

Travel Assistance Policy and Process

Note: If printed, this document is for immediate reference only. Do not file it, as it will go out-of-date over time and be replaced by newer versions.

Croydon Adult Social Care Travel Assistance Policy

Introduction

This policy explains the principles of the Council's approach to the provision of travel assistance, the types of travel assistance that may be provided and the factors that it will take into account when determining the most appropriate means of travel assistance.

Where it appears to the Council that an adult may have needs for care and support, the Council has a duty to carry out an assessment under section 9 of the Care Act 2014. If the Council is satisfied on the basis of the assessment that an adult does have needs for care and support, it must determine whether any of those needs meet the national eligibility criteria. If the adult does have needs which meet the eligibility criteria, the Council must consider what can be done to meet those needs and draw up a care and support plan setting out how a service user's eligible needs for care and support will be met.

The provision of travel assistance is one way the Council may meet a service user's needs for care and support. This policy explains how the Council will make decisions about the provision of travel assistance for those who have been assessed to have eligible needs. The Council does have the power to meet needs for care and support on an urgent basis prior to completing a needs assessment and regardless of ordinary residence or where the adult has been assessed to have needs that do not meet the national eligibility threshold. The factors detailed in this policy will also be relevant to those decisions.

Policy Context and Principles

Croydon Council is committed to promoting independence and personal choice for the most vulnerable people in the borough including the provision of travel assistance, where appropriate, to enable people to be and remain mobile. As part of the Council's commitment to inclusion and independence, individuals who can travel either independently or with assistance from family, friends or support providers will do so if it has been assessed as suitable. Individuals who are assessed as capable of independent travel, and successfully supported through travel training, will only travel independently if the Council considers it is safe for them to do so.

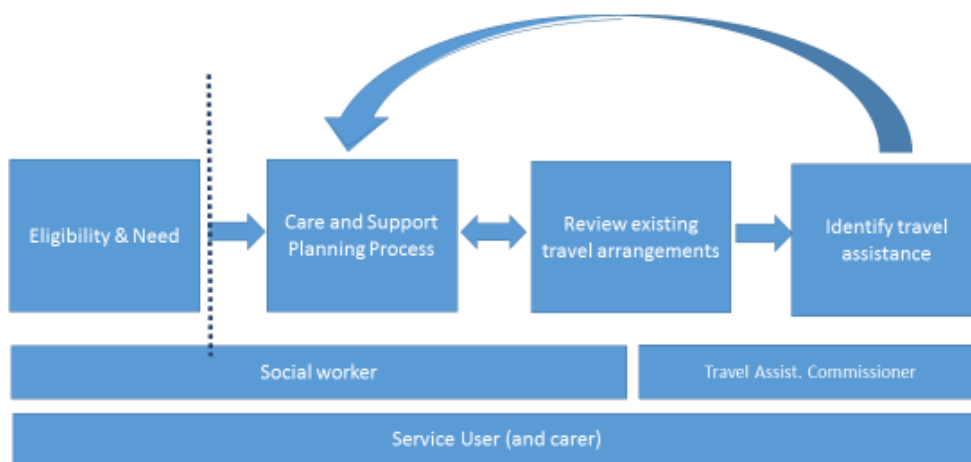
When making decisions about the provision of travel assistance to an adult, the Council will promote the adult's well-being in accordance with section 1 of the Care Act 2014.

This policy does not cover travel assistance services for service users who are attending (or will attend) Special Educational Needs (SEN) further education (post 16).

Students aged 16 to 18 (or in some cases up to 25 if the young person has complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the course is suitable and will provide an educational benefit to the learner) are covered by the Post 16 Travel Assistance Policy for Education and Training.

Process

The determination of the most suitable means of travel assistance will be carried out in consultation with the service user, the Travel Assistance Commissioner and the social worker. A risk assessment of the type of travel assistance proposed will also be part of the care and support planning process.



The Council will first consider the ability of a person to travel independently. When considering whether a service user is able to travel independently, the Council will consider:

- Mobility difficulties such as the service user's ability to walk outside, need for wheelchair / other walking aid, ability to get in and out of a vehicle, history of falls, and ability to use stairs and manage gradients.
- Communication difficulties
- Psychological factors
- Vulnerability
- Conditions that would lead to deterioration of the service user's ability to travel without assistance.

The Council will determine whether the service user:

- Is able to travel independently without an unreasonable level of risk;
- Requires some training, support or assistance that will enable them to be capable of travelling in the future; or
- Is not capable of travelling independently.

Other relevant factors will be taken into consideration and each case will be determined on its own merits.

Type of Travel Assistance

In accordance with the Council's commitment to promote independence, needs should be met by types of care and support which are available universally or in the community where appropriate. The range of provision includes:

1. 'Motability' vehicles: if a service user has a 'Motability' vehicle which they either drive themselves or someone else drives for them and this is a suitable way to meet the service user's needs, they will usually be expected to use the vehicle. Consideration should be given to whether it is reasonable to expect that the service user will use that vehicle to travel to specific care services/activities. If it is unreasonable, alternative travel assistance should be considered.
2. Carers: service users may have carers who can provide travel assistance. Where carers have been identified as being able to provide travel assistance, alternative arrangements should be detailed to cover periods where they are unable to do so. Where it is identified that a carer will provide travel assistance the social worker should demonstrate that the impact of this has been appropriately considered in an assessment of the carer's needs. Where it is concluded that the carer cannot provide travel assistance because it would place an unreasonable demand on them, alternative methods of travel assistance should be considered.
3. Taxi cards: service users may have a taxi card which they are able to use to attend care services/activities. These may be considered suitable where their use does not result in an additional unmet need (e.g. shopping) and the service user has been assessed as capable of independent travel.
4. Freedom Passes: freedom passes may be considered suitable where a reasonable public transport route is available and the service user has been assessed as capable of independent travel.

