

Conveyance Allowance – changes being implemented in 2013

Information for Parents and Students



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Some of the eligibility criteria for the student conveyance allowance have been changed for the 2013 school year. This information sheet is designed to help you understand how the changes might affect you.

The Conveyance Allowance Program provides financial assistance for the journey to and from school in areas where transport options are limited.

While the transport of students to school is primarily the responsibility of students' families, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) recognises the need of some students for assistance with getting to and from school. Therefore the Department provides financial support in the form of a conveyance allowance to assist some families. The conveyance allowance contributes to the cost of transporting children to attend their closest appropriate school/campus in rural and regional Victoria. The conveyance allowance is generally

restricted to students attending schools located in rural and regional Victoria in recognition of the often limited public transport options to travel to and from school.

Eligibility criteria are being changed to better target those families most in need.

Two major changes are being introduced in 2013 to better target the conveyance allowance assistance.

Firstly, the boundary used to define metropolitan Melbourne is being updated to better align with Melbourne's urban growth. The boundary used for conveyance allowance purposes has not been updated since 1983. Since that time Melbourne's suburbs and suburban public transport system have expanded considerably. This change was announced by the Government in May 2011.

The second change ensures the conveyance allowance is better targeted to reach those in need of financial assistance. From 2013 to be eligible for the conveyance allowance you must meet a means testing requirement.



Neither change will affect students who have established their eligibility for the allowance in 2012. As part of the transition arrangements (grandfathering), already claiming students will continue to receive the conveyance allowance until they complete Year 6 or Year 12 unless their personal circumstances change (that is move residence or school).

Criteria determining eligibility for the conveyance allowance

To receive a conveyance allowance each student must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Attend a school/campus located in rural or regional Victoria i.e. outside the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB)
2. Be an eligible beneficiary within the meaning of the *State Concessions Act 2004*. This means the student's parent/s is/are a holder of an eligible Commonwealth Health Care Card or equivalent Concession Card at the time of application

3. Attend the closest appropriate school/campus
 - a. For students attending specialist schools, this will be determined by the specialist school Designated Transport Area (DTA) in which the student resides
 - b. For students attending government schools, this will be the closest school/campus appropriate to the age and gender of the student (eg primary, secondary)
 - c. For students attending non-government schools, this will be the closest school/campus of the chosen denominational group
4. Reside 4.8km or more from the school/campus (as calculated by shortest practicable route in distance from the student's home to the school/campus attended)



5. Be of school age (between 5 and 18 years-old at the time of application), and reside in Victoria
6. Be enrolled in a school three or more days per week.

Detailed information on each criteria can be located in the Conveyance Allowance Policy (2013) available on our website www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/studenttransport.htm

The type of conveyance allowance your child can receive is dependent on the most economical form of transport available for the journey to school.

Conveyance allowance can only be paid for the most economical form of transport that is available for the journey to and from school.

Public transport is usually the most economical

form of transport available where it exists.

The Department will consider public transport is available if Public Transport Victoria (PTV) indicates a service in the hours before school (7am-9am) and after school (3pm-5pm).

Families that choose, for whatever reason, to transport their child by means other than the most economical transport option available, will not be eligible to receive conveyance allowance.

The level of transport assistance received is dependent on the type of transport used

Private transport conveyance allowance is available where public transport is either not available or is not the most economic mode of transport. It is based on the one way travel distance by the shortest practicable route from the home to the school. The conveyance allowance rates that apply for each type of transport mode can be viewed on the student transport website. www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/studenttransport.htm

How to apply for a conveyance allowance

Your school will provide you with information and an application form prior to your enrolment if they believe you may be eligible for the assistance.

Complete the application form and send it back to your school. It is important to complete the form as accurately as you possibly can. You should refer to bingmaps.com or

maps.google.com to check the travel distance that applies for the journey from home to school. Providing accurate information will ensure your application is processed quickly and easily.

It should be noted that in some cases online mapping tools cannot take into account practical considerations such as road closures.

Once you submit the application the school will process it in the online conveyance allowance system; in most cases this will enable them to confirm your eligibility straight away and also provide you with advice on the amount of conveyance allowance you will receive.

If the application for your child is not approved it may not have met part of the eligibility criteria. Your school, in most cases, will be able to tell you why it was not accepted. If you have any questions regarding an unapproved application we suggest you talk firstly with your child's school and read the detailed conveyance allowance policy that is on our website: www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/studenttransport.htm. If you are still not satisfied, your school will be able to provide you with advice on how you can pursue this matter with the Department directly.

After the school submits the application online the Department processes all eligible applications and provides conveyance allowance funds to your school. The school is then responsible for distributing the funds. Schools have different ways of providing transport assistance to their families and you should check how this is done prior to submitting your

application. The school should be able to advise of the process and give you an indication of the timeframes involved.

Other key points

- Late (previous year) applications cannot be accepted or paid.
- DEECD provides financial assistance in the form of a conveyance allowance for the applicant as listed on the application. Schools are not authorised to withhold the financial assistance in lieu of school fees or for any other purpose unless the express and written permission of the family has been provided.
- Schools can divide the conveyance allowance for a child if a split custody arrangement applies. The school is responsible for determining the payment that is made to each parent.
- Your child may be eligible to receive two types of conveyance allowance (multimode) if their journey to school cannot be taken via one mode of transport alone.
- If your child is in Year 11 or 12 you may apply for a conveyance allowance if they need to travel to a TAFE institute, Registered Training Organisation or alternate school to access a subject that is unavailable at their enrolled school. Year 11 and 12 students also may travel to a more distant school than their closest and receive the conveyance allowance if two or more subjects chosen for VCE are not available at their closest school.

A quick guide to your eligibility for a conveyance allowance



