

# Commercial Passenger Vehicles Information Bulletin – CPV21

## Northern Territory Transport Subsidy Scheme and Lift Incentive Scheme

### Transport Subsidy Scheme

The Transport Subsidy Scheme (TSS) has been established by the Northern Territory (NT) Government in recognition of the *Disability Services Act 1993*, having the aim of promoting greater community engagement for NT residents assessed as having a permanent, or likely to be permanent, disability or significant mobility restriction that prevents them from being able to safely use public transport. The assessed disability may be physical, sensory, psychiatric or intellectual.

The scheme acknowledges that some disabilities can result in disadvantage and assists members with better community engagement, however the scheme is not intended to meet all travel costs and members are responsible for managing their allocated yearly entitlement. Membership to the scheme is subject to application criteria and periodic review.

The scheme operates throughout the NT and members can use the scheme for travel in any taxi, minibus, private hire car and rideshare vehicle where TSS payment processing is available – note that the processing of TSS transactions may not be available in some vehicle types.

Members living in remote areas may access the TSS to support their transport needs when visiting urban centres such as Darwin and Alice Springs. Members can also access their entitlements when travelling interstate (conditions apply).

### How does the TSS work?

The scheme provides eligible persons with a subsidy of half of the total fare. The other half of the fare is to be paid in cash and/or credit/debit card by the member.

There are four subsidy categories. An applicant must first meet the general eligibility requirements for the TSS before being assessed against an individual category.

#### General eligibility requirements

To be eligible for the NT Transport Subsidy Scheme, a person must meet the following criterion:

- 1) be a resident of the Northern Territory and provide evidence of such; and
- 2) not able to safely travel on a public bus – consideration may also be given to persons not able to access the public bus network e.g. has difficulty accessing the public bus network, but may be able to safely use it once accessed; and
- 3) be assessed by a medical practitioner, medical expert or allied health professional as having a permanent or long term disability (greater than six months) which prevents them from safely accessing the public bus network.

Category Eligibility Requirements	
<b>Category D</b> <b>Subsidy of \$243 per financial year</b>	This category is for a person who has: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) a medical condition of an episodic nature ('flares up' from time to time) e.g. arthritis, which prevents them from safely using public transport at the time; or</li> <li>b) access to other forms of transport, such as a private vehicle or community bus.</li> </ol>
<b>Category C</b> <b>Subsidy of \$604 per financial year</b>	This category is for a person who has limited access to other forms of transport and does not meet the criteria of any other category.
<b>Category B</b> <b>Subsidy of \$2056 per financial year</b>	This category is for a person who: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) has limited access to other forms of transport; and</li> <li>b) can demonstrate, on three or more occasions per week:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o participation in paid or voluntary work;</li> <li>o attendance at an approved learning centre for educational purposes e.g. school;</li> <li>o participation in organised community-based activities; and</li> </ul> </li> <li>c) does not meet either criterion listed in Category D.</li> </ol>
<b>Category A</b> <b>Exceptional Circumstances</b>	An existing TSS member in Category B may apply for an increase to their annual entitlements where the member: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) does not have *access to other transport supports or funding; and</li> <li>b) demonstrates significant financial hardship (this will require an assessment of the applicant's financial history and current status); and</li> <li>c) does not have access to other forms of transport e.g. use of, or carriage in, a family vehicle or community transport; and</li> <li>d) has a demonstrated need to use point to point transport services to access essential services.</li> </ol> <p>All applications for Category A are based on exceptional circumstances and must be approved by the Minister.</p>

### Additional Entitlements

Applicants having exceptional circumstances in any category may apply to the Transport Subsidy Scheme Officer for a one-off amount to be added to their entitlement for that financial year period.

Approval of a one-off payment is subject to assessment by the TSS office and will consider things such as:

- a) a member's demonstrated financial position;
- b) historical TSS usage and a member's category;
- c) unexpected medical, work or educational needs;
- d) access to other transport options and supports; and
- e) any other factor considered relevant.

