

POLICY NUMBER

SER DEL 9

INTENT

The intent of this policy is to provide guidelines for situations where people using the Service are assisted with their transport requirements during their hours of support.

DEFINITION

Transportation: act of conveying or means of conveying.

POLICY STATEMENTS

- Real Living Options Association Inc. will encourage and assist Participants to use community facilities wherever possible and feasible and commensurate with the abilities of the person.

Use of Public Transport

- If public transport (bus travel) is available and is suitable, it should be considered when arranging transport to an activity.
- When a Lifestyle Assistant is accompanying a person to an activity on public transport the Service will reimburse the Lifestyle Assistant for the full cost of their fare if a receipt is provided. Participants will pay for their own fare at the time and will be billed by the Service for the cost of the Lifestyle Assistant's fare.

Payment of Mileage

- Mileage costs incurred by a Participant using the Service are the responsibility of that Participant or their Representative/Nominee. Where a Participant is receiving activity based transport they may choose to have their mileage costs funded through their NDIS Core supports funding.
- Mileage will be paid to Lifestyle Assistants at the current rate specified by the relevant award for kilometres travelled when the Participant is in their vehicle.
- Where a Lifestyle Assistant chooses to seek reimbursement through their tax return no payment can be claimed against a Participant
- All mileage must be authorised by the Participant and/or their Representative/Nominee and the Service regardless of whether reimbursement is being claimed.
- Any mileage costs incurred by a person using the Service must be paid by the due date as noted on the invoice. Should a person's account fall into arrears – further transport may cease unless there are special circumstances preventing payment.
- Both the Participant and the Lifestyle Assistant should carry identification with them at all times when in the community. Such identification should contain the name and contact phone number of their Representative/Nominee and Real Living Options Association Inc.

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Transport provided by Staff of Real Living Options Association Inc.

- All transport provided to Participants by employees of Real Living Options Association Inc. must be in line with policy NDIS STAFF 19 Use of Own Motor Vehicle.

Transport provided in a Participant vehicle or Representative/Nominee owned vehicle.

- An Agreement for the use of a vehicle owned by the Participant/Representative/Nominee will be signed by the Participant/Representative/Nominee prior to the vehicle being driven by a Lifestyle Assistant. The Agreement will include the following points:
 - If the Participant is being transported in the Participant/Representative/Nominee's own vehicle it must be registered and have full comprehensive insurance before the employee will be permitted to drive the vehicle. The vehicle must be serviced and maintained in a clean and roadworthy condition and have a completed Vehicle Check List provided by the Service when providing evidence of the renewal of vehicle insurance.
 - The Participant/Representative/Nominee must provide documented evidence of the current registration and insurance of the vehicle prior to a Lifestyle Assistant being approved to drive the vehicle. Such evidence must be updated within seven (7) days of its expiry date.
 - Before an employee will be permitted to drive a car owned by a Participant/Representative/Nominee, the Support Manager and/or Senior Support Facilitator must check if there is any age excess clause in the insurance policy. No Lifestyle Assistant will be employed to drive the vehicle if he/she is under the age limit specified on the respective policy.
 - Lifestyle Assistants must at all times drive with due care and attention, in a safe, lawful and defensive manner while providing transport to a Participant.
 - In the event of an accident whilst a Lifestyle Assistant is the driver of the Participant/Representative/Nominee's vehicle the following will apply:
 - Any excess on the policy will be paid by the Participant/Representative/Nominee and not the Lifestyle Assistant or Real Living Options Association Inc.
 - The Lifestyle Assistant must take whatever immediate action is required to ensure the safety of the Participant and themselves.
 - Notify the relevant emergency services if required.
 - The Lifestyle Assistant is required to report any accident/incident to the Participant/Representative/Nominee as soon as possible after the event.
 - The Lifestyle Assistant must also report any accident/incident to the Support Manager and/or Senior Support Facilitator as soon as possible after the event and complete an Incident Report.
- Employees of Real Living Options Association Inc. may drive a Participants vehicle to transport a Participant where all of the above criteria have been met, however where a Participant wishes to drive their own vehicle the employee of Real Living Options Association Inc. must travel in their own vehicle and meet the Participant at their destination. At no time should employees of Real Living Options Association Inc. travel as a passenger in a car that is driven by a Participant.

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PROCEDURES

Transportation provided by Staff of Real Living Options Association Inc.

