



Repatriation Transport Scheme

Transport Modes available under the Repatriation Transport Scheme

Overview

This Factsheet briefly outlines travel assistance available to eligible veterans and war widows/widowers when they attend a health provider for medical treatment and travel by:

- private vehicle
- public transport
- community transport
- taxi/hire car
- Booked Car with Driver; and
- air travel.

Who is eligible?

Repatriation Health Card for All Conditions (Gold Card) holders are eligible for assistance towards travelling expenses for the treatment of all health conditions.

A Repatriation Health Card for Specific Conditions (White Card) is issued to Australian entitled persons or mariners under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA) with:

- an accepted war or service-caused injury or disease
- malignant cancer (neoplasia), whether war-caused or not
- pulmonary tuberculosis, whether war-caused or not
- posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), whether war-caused or not
- anxiety and/or depression, whether war-caused or not; or
- symptoms of unidentifiable conditions that arise within 15 years of service (other than peacetime service).

A White Card is also issued to ex-service personnel who are eligible for treatment under agreements between the Australian Government and New Zealand, Canada, South Africa and the United Kingdom for disabilities accepted as war-caused by their country of origin.

Note: Services available to these veterans may be different from those available to Australian veterans. Please refer to other Factsheets for specific information on the services available.

You may also be eligible to claim reimbursement of your travelling expenses if DVA directs you to attend a medical assessment to assess your eligibility for a service pension on the grounds of permanent incapacity.

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What does the Department pay for?

If you incur transport expenses when you travel to treatment by any one, or any combination, of the transport types listed below, you may be entitled to receive reimbursement from DVA.

DVA may assist you with transport expenses for:

- the use of private vehicle, public or community transport, parking expenses and road tolls
- taxi, or hire car travel (where this is the most suitable and economical mode of transport), booked car with driver and air travel where this type of transport is necessary
- ambulance travel *and*
- accommodation and meals.

Closest practical health provider - To receive the maximum allowable assistance with travelling expenses, you will need to attend the closest practical health provider to your permanent or temporary residence at the time of treatment.

If you receive treatment from a health provider who is more than 50 kilometres from your residence and the health provider has not indicated on the 'Claim for Travelling Expenses' (D800) form that they are the closest practical health provider, DVA will reimburse you to a distance equal to the closest practical provider or 100 kms whichever is the greater.

Private and Public Transport

When calculating the amount payable for:

private transport – DVA will only reimburse the distance travelled once, regardless of the number of veterans sharing a vehicle to attend treatment. The current private vehicle allowance is 31.1 cents per kilometre.

public transport – DVA will reimburse the actual fare of the ticket.

Community transport

Many community-based organisations are funded through a range of government and charitable sources. The purpose of providing community transport is to meet the needs of specific groups in the community including isolated families, the frail aged, younger people with disabilities and their carers.

Volunteers usually work through community transport groups including Home and Community Care (HACC), local councils, Lions, Rotary or other service clubs and some ex-service organisations. You or your health provider will need to contact the local council, or Community Health Centre to see if community transport is available in your area.

When travelling for treatment, DVA may reimburse community transport contributions, where this amount is considered reasonable. Receipts are required for amounts \$30 or greater for the return journey, with or without an attendant.

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Travel to non-treatment locations - Your local community transport organisation may be able to assist you with transport for social activities such as travel to the supermarket, bowls etc.

However, the subsidised costs associated with this service will not be met by the Department, as DVA is unable to assist with travel for non-treatment purposes.

Parking expenses

DVA will reimburse all parking costs incurred when receiving medical treatment. Please note receipts are required for parking fees of \$30 or more.

Road Tolls

DVA will reimburse road toll costs incurred when travelling to medical treatment by the most direct route.

Taxi/Hire Car Travel

You may travel by taxi or hire car for treatment purposes only where public, community or private transport are not available or if you are 80 years or older.

