the front gate of the family residence to the nearest government school or department-provided school bus service by the shortest practicable all-weather road route, whichever is closer. For rural families, residential driveways will be considered in this calculation.
4. TSU will notify the parent in writing whether the application is approved or not approved. They will explain the reasoning for non-approvals.
5. If the application is approved, the parent must then complete an [ED228: Claim for payment of student travelling allowance form \(PDF 168 KB\)](#).
6. The department will make allowance payments either directly to the parent or the school, depending on agreement between the parent and the Principal.

Travelling allowance applications apply only for the year of application. Retrospective applications will not be considered.

4.1.3. Types of travelling allowances

Families eligible for a travelling allowance may receive one, or depending on the circumstances, a combination of the following forms of travelling allowance.

4.1.3.1. Car allowances

Car allowances are payable (based on attendance) on a 'per car, per family' basis at a prescribed daily rate, which is annually adjusted by the Minister. Car allowances are primarily provided in rural areas of South Australia. The rate can be claimed at the end of each school term.

A new [ED226: Application for student travelling allowance form \(PDF 171 KB\)](#) must be submitted to the Principal when:

- additional children in a family commence school
- there is a change of address or school attended.

The details of each child being transported at the time must be restated on each new application form.

4.1.3.2. Public passenger transport grants

Public passenger transport grants are payable in advance on a per child basis in the form of an annual grant. Families should use the grant to purchase Adelaide Metro student bus passes for their child based on a full school year of attendance.

Parents must submit a separate [ED226: Application for student travelling allowance form \(PDF 171 KB\)](#) to the Principal for their approval.

4.1.3.3. Private bus fare allowances

Private bus fare allowances are claimed through reimbursement on a per child basis for travel costs incurred on licensed private bus services. They are claimable at the end of each school term.

The parent must submit a separate [ED226: Application for student travelling allowance form \(PDF 171 KB\)](#) for each student to the Principal for approval.

Prescribed rates for car allowances are increased annually in line with inflation. Transport grants and fares are also adjusted annually based on advice from the Department for Infrastructure and Transport.

4.1.4. Additional considerations for travelling allowance assessments

4.1.4.1. Attending a more distant government school

Education directors may approve travelling allowances for government students who bypass their nearest government school to attend a more distant one. Approval may be granted if the distance criteria can be met, and under one or more of the following categories:

- a) The student attends a government school other than the nearest government school and the Education Director for that region determines that the school is the nearest to offer a study course that meets the educational needs of the student.
- b) The Education Director determines, based on written specialist psychological or other relevant medical advice, that:
 - i) the school is the nearest that adequately caters for the emotional or psychological needs of the student
 - ii) not attending that school would likely cause significant emotional or psychological distress to the student, that would disrupt their ability to participate in the curriculum.
- c) The Education Director has approved and directed the student to attend a specified alternative government school because of disciplinary, bullying, or conflict problems.
- d) At the Department for Child Protection's request or by Court Order, the student is required to attend a school other than their nearest government school. A copy of the request or order must be provided with the application.
- e) The Education Director has approved and directed the student to attend an alternative government school to alleviate overcrowding at the nearest government school.

For each of these categories, distance would be measured from the student's residence to the government school they attend or to a department-provided school bus service that travels to the school, whichever is the closer.

Any students approved by the Education Director under these criteria is considered eligible for a travelling allowance for the period of their enrolment at the specified government school.

4.1.4.2. Siblings of students approved by an Education Director

Siblings of students approved by an Education Director under the [criteria above](#) are not automatically entitled to receive a travelling allowance.

Parents must apply for each sibling separately.

4.1.4.3. Attending a school of choice

If a parent enrolls their child at a school of choice and requests a travelling allowance, the application will be measured to the nearest government school or department-provided school bus service, whichever is the closer.

4.2. State education allowances

A State Education Allowance (incorporating Remote Travel Allowance) is available to geographically isolated parents of secondary students who board away from home to attend school.

The allowance helps cover travel, boarding, and other education-related costs.

The department makes 4 payments to eligible families each year, at the end of each school term.

