



Health & Community Directorate

Travel Policy, Procedure and Practice

April 2008

CONTENTS

	Page	Paragraph
POLICY	3	1.0
Introduction	3	1.1
Aims of the Policy and Procedure	3	1.2
Promoting Independent Travel	3	1.3
Principles of Providing Transport	4	1.4
Principles of Charging for Transport	5	1.5
Charging Rates	6	1.6
Type of Transport Charges Apply To	6	1.7
Post 16 Home to School/College Transport	7	1.8
PROCEDURE		
Independent Travel	8	2.0
Concessionary Travel Pass	8	2.1
Individual Travel Training	8	2.2
Dial-a-Ride	9	2.3
Blue Badge Scheme	9	2.4
Provision of Transport	9	3.0
Assessing Eligibility Criteria	9	3.1
Assessing Risk	10	3.2
Referral Process	11	3.3
Recording and Billing	11	3.4
Debt Management	11	3.5
Review and Termination of Service	12	3.6
Complaints Procedure	12	3.7
APPENDICES	Number	
Transport Request Form	1	
Referral Process Flow Chart	2	
Eligibility Quick Practice Guide	3	

INFORMATION SHEET

Service areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults with Learning Disabilities • Physical & Sensory Disability Services • Mental Health Services • Older People's Services • Independent Living Services
Date effective from	1 st April 2008
Responsible officer(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational Director, Adults of a Working Age • Operational Director, Older People's Services • Divisional Manager (Finance & Support)- Health & Partnerships • Service Development Officer, Adults
Date of review(s)	Annual
Status: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mandatory (all named staff must adhere to guidance) • Optional (procedures and practice can vary between teams) 	Mandatory
Target audience	All staff and managers in the above service areas
Date of Committee decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Board Sub Committee 20th March 2008 • Healthy Halton Policy & Performance Board 10th June 2008 • Executive Board Sub Committee 17th July 2008
Related document(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children & Young People's Directorate Transport Policies • Strategic Best Value Review of Transport Report • Service Level Indicator Policy for Adults with Learning Disabilities • Service Level Agreement between Environment & Health & Community for the Provision of Transport
Superseded document(s)	Health & Community Directorate Travel Policy Procedure & Practice, April 2007
File reference	CC/PPP/10/Apr 08

POLICY

Practice

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Travel Policy and Procedure provides a range of options to staff in the consideration of the provision of travel assistance to people who access social care services. The Policy outlines the Directorate's principles with regard to the promotion of travel independence for individuals and with regard to the provision of transport to people who access services and associated charges.

The Procedural element of the Policy and Procedure provides staff and managers with guidelines in accessing independent travel initiatives and the assessment of eligibility and provision of transport funded by the Council.

The Policy and Procedure applies to all adults aged 18 years and above who access learning disability services, physical and sensory disability services, mental health services, older people's services and independent living services.

Implementation of the Policy is dependent on resource decisions in future years, which the Directorate cannot predict or forward commit.

1.2 AIMS OF THE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

This Policy and Procedure aims to:

- Promote a range of travel options available to people who access services so that they can choose how they travel.
- Promote the independence of people by encouraging and supporting independent travel and the use of concessionary travel passes to access cultural and leisure services and other healthy activities available in the borough.
- Provide clear guidelines to staff and managers on the provision of transport.
- Provide clear guidelines to staff and managers regarding the charges associated with the provision of transport.
- Reduce air pollution and encourage the use of sustainable resources by promoting the use of public transport.

1.3 PROMOTING INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

The Directorate is committed to promoting people's independence, therefore, every effort should be made to encourage people who access services to travel independently where possible. The following options are available.

Concessionary Bus Travel:

The Concessionary Bus Travel Bill implements the announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the 2006 Budget that everyone over the age of 60 and disabled people will receive free

POLICY

Practice

off-peak travel on all local buses in England from April 2008. Prior to that date individuals could travel free off-peak on all buses within their local authority area. Central Government is providing up to £250m a year to support the extension to the concessionary bus travel scheme.

Every effort should be made to encourage those people who access services who are eligible to apply for a concessionary travel pass to obtain one.

Mobility Management Team:

The Mobility Management Team, which is part of Transport Co-ordination, has taken on the role of the Neighbourhood Travel Team. The Team provides information on the public transport network within the borough and on accessible and special services. It offers tailored Personalised Journey Plans to provide specific journey advice to Halton residents, which provide travellers with all the public transport options available for their journey.

The Team also offers independent travel training for those who face difficulty with transport and require additional support.