A combination of these services may be suitable to meet a service user's needs. In other cases, the service user may require a service from the Council to meet their needs. The range of provision includes:

1. Assistance with using public transport, such as escorts.
2. Independent Travel Training: Travel training is to help people, who have the ability to develop the necessary skills and confidence, to travel independently. The Council recognises the benefits of such training in developing the

confidence and social skills of service users who may continue to need to be accompanied when travelling but may be able to learn how to use public transport with support.

3. If a service user has the potential to travel more independently, following appropriate training or support, the service user will be referred for a travel training assessment. An appropriate training plan will then be drawn up for agreement with the service user and/or parent/carer as appropriate. As the travel training programme progresses the way in which the service user travels to access social care support will change.
4. Once travel training has been undertaken the travel training assessor will produce a full report, risk assessment and recommendation as to whether a person is safe to travel that particular journey. If a person has been assessed as able to travel independently, the Council will usually expect the person to do so. After successful completion of the travel training programme, service users will still have access to the travel training service in order to have route training for any new journeys.
5. Taxi shared with other service users.
6. Taxi solely for the use of the service user.
7. Travel in Council vehicles, e.g. minibuses.

If it is decided that a service user is not able to travel independently and is not suitable for Independent Travel Training, a referral should be made to Croydon Transport Services (CTS) for consideration of options 5-7 above. CTS will either utilise existing travel arrangements through its in-house service; or, through access to the council's framework of approved suppliers, procure appropriate contracted vehicles (private hire taxis / minibuses). The decision will take into account the council's limited resources and make best use of the council's assets.

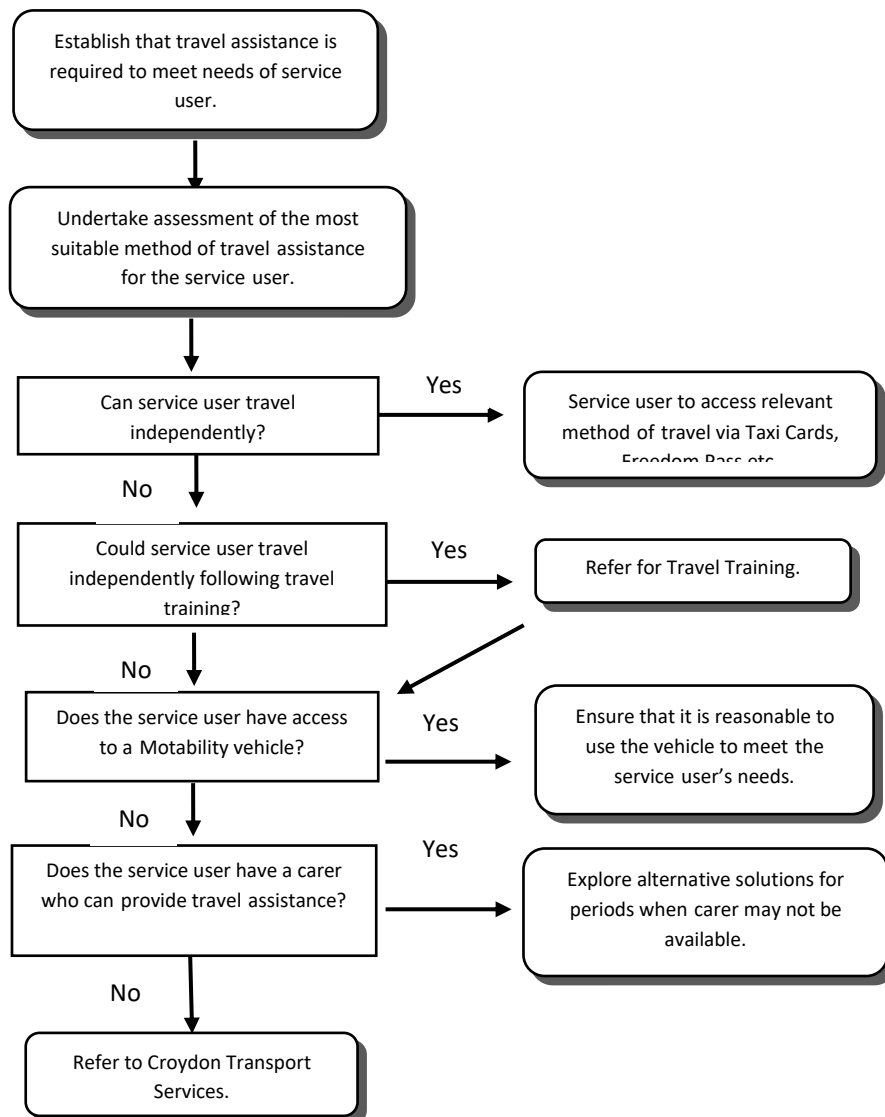
Funding for Transport

After a decision has been made about the most appropriate travel arrangement to meet the service user's need, if funding is required, the responsible worker must approach the Challenge Panel for a decision on the cost of the transport provision. The responsible worker is to also ensure that the outcome is recorded on Liquid Logic (LAS)

Review

The means and provision of travel assistance will usually be reviewed on an annual basis in the course of reviewing a service user's care and support plan. It may also be reviewed on an ad hoc basis when a service user's needs change.

Process Flow Chart



Referrals for Travel Assistance

All referrals should be completed using the Croydon Transport Service Travel Assistance Request Form. The completed form, along with a copy of the service user's support plan should be sent to Jackie.S.Wright@croydon.gov.uk and passenger.transport@croydon.gov.uk

Click Here for Referral Form: [CTS Referral Form](#)