4.2.1. Eligibility criteria for a State Education Allowance

To be eligible for State Education Allowance (incorporating Remote Travel Allowance) in South Australia, Centrelink must approve the parents to receive the [Assistance for Isolated Children Allowance](#).

4.2.2. Applying for a State Education Allowance

The process to apply for the State Education Allowance (incorporating Remote Travel Allowance) is as follows:

1. A parent must provide the following to the TSU.
 - evidence that they have been approved to receive the Assistance for Isolated Children Allowance by Centrelink to the department (this could be a letter from Centrelink)
 - a [TSU015: South Australian State Education Allowance \(incorporating Remote Travel Allowance\) form \(PDF 183 KB\)](#).
2. The TSU will assess the application and advise the parent of the outcome.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1. All department staff and volunteers

Comply with this procedure and associated policy and procedures.

5.2. Education directors

Assess situations where families have applied for a travelling allowance to bypass their closest Government school for approval.

5.3. Principal

Certify applications for student travelling allowances and claims for student travelling allowances.

5.4. Transport Services Unit (TSU)

Assess applications for student travelling allowance and process claims for student travelling allowances.

Monitor, evaluate, and review this procedure.

6. Definitions

6.1. bus

A bus is a motor vehicle that seats more than 12 adults including the driver.

The definition of a bus is based on the number of seats, regardless of the Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) or whether the seats are occupied or vacant.

6.2. eligible student

A student who is considered eligible for transport assistance, such as school bus travel or a travelling allowance.

6.3. ineligible student

A student who is **not** considered eligible for transport assistance.

6.4. parent

For this procedure, a 'parent' is any person responsible for the child. This includes the child's:

- biological, adoptive, or other recognised parents if the child was conceived following a fertilisation procedure or under a surrogacy arrangement
- guardian
- person standing in loco parentis.

This does not include anyone whose legal custody, guardianship, or responsibility for the child has been removed by a Court, Act or Law. For example, a biological parent whose custody, guardianship, or parental responsibility was removed by a parenting order made under the *Family Law Act 1975* (Cth) is not considered responsible for the child.

6.5. school transport service

A school service that:

- uses a school transport vehicle
- is provided to students or persons eligible to travel
- meets service viability criteria.

6.6. school transport vehicle

A vehicle that is a:

- bus provided by the department as a department-owned and operated school bus (not a bus that is owned by a school)
- bus operated by a third-party provider under a contract with the department (which may include a transport service for children and young people with a disability or those enrolled in the Intensive English Language Program)
- taxi or hire car.

6.7. travelling allowance

May take the form of a:

- car allowance, payable on a per family basis at a prescribed rate per day
- public passenger transport grant, payable on a per child basis by way of annual grant
- reimbursement of fares for licensed private bus services.

7. Supporting information

[ED226: Application for student travelling allowance form \(PDF 171 KB\)](#)

[TSU015: South Australian State Education Allowance \(incorporating Remote Travell Allowance\) form \(PDF 183 KB\)](#)

7.1. Related legislation

[Education and Children's Services Regulations 2020 \(SA\)](#)

7.2. Related policies

[Camps and excursions policy \(PDF 665 KB\)](#)

[Closed-circuit television \(CCTV\) use on department school transport vehicles procedure \(PDF 604 KB\)](#) (staff login required)

[Department and contract school bus driver procedure \(PDF 632 KB\)](#)

[Driver review procedure \(PDF 589 KB\)](#) (staff login required)

[Establishing or altering a school transport service procedure \(PDF 589 KB\)](#) (staff login required)

[Safe transportation of children policy \(PDF 144 KB\)](#)

[Safe transportation of children procedure \(PDF 197 KB\)](#)

[School bus driver policy \(PDF 590 KB\)](#)

[School bus maintenance and safety policy \(PDF 580 KB\)](#)

[School bus maintenance and safety procedure \(PDF 649 KB\)](#)

[School bus management procedure \(PDF 654 KB\)](#) (staff login required)

[School bus travel procedure \(PDF 622 KB\)](#)

[School transport policy \(PDF 678 KB\)](#)

8. Record history

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8.1. Approvals

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Approved by: Chief Operating Officer

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8.2. Revision record

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9. Contact

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