Special Needs Transport and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

How does the NDIS affect transport for students with disability?

All new applicants for transport assistance must be registered NDIS participants.

Specialist school transport has been identified as a funding responsibility for the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). The transition to the NDIS is a complex task. Jurisdictions and the NDIA are working to determine how specialist school transport could be provided under the NDIS. While this work is occurring, states and territories will continue to provide specialist school transport. In the ACT, this is the Special Needs Transport (SNT) program. This means SNT will continue to be provided in the same way it has been in the previous school years. However it may mean a change in the way student eligibility for SNT is assessed in future years and eligibility will be dependent on a reasonable and necessary decision. Parents and schools will be provided with further updates as planning for the transition of SNT to the NDIS progresses.

Does my child need to be part of the NDIS to access the Special Needs Transport program?

Yes, students applying for SNT must be registered NDIS participants. The following exceptions may apply and will be considered on a case by case basis:

- students who are not eligible for the NDIS because they do not meet Australian residency requirements
- students already accessing the SNT program who are Australian residents but have not been found eligible for the NDIS.

Please note: Eligibility for the NDIS is the first step. Students eligible for the NDIS must also meet the Directorate’s criteria for access to transport to be included in SNT.

Can I still apply for transport if I haven’t yet lodged my child’s NDIS application?

We know the process for determining NDIS eligibility can take a little time. Your application for SNT will be considered if you have lodged an application for your child to participate in the NDIS and are awaiting an eligibility decision. However, your child will not be offered a place on a bus until such time as NDIS eligibility has been established and you are able to provide Transport Canberra with the child’s NDIS number. This could mean your child is placed on a waiting list until a place on the bus becomes available.
My child’s NDIS package includes funding for transport assistance. Do I use this money to pay for the Special Needs Transport service?

No, you do not need to do anything. The amount of funding in your child’s package for student transport is only there to reflect the cost of the assistance currently provided by Transport Canberra. There is no exchange of cash between you, Transport Canberra or the NDIS. This is what is called an ‘in-kind’ service.

How do I become an NDIS participant?

For information on how to become an NDIS participant please refer to the NDIS website at the following link:


or phone 1800 800 110.

For further information on the SNT program:

Please contact the SNT Coordinator on 6205 3555.