Dial-a-Ride:

Dial-a-Ride, operated by Halton Community Transport, provides a pre-bookable door-to-door service for people who are unable to use public transport because of disability or mobility problems. Individuals must register with Dial-a-Ride to use this service. Registration is free. The concessionary travel pass can be used on this service.

1.4 PRINCIPLES OF PROVIDING TRANSPORT

The following principles should be adhered to:

1. All those who access services, regardless of their age or disability, will be deemed able to travel to the service provided without financial or other assistance.
2. An appropriate mode of transport, eg, supported transport, taxi, passenger transport services, volunteer driver vehicle, will only be considered after the use of public transport, bus pass, Motability and Disability Living Allowance entitlement, has been thoroughly considered and deemed inappropriate.
3. If eligible, the provision of transport will only be agreed from an agreed pick up and return point lying within the Halton borough boundary. Trips that do not form part of an agreed care package will be the responsibility of the service user/parent/carer. 'Home to service' is defined as "picked up address to agreed establishment and return" at the normal service hours.

POLICY

Practice

4. If the person accessing services is in receipt of a mobility allowance this must be utilised by them to purchase private transport, eg, taxis. Should the person have a motability vehicle the provision of transport by the Council can be refused.
5. Before Council funded transport is considered the assessor and person accessing the service and/or their carer should explore the individual's eligibility for Disability Living Allowance (mobility component) and any use of Motability.
6. The Council provides assistance with transport to promote people's independence and provide value for money, eg, by providing travel training. Wherever possible, the Council will only provide transport, ie, a taxi, volunteer driver vehicle or special transport, until an alternative can be provided, eg, until travel training is successfully completed or an accessible public transport bus is available. Where a person's ability to use public transport depends on travel training being provided, transport will be authorised for a limited period of up to a maximum of 6 months so that the training can take place.

1.5 PRINCIPLES OF CHARGING FOR TRANSPORT

The Local Government Act 2003 and Fair Access to Care Services Guidance allows for discretionary services to be charged in addition to the means tested charge for a social care package.

Section 93, Local Government Act 2003

The following principles should be adhered to:

1. If a person accessing services is eligible to receive help with transport and is provided with a transport service which is funded by the Council, they will be asked to contribute towards the cost of each journey. This will be a fixed charge and will be made in addition to the assessed charge of their care package.
2. Charges will apply to all journeys made by service users both within the boundary of the borough and out of the borough.
3. A ceiling will apply for the maximum amount an individual can be charged per week (refer to Para. 1.6). Any transport trips made above this ceiling will be provided free of charge.
4. Those who receive care services provided under Section 117 of the Mental Health Act will be exempt from charges.
5. Those people who are discharged from intermediate care/respite services and provided with transport to their place of residence will be exempt from charges.

POLICY

Practice

6. Those people who are invited to participate in service development initiatives in their capacity as people who use services and who are unable to make their own way to/from a venue and are provided with transport will be exempt from charges.

1.6 CHARGING RATES

Trips made within the borough boundaries:

£1.00 per trip for all service users.

A trip is defined as being a single journey, therefore, the charge for a person being picked up from home (within the boundary of the borough) and taken to, for example, a day care activity would be £1.00. For that person to be taken from the place of activity to another venue within the borough's boundary or back home would incur another charge of £1.00.

In order to support the day service modernisation agenda in Halton whereby a culture shift from traditional building based services to one where people engage in community based activities is striving to be achieved, a ceiling has been placed on the maximum amount an individual can be charged per week.

For those not in receipt of the higher rate mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance a maximum weekly charge of £10.00 will be made.

For those in receipt of the higher rate mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance a maximum weekly charge of £23 per week will be made, ie, 50% of the higher rate mobility component £46.75 per week for 2008/09.

Any transport trips made above this ceiling will be provided free of charge. This will ensure that people accessing services do not incur high transport costs.

Organised trips beyond 10 miles of the borough boundaries:

The cost of the trip should be subject to separate arrangements, with funding/recovery of costs to be agreed by those service areas who have arranged the trips.

1.7 TYPE OF TRANSPORT CHARGES APPLY TO

A transport charge will be applicable to any individual accessing social care services who uses transport that is provided and funded by the Council. Currently transportation provision by the Directorate is made through a combination of procurement via Transport Co-ordination/Fleet Management and direct

POLICY

Practice

procurement via tendered contracts and adhoc private hire from a list of approved contractors.