If you are aged 79 years or less, not legally blind and not suffering dementia and travel by taxi/hire car, your health provider must certify that you cannot use a private vehicle, public or community transport due to certain medical conditions which are listed below:

The **medical conditions** are:

- dementia, psychosis, hemiplegia, ataxia, blindness (both temporary and permanent)
- respiratory insufficiency severely limiting independent activity
- cardiac failure severely limiting independence, recent coronary occlusion or peripheral vascular disease severely limiting independence
- amputation or arthritis severely limiting independence
- recent surgery severely affecting your capacity to use public transport
- conditions that would cause you to be gravely embarrassed or that are unacceptable to other passengers in public transport e.g. incontinence of bladder or bowel, severe deformity or disfigurement
- significant trauma
- frailty that severely limits your independence.

To receive the maximum allowable assistance with travelling expenses, you will need to attend the closest practical health provider to your permanent or temporary residence and you must travel by the most economical and suitable means of transport available at the time. For example, if you travel via a more expensive mode of transport such as a hire car, DVA may only reimburse you at the relevant state/territory government regulated taxi rate.

Transport Modes available under the Repatriation Transport Scheme, *continued*

You can arrange taxi/hire car travel yourself by contacting your local transport company. Reimbursement of your transport fares will only be made if your health provider certifies on your 'Claim for Travelling Expenses' (D800) form that this type of transport was medically required. Without this certification, you will only be paid at the current private transport rate of 31.1 cents per kilometre for the distance travelled.

Booked Car with Driver

DVA may provide a Booked Car with Driver (BCWD) for travel to approved treatment locations. Under this scheme, which focuses on a quality and reliable service, DVA will arrange a suitable vehicle to transport eligible veterans to their appointment on time.

You will be required to show your gold/white card or authorisation letter to the driver.

BCWD locations for eligible veterans aged 79 years or under, not legally blind or not suffering from dementia

The following treatment locations are approved BCWD locations for eligible veterans whose health provider has certified that the travel satisfies the medical conditions previously listed in the Taxi/Hire Car travel section of this factsheet.

The approved BCWD locations for **eligible veterans** are limited to:

- former Repatriation General Hospitals
- public and approved private hospitals
- providers of prosthetics, surgical footwear and orthotics
- Office of Hearing Services accredited providers
- medical specialist rooms
- radiology, imaging and pathology services.

BCWD locations for eligible veterans aged 80 years and over, or legally blind or suffering from dementia

The following treatment locations are additional approved BCWD locations to those listed above for eligible veterans aged 80 years and over, or legally blind or suffering from dementia:

- Local Medical Officers and general practitioners
- dental providers
- allied health services (other than those mentioned above)
- optical dispensers
- VVCS – Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Services.

Your health provider can arrange transport on your behalf under the BCWD scheme by contacting DVA directly or accessing the online transport booking system.

Some health providers have also been given authority by DVA to arrange transport directly with approved transport contractors.

Transport Modes available under the Repatriation Transport Scheme, *continued*

Note: It is important to note that authorisation for reimbursement of taxi/hire car expenses or provision of a booked car on one occasion does not necessarily mean that DVA will approve any future requests as this will depend on your medical condition at the time of travel.

Air transport

DVA may authorise air transport in certain circumstances where this is considered the most suitable means of transport. This will depend on your medical condition and the availability and cost of other transport. Your health provider must contact the Veterans' Transport Services Section to make arrangements for this mode of transport.

What expenses are not covered?

- reimbursement for free transport
- parking expenses incurred by a relative or friend visiting you in hospital.

When are receipts required?

Receipts *must* be provided for:

- public or community transport, taxi transport, hire car transport and air travel (when the total fare per item for the return journey is greater than or equal to \$30) for you and, if applicable, your authorised attendant
- parking expenses incurred (greater than or equal to \$30).

Note: The \$30 or more receipt requirement is for the total return journey per item (i.e. public transport, taxi transport, hire car transport, parking etc). This includes both you and your authorised attendant costs.

Receipts are *not* required for:

- travel by private vehicle
- public or community transport, taxi transport, hire car transport, vehicular ferry or parking expenses (when the total return journey amount is less than \$30 per item)
- meals
- road tolls; and
- transport paid directly by DVA, such as booked car with driver.

