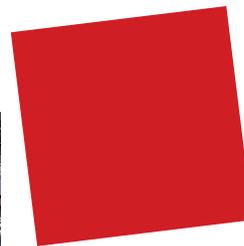


Frequently Asked Questions – Conveyance Allowance 2013

October 2012



How do the changes affect your school

1. **What is the purpose/intent of the conveyance allowance?**

The intent of the conveyance allowance is to assist families attending schools in rural or remote areas with limited access to public transport or free school bus service. With the introduction of the boundary changes and means testing the intent does not change, only the way the intent is achieved will change.

2. **Who is responsible for getting students to and from school?**

Parents and caregivers are primarily responsible for transporting their children to and from school.

Parents should consider their family's unique situation and what is in their child's best interests when deciding on school transport options.

3. **What changes are happening and when do they come into effect?**

From the 1 January 2013 the conveyance allowance will be means tested and a new metropolitan boundary, by which allowance eligibility is determined, will be introduced.

4. **Why are changes happening to the conveyance allowance?**

Changing the conveyance allowance criteria ensures the program is targeted to those most in need.

5. **What is grandfathering?**

Grandfathering is an expression used to describe a statutory or contractual willingness to allow some activities or former rights to continue even though not technically allowed under current conditions. Often grandfathering arrangements are limited, have end dates and specify the circumstances in which grandfathering can be revoked.

6. **How long will grandfathering occur and why?**

Grandfathering will last a maximum of six years and has been approved by the Minister for Education. Grandfathering will give families, schools and transport companies time to plan and adapt their transport arrangements.

7. **What does grandfathering mean in terms of the conveyance allowance?**

It means eligible students in receipt of the allowance in 2012 will be entitled to continue to receive it as long as the student remains at the same school and lives at the same residential address as registered on the conveyance allowance system in 2012.

8. **What if a student receiving the allowance in 2012 moves house in 2013?**

The student must reapply for the conveyance allowance and be assessed under the 2013 criteria. The student may no longer be entitled to receive the allowance.

9. **What if a student receiving the allowance in 2012 moves school in 2013?**

The student must reapply for the conveyance allowance and be assessed under the 2013 criteria. The student may no longer be entitled to receive the allowance.

10. **Why is the allowance non-transferable?**

It is part of the conditions of the grandfathering arrangement. A change of school or residential address alters a student's status and enables the entitlement to be reassessed.

11. **Is there potential for children from the same family to have different conveyance allowance arrangements?**

Yes. Some families may have a child on a grandfathering arrangement while siblings may be deemed ineligible under the 2013 criteria.

12. **Will a primary school student receiving the allowance in 2012 be entitled to have their allowance grandfathered when they transition to secondary school in 2013?**

As per the existing policy, a student attending a new school needs to apply for the allowance and meet the eligibility criteria that applies at the time of application.

13. **What is the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) and how is it determined?**

The UGB distinguishes urban land, to be used for housing, industry and commerce, from non-urban land, to be used for conservation, agriculture and resource development. The UGB enables long-term planning to ensure infrastructure and essential services, such as transport and schools, will be ready as communities grow.

After community-wide consultation the UGB was last expanded in 2010 to take in the growth corridors of Casey-Cardinia, Melton-Caroline Springs, and Hume-Whittlesea.

The Department has aligned its conveyance allowance boundary with the UGB.

The UGB is managed by the departments of Transport, Planning and Community Development, and Sustainability and Environment; and the statutory authorities of Vic Roads and Growth Areas Authority.

14. What if the UGB goes through a postcode?

While the UGB does pass through postcode areas, the Department will not spill postcode areas. Where the UGB does run through a postcode area, the Department, for the purposes of determining conveyance allowance eligibility, will deem the whole postcode area as being within the UGB.

Postcode areas have traditionally determined conveyance allowance eligibility and it provides immediate certainty as to eligibility.

Go to: www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/studenttransport.htm

15. How often will the UGB be reviewed?

The UGB will be regularly reviewed by its managing intergovernmental agencies and statutory authorities (as referred to in Q.13) to ensure it is meeting any future population demand and growth.

The Department will review the conveyance allowance boundary annually each March and notify schools of any changes to their eligibility in advance of the next school year.

16. Why are some schools within the UGB still able to claim the conveyance allowance?

The Department acknowledges that some schools located within the UGB postcode areas have limited transport options, making it hard for students to access the schools.

In the interests of equitable access, some postcode areas within the UGB have been granted exemptions from the boundary. This means for the purposes of conveyance allowance, students attending schools within exempted postcode areas are eligible to apply for the conveyance allowance.

Exemptions will be reviewed annually each March to determine if school accessibility has improved. Once access has sufficiently improved the exemption will be removed and the postcode area deemed ineligible to claim the conveyance allowance.

17. How was the exemption determined?

Please refer to the Accessibility Index fact sheet.

18. What is the criterion for means testing?

Students must be listed on a means tested Commonwealth Health Care or Pension Card that can be verified by Centrelink.

Students must also meet the other criteria to successfully claim the conveyance allowance.

19. What are the pension cards and health care cards recognised by the Department for the purposes of conveyance allowance?

- Age pension (card code - AGE/AGE BLIND)
- Bereavement Allowance (card code - BVA)
- Carer payment (card code - CAR)
- Disability support pension (card code - DSP)
- Disability support pension – blind (card code - DSP BLIND)
- Mature age allowance (card code - MAA)
- Mature age partner allowance (card code - MPA)
- Newstart allowance – over 60 (card code - NSA)
- Newstart mature age allowance (card code - NMA)

- Parenting payment – partnered over 60 (card code - PP)
- Parenting payment – single (card code - PPS)
- Partner allowance – over 60 (card code - PA)
- Sickness allowance – over 60 (card code - SA)
- Special benefit – over 60 (card code - SL)
- Widow allowance – over 60 (card code - WA)
- Wife pension (card code - WFA, WFD, WFW)
- Widow B pension (card code - WID)
- Exceptional circumstances relief payment (card code - DR)
- Family tax benefit – part A (card code - FA)
- Farm help income support (card code FFR)
- Low income card (card code – LI)
- Newstart allowance (card code – NS)
- Newstart mature age allowance (card code – NMA)
- Parenting payment – partnered (card code – PP)
- Partner allowance (card code – PA)
- Sickness allowance (card code – SA)
- Special benefit (card code – SL)
- Widow allowance (card code – WA)
- Youth allowance (card code – YA)

20. How will the changes affect the Student Conveyance Administration System (SCAS)?

From 2013 all conveyance allowance claims must be processed through SCAS. The system is being adapted to manage the introduced changes.

2012 (current) SCAS users

Schools affected by means testing and the boundary change will have their claimable applications from 2012 rolled forward in SCAS for 2013.

Schools affected by the boundary change and not exempt from the UGB will be unable to make any new conveyance allowance applications after 31 December 2012.

Schools affected by means testing only (UGB exempt schools included), can continue to create new applications in SCAS for students who meet the 2013 eligibility criteria.

2013 (new) SCAS users

Schools affected by the boundary change and not exempt from the UGB can only create 'new' applications in SCAS for students who are to be grandfathered.

Schools affected by means testing only (UGB exempt schools included), can create new applications in SCAS for students who meet the 2013 eligibility criteria.

Proof of eligibility

School administrators will be required to sight and take a copy of the health care or pension card being used to support a new conveyance allowance application. The copy of the card must be kept with the application and maintained by the school.

For more information go to:

www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/studenttransport.htm