The type of transport provided to an individual will be at the discretion of the Health and Community Directorate and will be on the basis of cost effectiveness. This includes a place, from an appropriate collection point, on a

- Directly procured vehicle
- Fleet vehicle
- Taxi
- Volunteer Driver vehicle
- Any other vehicle provided by the Council

From October 2006 a Volunteer Driver Scheme for adults and older people has been in place. This Scheme is co-ordinated and managed by the Transport Co-ordination Section. This service is delivered by volunteer drivers using their own vehicles to transport people without access to public transport, particularly the elderly and those with a disability. All drivers are CRB checked and trained in Passenger Assistant's Training as part of the recruitment and induction process.

The Scheme provides an additional option for staff when considering the best form of transport for individuals and benefits people by offering them a flexible door-to-door service. Every attempt is made by Transport Co-ordination to utilise a volunteer driver who resides within a 3 mile radius of the individual using the service.

1.8 POST 16 HOME TO SCHOOL/COLLEGE TRANSPORT

It should be noted that the Children's and Young People's Directorate (CYPD), in partnership with other key agencies represented on the Halton Post 16 Learners Transport Partnership is responsible for setting transport policies for providing transport for post 16 learners. The CYPD will instruct Transport Co-ordination to provide specific help and assistance to post 16 learners who are deemed eligible for assistance under these policies.

It must be noted that CYPD will under certain circumstances require home to college transport to be arranged for learners with special educational needs up to the age of 25.

PROCEDURE

Practice

2.0 INDEPENDENT TRAVEL

This Section provides guidance on accessing initiatives which encourage and support independent travel.

2.1 CONCESSIONARY TRAVEL PASS

From 1st April 2008 a new national bus pass will be available to anyone over the age of 60 years or who qualifies for a disabled persons bus pass.

The national pass will allow free travel anywhere in England from 9.30am to 11pm Monday to Friday and all day on Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holidays. Passes are not valid for travel in Scotland or Wales. As Halton is part of the Cheshire concessionary scheme, pass holders who are permanent residents of Halton will also be able to continue to use their new passes for existing extra local concessions, ie, half fare before 9.30am Monday to Friday and free travel until midnight on any journey which starts or finishes in Cheshire. (This includes journeys which commence in Cheshire and end in Wales but not onward journeys in Wales)

Applications for new senior citizen passes should be made in person at any of the Halton Direct Link one stop shops. Applicants will need to provide proof of age and two passport sized photographs. Applications for disabled persons bus passes can be made by post and can be requested from the Contact Centre on 0151 9078300.

2.2 INDIVIDUAL TRAVEL TRAINING

Referrals for travel training should be made to the Transport Co-ordination Section by completing a Transport Request Form (Appendix 1). Transport Co-ordination will then arrange a comprehensive needs based risk assessment in consultation with the individual for whom the referral has been made and their parent/guardian/carer as appropriate, plus the learning provider.

An individual Travel Training Programme will then be developed to suit the particular needs of the person. It may take a considerable period of time before the person is deemed fit to travel independently by public transport, or by walking, cycling, etc. On satisfactory completion of the Travel Training Programme the person will be able to travel independently with the signed agreement of either themselves or their carer. Transport Co-ordination will closely monitor their progress.

PROCEDURE

Practice

2.3 DIAL-A-RIDE

Dial-a-Ride, operated by Halton Community Transport, provides a pre-bookable door-to-door service for people who are unable to use public transport because of disability or mobility problems.

Registration is free and the service accepts the concessionary travel pass, therefore, with this pass travel is free after 9.30am. Dial-a-Ride can be contacted on 0151 2572414.

2.4 BLUE BADGE SCHEME

The Blue Badge Scheme gives parking concessions for disabled and blind people who travel either as drivers or passengers.

The Scheme applies throughout England and allows badge holders to park close to their destination and use any special arrangements for Blue Badge holders, eg, reserved parking spaces.

A Badge can be obtained if an individual:

- Is in receipt of the higher rate of Disability Living Allowance.
- Is in receipt of a Mobility Allowance.
- Is in receipt of a War Pensioner's Mobility Supplement.
- Uses a motor vehicle supplied for disabled people by a Government Health Department.
- Is registered blind.
- Has a severe disability that makes it difficult for them to park in normal parking spaces.
- Has a permanent or substantial disability which means they are unable to walk or have considerable difficulty in walking.

Application forms for Blue Badges can be obtained from any of the Halton Direct Link one stop shops or by contacting Customer Services on 0151 9078306.

3.0 PROVISION OF TRANSPORT

This Section provides procedural guidance on the provision of transport funded by the Council to people accessing social care services and associated charges.