Please keep your receipts until you have been notified that your claim has been paid, as DVA may occasionally request proof of your expenses to verify a claim.

Allowances and the CPI

All travelling allowances are increased on 1 July each year in line with Consumer Price Index (CPI) figures. For a full list of travelling allowances refer to HVS02 – *Entitlements under the Repatriation Transport Scheme*.

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How are payments made?

In most instances, DVA will pay your travelling expenses directly into the same bank account into which your pension or allowance is already paid.

An automated advice letter is also generated to provide you with payment details, including any amount paid for an authorised attendant.

If a claim for payment has been rejected or amended for any reason the letter will explain the decision and how this decision can be reviewed.

How to make claims

All claims must be made on the '*Claim for Travelling Expenses*' (D800) form for travel:

- to visit a health provider for medical treatment
- for a disability claim
- for an invalidity income support claim; and
- treatment under the *Australian Participants in British Nuclear Tests (Treatment) Act 2006*.

The exception is for travelling expenses incurred in relation to:

- attendance at the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) or a Veterans' Review Board (VRB), or
- obtaining any relevant documentary medical evidence submitted to the VRB or the Specialist Medical Review Council.

In these cases you must complete an '*Application for Travelling Expenses in Connection with a Medical Review*' (D803) form.

Copies of the '*Claim for Travelling Expenses*' (D800) form are available from any DVA office or Veterans' Access Network (VAN) office. An electronic version of the D800 or D803 form is also available at <http://www.dva.gov.au/dvaforms>.

In order to claim reimbursement for transport, a cost must be incurred. That is, any free transport cannot be claimed and then reimbursed by DVA.

To claim for reimbursement of travelling expenses you must:

- fill in a separate form for travel to *each* health provider or hospital admission
- complete all the applicable '*Claimant to Complete*' brown sections of the form and ensure that your health provider completes all the applicable '*Health Provider or Hospital to Complete*' blue sections
- state on the claim form *which type of transport* was used for each visit
- complete the distance from home details section, if your travel is greater than 100kms (return) using any mode of transport
- if you travelled with an attendant ensure their details are entered on the claim form
- ensure each visit is certified by your health provider

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- ensure your health provider *certifies* that an attendant was medically required, if claiming expenses for an attendant
- ensure your health provider *certifies* that you were unable to travel by private, community transport, public transport, if claiming expenses for travel by taxi, hire car or air
- ensure your health provider certifies whether or not they were the *closest practical* provider able to give treatment *and*
- attach required receipts.

Lodge your 'Claim for Travelling Expenses' (D800) form or 'Application for Travelling Expenses in Connection with a Review' (D803) form within **twelve (12) months** of completion of travel.

Note: Late claims may only be reconsidered where the circumstances that prevented you from lodging your claim meets the exceptional circumstances guidelines as set down by the Repatriation Commission.

Related Factsheets

Other Factsheets related to this topic include:

- *Entitlements under the Repatriation Transport Scheme: HSV 02*
- *Ambulance Travel: HSV 120*
- *Transport Information for Health Providers: HIP 80*
- *Repatriation Health Card - For All Conditions (Gold): HSV 60*
- *Repatriation Health Card - For Specific Conditions (White): HSV 61*
- *Before you Travel: HSV 129*

Disclaimer

The information contained in this Factsheet is general in nature and does not take into account individual circumstances. You should not make important decisions, such as those that affect your financial or lifestyle position, e.g. retirement, on the basis of information contained in this Factsheet. Where you are required to lodge a written claim for a benefit, you must take full responsibility for your decisions prior to the written claim being determined. You should seek confirmation in writing of any oral advice you receive from DVA relating to complex or important matters.

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More information

All DVA Factsheets are available on request from DVA offices, and on the DVA web site at www.dva.gov.au

You can phone DVA for the cost of a local call on 133 254 or 1800 555 254 for country callers.

Use a normal landline phone if you can. Mobile phone calls may cost you more.

You can send an email to DVA at: generalenquiries@dva.gov.au

You can get more help from any DVA office.