

Travel Arrangements for Young People

SCOPE OF THIS CHAPTER

This chapter outlines the process that applies when travel arrangements need to be made for children and young people through Supportive.

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1. Access to the Service

Supportive's service can be accessed by the following services/teams:

- Families First Teams
- Children's Disabilities 0-13 Team
- Looked After Teams
- Young People's Service
- Transitions Team
- Emergency Duty Team (EDT)
- One Point Service

2. Approval of Transport Requests

Supportive will only accept transport requests that have been authorised by the Team Manager or Social Work Consultant. The signature box on the transport request must be signed and dated to show this authorisation.

When the Team Manager/Social Work Consultant authorises the journey, they are confirming that full consideration has been given to the carer/their support networks/other identified alternative, in relation to transporting the child or young person.

All transport requests must be considered at the Team's Finance Panel. If the Panel cannot consider the request prior to the journey taking place, this must be considered retrospectively.

3. Transport Requests

When it is necessary for travel arrangements to be made regarding children and young people, the Social Worker/Social Work Assistant/Contact Officer/Team Co-ordinator should:

- Complete the Request for Transport Form (Appendix 1) giving the full details for the journey frequency and time period required.
- Ensure the request is sent to Supportive by Egress (a secure e-mail platform).
- Give Supportive 24 hours' notice prior to the journey taking place.
- Ensure all referral documentation is stored on the child's file and appropriate recording placed on LiquidLogic.

Emergency Requests for Transport

Where situations require an emergency request for transport the Social Worker/Social Work Assistant/Contact Officer/Team Co-ordinator should:

- Contact Supportive by telephone.
- Follow the call with a Request for Transport Form (Appendix 1) sent using Egress within 24 hours.
- Ensure all referral documentation is stored on the child's file and appropriate recording placed on Liquid Logic.

Supportive will try to accommodate emergency transport requests when less than 24 hours' notice is given. This may not always be possible and will be subject to driver availability.

Changes to Journeys

Any change to journeys, for example, drop off location, collection time, or where there is no longer a requirement for transport, should be communicated by the Social Worker/Social Work Assistant/Contact Officer/Team Co-ordinator to Supportive 24 hours in advance of the journey taking place.

Supportive will try to accommodate changes with less than 24 hours' notice given, but this may not always be possible subject to the impact that it may have on follow up/planned journeys.

Out of Hours Requests

Where transport is requested from Supportive 'out of hours' service' via the telephone, the Social Worker/Social Work Assistant/Contact Officer should:

- Follow the call with a Request for Transport Form (Appendix 1) sent by Egress.
- Ensure all referral documentation is stored on the child's file and appropriate recording placed on the electronic case recording system.

On receipt of a transport request, Supportive should:

- Decide which is the most cost effective method of transport to use e.g. a volunteer driver, a taxi registered with the Integrated Passenger Transport Group, and whether the journey can be combined with other travel arrangements. Where a taxi is used, Supportive should seek 3 quotes, to ensure value for money.

If a Passenger Assistant is required to travel with a child or young person due to the risks they present (behaviour or medical requirement), the journey will be passed to a taxi company. The Volunteer Driver Service does not provide Passenger Assistants.

- Confirm the transport booking with the Social Worker/Social Work Assistant/Contact Officer/Team Co-ordinator who made the transport request.
- Contact the Social Worker/Social Work Assistant/Contact Officer/Team Co-ordinator if Supportive have any issues covering the journey.

4. Egress

Egress must be used for all transport requests to Supportive.

Egress provides a safe and secure platform for sharing sensitive and confidential information with external providers. Durham County Council is subject to significant financial penalties if personal information is not shared securely. Individuals may also be liable to direct fines.

Team Managers must:

- Ensure that they have discussed and agreed within their team how transport requests are coordinated and which individuals will be responsible for sending transport requests to Supportive.
- Ensure that those responsible for the coordination of transport requests to Supportive have an Egress license and have read the Egress guidance notes.
- Regularly review the arrangements for making transport requests to Supportive and ensure the allocation of Egress licenses within the team is appropriate and meets the referring needs of the team.

To achieve consistency and alignment across teams, it is suggested that 2-3 team members are allocated an Egress License. These individuals would normally be the Team Coordinator/Administrator, Social Work Consultant and Team Manager.

Where required the Systems Team can provide advice and support in relation to Egress.

5. Invoices, Payment and Monitoring Expenditure

Where a taxi company is used

- On completion of the journey, the taxi will send a completed proforma invoice to Supportive with details of the driver and Passenger Assistant (where applicable).
- Supportive will verify the invoice against these details and the information of the Request for Transport Form (Appendix 1).
- If there are any discrepancies with the invoice, Supportive will contact the taxi company to make the appropriate amendments.

Where a volunteer driver is used

A weekly mileage sheet will be submitted and checked by Supportive. Volunteers will be paid expenses on a weekly basis.

Invoicing

Supportive will send the invoice to the relevant Strategic Manager for approval every 4 weeks (also copying in the Commissioning Service and Finance). All journeys will be grouped and costs will be broken down by team. A further detailed breakdown of journeys, alongside the cost for each team will also be provided.