**Notes** \*Access to other transport supports' means any financial assistance received from the Northern Territory or Commonwealth Governments, examples of which include transport supports and funding under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), home care assistance and mobility allowance administered by Centrelink. For more information on the NDIS, visit, [www.ndis.gov.au/](http://www.ndis.gov.au/).

When assessing the most appropriate category of entitlement, consideration can be given to a person's requirement to travel three or more times per week for medical purposes e.g. to attend hospital or remedial therapy. While the TSS is not intended to directly provide financial assistance for transport to and from medical appointments, it is acknowledged that persons needing to attend frequent medical appointments may be financially disadvantaged and therefore less likely to afford transport for the purposes of community engagement.

Membership review periods are every five years or for a shorter period to align with expected end dates of work, schooling or anticipated changes to assessed medical conditions. New members will be issued with their entitlements on a pro-rata basis for the remainder of the initial financial year period.

Current transitional arrangements to facilitate the roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) allow members to continue to access entitlements under the TSS while receiving supports through the NDIS and other Government schemes, however once the NDIS is fully established it is expected that membership to the TSS will discontinue for members accessing other transport supports.

## How to apply for membership

Complete the [CPVF21 – Application for the Northern Territory Transport Subsidy Scheme and Lift Incentive Scheme](#).

Applications are available on the Commercial Passenger Vehicles website at [nt.gov.au/driving/industry/cpv-information-bulletins-and-forms](http://nt.gov.au/driving/industry/cpv-information-bulletins-and-forms) or by contacting the Transport Subsidy Scheme Officer on (08) 8924 7229 or [cpv.admin@nt.gov.au](mailto:cpv.admin@nt.gov.au).

**Part A** of the application must be completed by the applicant or the applicant's carer/ agent.

**Part B** of the application must be completed by a medical professional, specialist or allied health professional.

The application must also include the following:

- two passport size photographs, not older than six months. One photograph must be certified by an approved person;
- evidence of residency in the NT e.g. Jacana Energy account or council rates notice less than six months old, NT evidence of age card or photocopy of both sides of a current Centrelink card showing the current residential address; and
- where applicable, documents in support of any claim of participation, three days or more a week, in paid or volunteer work, education or organised community based programs.

The completed application and supporting documentation can be mailed to:

NT Transport Subsidy Scheme Officer  
Commercial Passenger Vehicles Office  
GPO Box 2520  
Darwin NT 0801

Alternatively, applications can be emailed to [cpv.admin@nt.gov.au](mailto:cpv.admin@nt.gov.au). Photographs must be in 'jpeg' electronic format.

For a list of approved persons, health professionals and photograph requirements see the CPVF21 application form.

## Membership and the smartcard

Applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis. Membership is for a five-year period unless otherwise determined by the TSS office. Things affecting the determination of membership could include potential changes to member’s needs or medical condition/s.

The applicant will be notified of the outcome by mail. If approved, the applicant will be sent an information package along with a TSS electronic smartcard (the smartcard).

The smartcard will store the member’s name, photograph, card number, subsidy amount and card expiry date. Members should note that any expiry date appearing on the smartcard may not reflect the membership review date. Members will be notified of their review date when receiving their approval letter. Each time the smartcard is used the subsidy balance will be updated.

The smartcards are robust and should not become damaged through normal use. However, if the card is damaged or faulty, the EFTPOS terminal in the vehicle will provide prompts and information about the fault to the driver.

If there is a problem with the smartcard, the member should obtain a receipt of their journey and contact the TSS Office for advice.

If the smartcard is lost or stolen the member must notify the TSS office immediately. The TSS Office will arrange to cancel the lost card and order a new one. The smartcard reordering process takes approximately 15 working days.

If your contact details or circumstances change, you or your carer must notify this office. If the TSS Officer is unable to get in contact with you, or you are overdue for your review, your membership may be suspended or cancelled.