- The Support Team should ensure that each person using the Service is aware of the facilities in that person's local neighborhood and he/she should be encouraged to use these local facilities for shopping, banking, etc.
- The onus is on Lifestyle Assistants to investigate all possible means of transport to and from a venue. If public transport is suitable, this should be considered as an option. This may involve more support hours being necessary but is in keeping with the philosophy of an ordinary life, inclusion in the community and the eventual hope of increasing the independence of the Participant. The Lifestyle Assistant should discuss alternatives in each instance with the person concerned when arranging transportation.
- The Support Team (or person negotiating service provision and providing a Service Agreement to the Participant) are responsible for ensuring that Participants understand their obligations to pay mileage where a Lifestyle Assistant is required to use their own vehicle as part of the support requested.
- The Support Team will negotiate with the Participant and inform the Lifestyle Assistants of the number of kilometers claimable when undertaking an activity.
- The Support Manager will ensure that the Agreement contained in the Terms of Employment with each Lifestyle Assistant is signed prior to driving their vehicle and all conditions contained therein are discussed with them.
- The Support Team are responsible for ensuring that all Lifestyle Assistants are made aware that payment will not be made for any unauthorised mileage. In the event that a Lifestyle Assistant has to use their vehicle for an unauthorised situation, the Support Manager and/or Senior Support Facilitator will use their own discretion as to whether the mileage will be reimbursed.
- The Support Manager or Senior Support Facilitator will negotiate any changes to authorised mileage with the Participant and/or their Representative/Nominee.
- All authorised mileage or fares will be paid directly to the Lifestyle Assistant by the Service with their wages unless the Lifestyle Assistant chooses to seek reimbursement through the taxation system.
- Should a Participant express interest in a specific recreation activity that is not available locally then a Lifestyle Assistant shall investigate the closest venue for that activity. While the mileage cost must be a consideration in choosing a venue, it is not intended to be the prime consideration.
- Should a Participant desire to shop/bank at a location that is not the closest to their home the Support Team will inform them of the costs involved in doing this.
- The Rostering Officers are responsible for checking that all mileage claimed has been authorised.
- The Rostering Officers will check the time sheets and authorise payment in each instance. If they are unsure, the Support Manager or Senior Support Facilitator will decide whether the claim is legitimate.
- Invoices for mileage that is claimed through NDIS funds will be billed on a weekly basis. Invoices for reimbursements paid directly by Participants should be mailed out monthly and should include the due date for payment.

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- Should payment not be received by the due date the Support Manager and/or Finance Officer will contact the person concerned for explanation and negotiate whatever action is necessary to avoid further debt. The Service reserves the right to refuse transport where an account is in arrears.

Use of Participant/Representative/Nominee's vehicle

- If a vehicle owned by a Participant/Representative/Nominee is to be used for the transportation of a Participant, the following will apply:
 - The Support Manager will inform the owner of the vehicle being provided for use by the Lifestyle Assistant of the requirements regarding insurance, registration etc. and ensure that all evidence is provided before a Lifestyle Assistant uses a vehicle owned by the Participant/Representative/Nominee. The Support Manager will ensure an Agreement in accordance with this policy is signed with the Participant/Representative/Nominee who owns the vehicle;
 - The Participant/Representative/Nominee or Lifestyle Assistant may wish to complete a Use of the Vehicle Form for completion prior to and after the use of the vehicle. Real living Options Association Inc. recommends this form is completed on each occasion of use, but accepts this is the individual decision of the owner or requested driver of the vehicle;
 - A system for keeping records of insurance and registration of the vehicle will be maintained by the Administration Officer;
 - The Support Manager and/or Finance Officer are responsible for checking if there is any insurance excess or driver age limit and ensuring details are recorded in the relevant Participant's records
 - In the event of an accident the General Manager must be informed, and an Incident Report completed. The Support Manager is to ensure that the Lifestyle Assistant has informed the Participant/Representative/Nominee of the event.

DELEGATIONS

General Manager

- Ensure as far as practicable that all parties understand the requirement in regard to mileage reimbursement to Lifestyle Assistants
- Ensure as far as practicable the Participant/Representative/Nominee understands and complies with the requirements for use of their vehicle
- Ensure as far as practicable that all requirements in regard to the use of a Participant, Representative/Nominee's vehicle are met

Support Manager and Senior Support Facilitator

- Negotiate appropriate transport with each Participant and/or their Representative/Nominee.
- Ensure as far as practicable that Participants and/or their Representative/Nominee understand the requirement in regard to mileage reimbursement to Lifestyle Assistants providing transport using their own vehicles
- Ensure as far as practicable that all requirements in regard to the use of a Participant, Representative/Nominee's vehicle are met
- Check timesheets and ensure that any mileage being claimed has been pre- authorised.

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- Inform Lifestyle Assistants of identification and insurance requirements.
- Inform the General Manager of any accidents.

Lifestyle Assistants

- Provide documented evidence of their current drivers' license, registration and insurance using the method required by the service.
- Inform the Service Manager or Senior Support Facilitator if involved in an accident.
- Inform the Participants Representative/Nominee where applicable if involved in an accident.
- Carry relevant identification at all times when driving a motor vehicle.
- Notify the office of any change to the regular vehicle that is being used for work purposes and update insurance and registration details in a timely manner.

Finance Officer

- Reimburse mileage claimed as approved by the Support Team.
- Prepare invoices for mileage reimbursements.
- Process receipts.
- Advise the Support Manager of overdue accounts.

Administration Officer

- Maintain current vehicle documentation in Akuety.
- Keep a record of current documentation of Participant/Representative/Nominee vehicles being used.

RELATED DOCUMENTATION

Lifestyle Assistant Time Sheets

Payroll records

Terms of Employment for Lifestyle Assistants

Agreement for Use of Participant/Representative/Nominee's Vehicle

REFERENCES

Social, Community, Home Care & Disability Services Industry Award 2010

NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators

AMENDMENTS/REVIEWS

Amended 09.08.12, Amended 05.05.16, Amended 27.09.18, Amended 22.08.19, Amended 23.06.22, Amended 02.05.24

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