



ASSISTED TRAVEL SUPPORT OFFICER FACT SHEET #1

Assisted School Travel Program



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Assisted School Travel Program

The Assisted School Travel Program (ASTP) supports eligible students with a disability who need transport assistance in order to attend school.

Most students with a disability travel successfully on buses and in taxis without the need for an Assisted Travel Support Officer (ATSO).

A few students with complex health and or behaviour needs require the services of an ATSO to ensure their safe travel to and from school.

Schools in partnership with families assess a student's travel support needs and apply to ASTP for an ATSO when needed.

About ATSOs

ATSOs are employed through the Department of Education and Communities on a temporary basis during the school year. An ATSO will work with the school, parents, contractors and drivers to provide a high level of supervision for students when on transport.

To help ATSOs in their role ASTP facilitates training in Child Protection, Code of Conduct, Anaphylaxis, e-Emergency care and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Schools also provide individual training and briefings on the specific travel support needs of students on transport.

ATSOs are expected to participate in training in order to improve their skills.

ATSOs must be 18 years of age, physically able, have good communication skills, be respectful and understanding of students with disability, and be able to work collaboratively with others.

How to apply

Prospective applicants must complete an **Expression of Interest (EOI)** package and return all the completed documentation to ASTP. The EOI package is available on the ASTP website at:

www.schools.nsw.edu.au/studentsupport/programs/astp/index.php

As part of the EOI process applicants will have to complete the *Working with Children Check* (WWCC).

This is mandatory for anyone working with children. More information about the WWCC, including the application form, can be found on the Commission for Children and Young People's website: www.kids.nsw.gov.au or phone: (02) 9286 7276. Applications for a WWCC number cost \$80.00.

Upon receipt of the WWCC number applicants will need to proceed with the free on-line anaphylaxis e-training provided by the Australian Society of Clinical Immunology Services (ASCIAS).

This on-line course is essential for all NSW Department of Education and Communities' employees working with children. EOI applicants can complete the anaphylaxis e-training for schools and childcare workers via this website: www.allergy.org.au/patients/anaphylaxis-e-training-schools-and-childcare

After completing the course the certificate can be printed and attached to the EOI application. Please note the certificate does not need to be signed by a supervisor.

It is important to note that the EOI application process can take several weeks given the various checks that are undertaken. It is essential that all information is **fully** completed.

ASTP will formally advise applicants if they have been successful and provide information on whether they will be on a relief list or commencing work on a transport run. Identification cards will also be issued.

ATSO responsibilities

Assisted Travel Support Officers provide a high level of supervision and support for students on transport. To do this ATSO are expected to:

- abide by the department's child protection and code of conduct policies
- maintain a courteous and respectful relationship with students, drivers, parents and school staff
- ensure the safety of all students throughout the journey
- sit in close proximity as practical to the student/s being supported or follow the recommended seating plan
- ensure you have a copy of the student's travel support plan from the school and follow the strategies listed
- seek assistance from the school with support strategies
- inform the school and ASTP of any significant student behaviour, incidents or issues that occur whilst transporting students in your care.
- liaise with drivers and contractors about pick up times, locations and day to day transport operations including absentee notices.
- be punctual and reliable in ensuring students get to and from school.

About Parents

Parents meet the transport at pick up and drop off times and ensure their child is safely seated with seat belts fastened. They provide any equipment required for safe travel as specified in the student's travel plan.

Parents are encouraged to communicate the specific needs of their child to appropriate travel staff and to notify the contractor if their child is not attending on a particular day.

About schools

Schools develop individual student travel support plans as required. They provide ongoing support for drivers and ASTOs regarding the specific needs of students.

School ensure students are safely seated with seat belts fastened. They meet transport to provide a safe entry and exit for students.

ATSOs should contact the school principal and ASTP with any concerns regarding students or school procedures.

About drivers

Drivers should ensure vehicles are roadworthy and clean. Drivers follow a run card and should carry driver identification at all times.

All vehicles carry a yellow 'Emergency Action and Procedures' card which drivers follow when necessary.

Drivers and ATSOs need to work as a team in managing students on transport.

About payments

ATSOs are paid fortnightly. Completed forms can be scanned/emailed or posted.

Claim forms require the signatures of school principals and contractors. Incomplete forms are returned to ATSOs for correction and may delay payment.

Child Protection

For child protection purposes if the nominated adult is not at home at the time of drop off, drivers will contact the parent, school and ASTP. In the event of a 'home alone' drivers will return the student to school or dropped off at the nearest office of the Department of Family and Community Services or to the police.

Things to remember

ASTP's focus is on ensuring students are transported safely and comfortably. Therefore ATSOs are expected to:

- ensure students are not left alone or unsupervised in vehicles
- not have unnecessary physical contact with students
- refrain from giving students food or gifts
- not smoke around students or in vehicles or be affected by alcohol or drugs
- refrain from using a personal mobile phone whilst on duty.

Where can ATSOs find information?

Any questions or concerns relating to how to apply, pay claims, incidents on transport or any other issues related to travel please contact the school or ASTP for assistance Monday to Friday 8:00am – 5:00pm on **1300 338 278** or email ASTP at atso.astp@det.nsw.edu.au

Further Information

Assisted School Travel Program
Locked Bag 7009
Wollongong East
NSW 2520

generalenquiries.astp@det.nsw.edu.au

1300 338 278

www.schools.nsw.edu.au/student-support/programs/astp/

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