If you knowingly misuse your TSS entitlements or permit your TSS card to be used fraudulently, your membership may be suspended or cancelled. You cannot use your TSS entitlements to pay for more than 50% of the fare for a journey and you must be a passenger of the journey in which you have claimed a subsidy amount for.

The personal information contained in your application will be used to assess your entitlements for the TSS, and may be shared with the Registrar of Motor Vehicles for the purpose of driver licencing. Consistent with NT Government legislation and policy, the TSS office takes all reasonable steps to protect the privacy of your personal and health information.

## Electronic systems in vehicles

In situations where the EFTPOS system is unavailable or the equipment in the vehicle has failed, the driver must use a paper based back-up system, known as an emergency docket (refer to the example below). The completed emergency dockets are forwarded to the TSS office, where they are processed, providing the docket meets policy requirements.

*Example of an Emergency Docket*

**SAMPLE**

DRIVER NAME  
 DRIVER ADDRESS  
 DRIVER PHONE  
 SERVICE AUTH. NO.

PASSENGER NAME  
 PASSENGER ADDRESS  
 PASSENGER PHONE  
 SERVICE AUTH. NO.

TRIP EXPLANATIONS

TAXI/TICKET SEQUENCE

CARD ISSUER AUTHORITY NO.

PASSENGER'S SIGNATURE

FARE  
 METER  
 EXTRA

TOTAL  
 DOLLARS  
 CENTS

10% SERVICE FEE APPLICABLE ON STATEMENT

## Can members travel outside of the NT?

If you are travelling interstate you are still entitled to the subsidy, however you will need to first obtain interstate vouchers (refer to the example below). To obtain interstate vouchers you must contact the TSS office at least 10 working days prior to your departure. NT Smartcards will not work outside of the NT.

### Example of a Northern Territory Interstate Transport Subsidy Voucher

The number of vouchers issued will depend on your available subsidy balance and are valid for 50% of the fare payable for the journey. Some States and Territories may restrict the use of the TSS to the taxi category. Unused vouchers must be returned to the TSS office upon your return to the Territory.

Membership of the scheme cannot be transferred to, or from, other States and Territories or to another person. However, members exiting the NT may wish to apply to the respective jurisdiction where eligible.

## Can a friend or family member travel with members?

Yes. Friends and family members can travel with members. However, the TSS smartcard is to be used for the member's personal travel only. It cannot be used for sending other people on errands or parcel deliveries i.e. the member must be present when accessing entitlements. The TSS office may cancel a person's membership where that member's entitlements have been accessed contrary to the conditions of use or where the member provides information knowing it is false or misleading.

## Prepaid taxi fares on Friday and Saturday nights

Members undertaking taxi trips on Friday and Saturday nights between 10 pm and 5 am are exempt from having to prepay the taxi fare i.e. TSS members are not required to prepay for a taxi journey.

If a taxi driver insists that you prepay for a journey, you may suggest they contact the network taxi base to have it verified. If you are uncomfortable with doing this, you can prepay the taxi fare, obtain a receipt and lodge a complaint with the relevant network or the TSS office.

## Lift Incentive Scheme

### What is the Lift Incentive Scheme?

The Lift Incentive Scheme (LIS) is a NT Government funded initiative which provides a payment of \$20 directly to a driver of an approved wheelchair accessible vehicle (WAV) for each journey completed involving the carriage of a passenger travelling in a wheelchair. This payment is in recognition of the additional time taken to secure the wheelchair and passenger into the vehicle and the potential travel time taken to commence the journey.

Eligible members are allocated with up to 180 x \$20 lift incentives per year. New members will be issued lift incentives on a pro-rata basis for time remaining in that financial year. The lift incentive is not transferable or redeemable for cash and is not able to be used as part of the fare.