3.1 ASSESSING ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Staff should assess an individual's eligibility for the provision of transport using the criteria outlined below. For a person to be eligible to receive help with transport, all of the following 6 bullet points must apply:

- To receive help with transport, ie, the provision of a taxi, volunteer driver or special fleet transport, a person must first

An Eligibility Quick Practice Guide is appended (Appendix 3) which may be detached and used by professional staff as a quick guide to

PROCEDURE

meet the criteria for the service to which they are being taken.

- The person must be unable to take part in the specific service or activity unless transport is provided.
- The person must be unable to use public transport because one or more of the following reasons apply:
 - (i) Difficulty of physical access and the interior design and layout makes this impossible.
 - (ii) To use public transport would mean an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the individual and/or to the other passengers.
 - (iii) Assistance is required that cannot be provided by the Council, volunteers or a carer.
 - (iv) The individual has made insufficient progress in travel training.
- The person does not have access to personal transport **or** lives with a carer/family (ie, someone who is not paid to provide care), who has personal transport but is unable to transport them to the service because of employment or caring commitments, illness or other incapacity.
- The person does not have a motability vehicle.
- The person cannot gain access to other voluntary or private transport that is available.

Single occupancy

To qualify for single occupancy of a taxi or any other vehicle provided under contract by the Council the individual must have a high level of challenging behaviours - requiring a Level 2 risk assessment and a risk management plan to manage safety, which specifies why a single occupancy taxi/vehicle is necessary.

Important: When an assessment or review is carried out for services, an assessment for transport services should be undertaken at the same time and presented to Panel. For single occupancy taxis/vehicles to be used, Panel must approve that the above criteria has been met. A Level 2 risk assessment must be supplied to Transport Co-ordination along with the Transport Request Form.

3.2 ASSESSING RISK

If a person accessing services is eligible to receive transport, staff should risk assess the suitability of the individual to be transported and consider any pertinent mobility issues, the wheelchair size (if applicable), whether a passenger assistant (escort) is required, any medical issues and any other information that may affect the environment or way in which the person is transported.

Practice

assessing transport provision.

PROCEDURE

Practice

Transport Co-ordination will carry out a parallel risk assessment to ensure that equipment provided, etc, during transport is suitable for the individual.

3.3 REFERRAL PROCESS

If a person is eligible to receive transport and a risk assessment has been carried out, before confirmation of transport provision is given to them a clear understanding and agreement must be reached with them and their carer, where appropriate, of how much it will cost them to use the transport service.

Once agreement to the charge from the individual has been received, a Transport Request Form (Appendix 1) will be completed and submitted to Transport Co-ordination.

The process as outlined in Appendix 2 will then be followed.

3.4 RECORDING AND BILLING

At Step 5 of the process outlined in Appendix 2, Transport Co-ordination will notify the member of social care staff responsible for making the transport request of transport arrangements put in place, ie, the date transport will be provided from, type of transport, pick up times, etc. Transport Co-ordination will also at this point notify the Financial Services Team within the Health and Community Directorate of these arrangements.

Transport Co-ordination will advise the Financial Services Team within the Health and Community Directorate of actual transport journeys undertaken by individuals via standard service returns. The Financial Services team should also be advised of any changes or terminations in relation to transport provision.

Charges for transport will then be included but shown separately on service user invoices covering other social care charges sent out on a 4 weekly basis in arrears. Individuals will only be charged for actual journeys undertaken.

3.5 DEBT MANAGEMENT

It is the responsibility of officers of the Council to collect monies due to the Council. All payment arrears will be followed up promptly and sensitively, in accordance with Council debt recovery policy.

There will be an expectation that those in receipt of Direct Payments would fund their transport costs using their Direct Payment, however, it must be borne in mind that Direct Payments cannot be used to purchase in-house services.

PROCEDURE

Practice

3.6 REVIEW AND TERMINATION OF SERVICE

The continuation of the provision of transport and/or passenger assistants/escorts will be reviewed, along with other elements of the care package, annually at a minimum.

In the event of the proposed removal of transport, Transport Co-ordination will be notified by social care staff 6 weeks in advance where practical of the intended termination of the transport, as will all other affected parties, including the Financial Services Team.

3.7 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Should a person who accesses services or their carer wish to have the opportunity to challenge any decisions made with regard to transport provision, they should be provided with details of the Council's Social Care complaints procedure, which has a clear route of appeal and timescale for handling complaints and a dedicated Social Care complaints telephone line.

Individuals and/or their carers should be provided with the leaflet 'Listening to You' explaining how to complain about Social Services in Halton, which is available in accessible formats and different languages. The leaflet and details of the complaints procedure can also be accessed online via the Council's internet website www.halton.gov.uk.

The dedicated Social Care Complaints telephone number is 01928 704411.