When the relevant Strategic Manager has confirmed with Finance that the invoice can be paid, the Finance Officer will split the costs between the various team cost centres. A separate invoice (and breakdown information) will be sent in relation to Transition Team costs and One Point Service costs.

The role of the Team Manager

Supportive will send a breakdown of all journeys (and their cost) to each Team Manager on a 4 weekly basis. This will detail cost incurred as a result of cancelled journeys.

The Team Manager should:

- Verify the journeys recorded on the monthly report, alongside their copies of Request for Transport Forms.
- Raise any queries directly with Supportive. If a discrepancy is identified, Supportive will investigate this and will make an adjustment on the next 4 weekly return/invoice.
- Sign the report confirming accuracy.

- Retain this report as part of their records.
- Monitor expenditure on a quarterly basis and ensure that transport arrangements for children and young people are 'appropriate' and reviewed on an ongoing basis. For example, where carers are able to transport children and young people this should be considered as the most appropriate form of transport.
- Ensure that Supportive are notified immediately where a child or young person transfers into another team or there is a change in Social Worker, so that Supportive can adjust the young person's record and ensure their transport costs are changed to the correct budget. This notification would normally be carried out by the former social worker for the child or young person.

6. Taxi Checks

On a weekly basis, the Integrated Passenger Transport Group (IPTG) will provide Supportive with the current approval status, by Egress, of taxi drivers and passenger assistants which will confirm if all relevant checks have been completed and they can be used. Information will be sent to:

transport@supportive.org.uk

Information provided will consist of:

- Badge number
- Initials
- If they are registered as a taxi driver, passenger assistant or both
- Date badge issued
- IPTG clearance (Yes/No)

If any of these fields are blank, Supportive will contact IPTG for further clarification.

When Supportive are booking taxis, they will ascertain the driver/passenger assistant's badge number and full name and check these against the badge number and initials in the weekly update provided.

If the badge number does not appear in the list, Supportive must assume that the driver/passenger assistant is NOT approved to work on transport contracts for Durham County Council.

If IPTG withdraw the approval of a taxi driver or passenger assistant during the course of the week, IPTG will send only the badge number of the individual to Supportive, in respect of the taxi driver or passenger assistant by Egress.

7. Transporting Children and Young People

Under no circumstances should children or young people be left unattended or placed directly in the sole care of the parent or relative. Supportive will provide appropriate guidance and details to Volunteer Drivers/ Taxi Companies to ensure children and young people are transported and handed over to an appropriate person before leaving to ensure the child or young person's safety.

Supportive will ensure that Volunteer Drivers/Taxi Companies adhere to the routes and times identified by Supportive acting upon the information provided by the Social Worker/ Social Work Assistant/Contact Worker/Team Co-ordinator.

The Social Worker/ Social Work Assistant/Contact Worker/Team Co-ordinator should:

- Ensure that they meet the driver at the agreed location and time.
- If they are running late, notify Supportive immediately. This often results in delays for subsequent journeys made by the driver and a complaint made to Supportive.

If the appropriate person is not at the agreed location at the agreed time the driver should provide reception staff or a member of staff with details of the contact and with whom the child or young person is to be met by e.g. Social Worker/ Social Work Assistant/Contact Worker. Should staff be unavailable or on any occasion where the driver is unable to locate the appropriate person(s) the driver should:

- Contact Supportive immediately, for further guidance (both during office hours and out of office hours).

Or

- Contact 'First Contact' during office hours or the Emergency Duty Team on 03000 267 979 for guidance.

8. Service Management and Monitoring

Supportive is subject to an annual quality monitoring exercise, undertaken by the Commissioning service. This will consider employee/volunteer files, policies and procedures, operating systems, management of the contract and its delivery in line with contract.

Commissioning and the Supervised Contact Service (SCS) will meet with Supportive on a quarterly basis to review:

- Team/staffing changes or updates across Children and Young People's Services – to ensure appropriate individuals receive 4 weekly journey information
- Journey costs – spot checks
- Spend Position – volunteer vs taxi
- Feedback from Transport Clinics
- Policies and procedures – updates
- Recruitment Strategy for volunteers and progress
- Review use of Egress
- Review information sharing with IPTG
- Complaints, compliments and issues
- Service user views
- Any other business

Regular Transport Clinics are held by Strategic Managers to review usage, to ensure that transport requests are still appropriate and to discuss any concerns.

All feedback provided during Transport Clinics should be shared with the Commissioning Service and the Supportive.

9. Complaints/Concerns with Transport Provision

If any concerns or complaints are raised in respect of the transportation of a child or young person all staff must inform Supportive immediately.

Concerns/complaints should be sent to Supportive (using Egress) using the Complaints Template (Appendix 2). Where complaints are raised by telephone this should be followed up by completing the Complaints Template. It is the responsibility of the person raising the concern/complaint to ensure that an appropriate response is provided, within 10 working days.

On receipt of the information Supportive will:

- Ensure the member of staff responsible for managing complaints/concerns undertakes a full investigation.
- Provide a response within 10 working days on the Complaints Template. The response should provide full details of any actions taken to address the concerns/complaints and also, where appropriate inform the Integrated Passenger Transport Group.

If a child or young person is unsatisfied with a complaint response from Supportive, they should be supported to make a direct complaint through the [Complaints and Representations](#) procedure.