When using a lift incentive in an approved WAV such as a taxi, the meter must not be engaged until after the wheelchair and passenger is appropriately secured in the vehicle and the journey has commenced.

Where a person is travelling in a wheelchair, but does not have available lift incentives, a driver of a taxi may engage the taximeter at commencement of hiring and include the time taken to assist with correctly securing the wheelchair and passenger into the vehicle. The driver may then choose to stop the meter at the end of the journey or upon assisting the person from the vehicle.

Drivers of standard taxis and other commercial passenger vehicles (CPVs) without the capacity to carry passengers seated in a wheelchair are not eligible to receive lift incentive payments.

If a wheelchair passenger cannot be safely secured in a WAV, the driver may assist the person to transfer to a seat in the vehicle. The wheelchair can then be secured in the load space of the vehicle. Persons reliant on wheelchairs are free to use any CPV where they are confident in transferring to and from a vehicle's standard seating.

If the WAV legally carries two or more wheelchair passengers at the same time, each wheelchair passenger will provide a lift incentive to the driver.

Where a person is charged an additional amount because of their disability, or are otherwise discriminated against, they can contact the Anti-Discrimination Commission to lodge a complaint. The Anti-Discrimination Commission can be accessed via the website: <http://www.adc.nt.gov.au>

Please note that a driver may refuse to carry persons in wheeled mobility devices that do not comply with Australian and New Zealand Standards AS/NZS 3696. 19:2009. When a wheelchair is being used as a seat in a vehicle, the driver is obliged to secure the wheelchair using a four-point harness (anchoring) system i.e. two restraints secure the front of the wheelchair to the vehicle and a further two straps secure the rear. The driver should then assist the occupant with their personal seatbelt, unless the passenger holds a medical exemption from wearing a seatbelt and presents this to the driver at the time. If a person travelling in a wheelchair feels unsafe or believes their wheelchair or personal restraints have not been fitted correctly, they should contact the TSS Office and lodge a complaint.

## Who is entitled to lift incentives?

To be eligible for the Lift Incentive Scheme (LIS), a person must be assessed by a medical professional as being reliant on a wheelchair for mobility and requires a wheelchair accessible vehicle for travel. Persons capable of walking whether assisted or unassisted e.g. by using a wheeled walking frame, are generally not eligible for the LIS.

## Information for drivers

To be eligible to receive lift incentive payments, each driver must nominate a bank account for payment by completing two NT Government forms:

1. [Northern Territory Government Vendor Creation / Amendment Form](#); and
2. [Recipient Created Tax Invoice Agreement](#).

To obtain the above forms, please visit [www.nt.gov.au/driving](http://www.nt.gov.au/driving) or contact the TSS office on telephone (08) 8924 7229 or email [cpv.admin@nt.gov.au](mailto:cpv.admin@nt.gov.au).

## Feedback

If you have a complaint, you should contact the network you booked through in the first instance. It is important that you provide the registration plate number, driver ID card number and journey details.

Alternatively, you may contact the CPV Office on telephone (08) 8924 7580 or complete and submit form [CPV35 Complaint Report – Commercial Passenger Vehicles](#) or submit feedback online at [transport.nt.gov.au/contact/feedback](https://transport.nt.gov.au/contact/feedback)

## General Information

CPV Information Bulletins and Forms: [www.nt.gov.au/driving/industry/](https://www.nt.gov.au/driving/industry/)  
Legislation: [www.legislation.nt.gov.au](https://www.legislation.nt.gov.au)

Motor Vehicle Registry Information [www.mvr.nt.gov.au](https://www.mvr.nt.gov.au)

This Information Bulletin is a guide only and contains general information and requirements in relation to the CPV industry. This document should not be regarded as a strict interpretation of Northern Territory law, but may form part of departmental policy.

## CPV Contact Details

Telephone: (08) 8924 7580  
Email: [cpv.admin@nt.gov.au](mailto:cpv.admin@nt.gov.au)  
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