

Assist Travel and Transport Policy and Procedure

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure participants are supported with safe, comfortable, and appropriate travel and transport options that align with their individual needs, preferences, and NDIS goals. SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd is committed to promoting participant independence, inclusion, and access to everyday activities by coordinating or providing transport that considers safety, accessibility, and wellbeing.

Transport supports may include assistance with travel to appointments, education, employment, community activities, and other daily living tasks that help participants maintain active and connected lives.

2.0 Scope

The policy applies to all staff, contractors, and volunteers involved in delivering or arranging transport supports for participants

3.0 Policy

SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd is committed to providing and coordinating transport in accordance with the NDIS Practice Standards – Risk Management and Safe Environment. Transport supports will be provided in a manner that upholds participant rights, dignity, and informed choice. Participants will be supported to decide how and by whom they are transported and can withdraw consent for transport arrangements at any time without impact on their access to other services.

All transport services will be assessed for safety, suitability, and participant comfort. Where vehicle use is involved, staff and contractors must hold a valid driver's licence, comply with road safety laws, and ensure vehicles used for transport are insured, roadworthy, and appropriate for the participant's needs.

Risk assessments will be conducted where required, especially for participants with higher support needs, and all incidents must be reported and managed according to the Incident Management Policy and Procedure.

3.1 Transport policy principles

All vehicles used for the transportation of participants, whether owned by SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd or SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd staff, will be:

- roadworthy

- currently registered
- properly insured
- clean and safe

All staff transporting participants will have a current and valid driver's licence appropriate for the vehicle used to transport the participant/s. All staff providing transport must have current NDIS Worker Screening clearance and must have completed all mandatory training, including WHS, incident reporting, infection control, and manual handling. This will be monitored via the Employment Check Register.

SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd will maintain information regarding all SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd employee's motor vehicles used to transport participants, including:

- driver's licence renewal date
- vehicle registration expiry date
- third party property or comprehensive insurance expiry date.
- SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd will maintain a system to ensure the above remains current for each employee

All vehicles must comply with Australian Design Rules (ADRs) for vehicle safety, and staff must comply with road rules, fatigue management laws, and drug/alcohol policies while transporting participants.

4.0 Procedure

4.1 Assessment and planning of transportation needs

Participant transport preferences, cultural needs, and communication styles will be documented in their Support Plan. Consent for transport must be obtained during intake and reviewed annually.

- Discuss options with the participant for each activity involving transportation. The primary considerations for transport options should be:
 - the specific goal of the activity
 - participant safety and comfort
 - participant's ability to travel
 - skills required of staff to accompany the participant (if any)
 - available resources.
- Transport options may include, but are not limited to:
 - SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd transportation in our vehicles
 - staff provided transportation in the staff member's private motor vehicle
 - use of community-based transport, e.g. council buses, community services buses sponsored by local clubs or transportation from other community groups or services
 - public transport including buses, trains or ferries

- transport sponsored by local hospitals or health services
- taxis
- Eligible participants should be encouraged to apply for a disability parking permit or the subsidised taxi scheme.
- If a participant needs to use a wheelchair, a wheelchair taxi will be used unless they can be safely transferred and assisted outside of the vehicle used at the destination.
- Undertake a risk assessment for the transportation service event to ensure the participant can be safely transported, which includes an assessment of:
 - the participant's capacity to enter and exit the vehicle
 - parking conditions at the pickup and drop off points
 - risks at the destination
 - weather conditions
 - the participant's overall health, including any behaviour that could potentially cause risk to themselves, other participants, staff or volunteers

All identified risks must be recorded in the Transport Assessment Form and the participant's Individual Risk Assessment Profile. Strategies must be implemented, reviewed and documented in the participant's Support Plan.

Where risks have been identified, strategies to reduce risks to acceptable levels will be placed in the participant's support plan.

4.2 Transporting participants in motor vehicles

Participants (or their nominee) must provide documented consent to be transported in a staff member's private vehicle. Vehicles used must have comprehensive insurance, and the provider must retain a copy of the policy.

- The Manager will need to obtain a quote for the travel service, which must be approved by the participant or guardian.
- If the National Disability Insurance Scheme manages the participant's plan, the quote will need to be approved by the NDIS.
- Use participant transfer aids as indicated from the participant's risk assessment.
- Ensure the participant uses seat belt restraints.
- Ensure that vehicle doors are closed properly.
- When required, use door safety locks to ensure doors can only be opened by the driver or from the outside.
- If leaving participants at an agreed destination, ensure the participant is safely inside the premises before leaving.
- Ensure there is no smoking by the participant or staff member whilst in a vehicle.

- In the event of an incident, accident or emergency, our staff member will call emergency services on 000 if they can (i.e. conscious and physically able).
- All vehicles are equipped with first aid kits.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment will be worn by the staff member to protect themselves and the participant.

Where restrictive practices are used during transport (e.g. specialised harnesses), these must be authorised under relevant state restrictive practices legislation and documented in a Behaviour Support Plan.

4.3 Transporting participants on a bus

- SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd will undertake a risk assessment using the Transport Assessment Form for the transportation service event/s, to ensure the participant can be safely transported.
- When a staff member and volunteer/s are present during any activity, our staff member always holds the primary responsibility of duty of care for the participant.
- Ensure that SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd staff and volunteers participating in the trip are well prepared for the activity by having all relevant information regarding each participant's individual needs.
- Seating will be allocated to individual participants according to their needs and to maximise all passengers' safety and comfort.
- Appropriate transfer aids identified in the risk assessment will be used for the participant.
- Participants will wear a seatbelt restraint (if the bus is fitted with these) unless the participant has a letter from their general practitioner stating that they do not have to wear a seat belt.
- Staff are responsible for having the following items when transporting participants:
 - water
 - charged mobile phone
 - first aid kit
- Ensure the relevant staff member always has a copy of the Reportable Incident, Accident and Emergency Policy and Procedure together with a list of emergency contact numbers and SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd contact phone numbers when transporting participants.
- Keep an Attendance Checklist on the bus and check the list to ensure everyone is accounted for after every stop.
- If an accident, incident or emergency occurs during transportation, SilaCa Tasmania Pty Ltd staff are to follow the appropriate procedure as outlined in the Reportable Incident, Accident and Emergency Policy and Procedure.
- All vehicles will be equipped with first aid kits
- If participants are carrying medication during transport, it must be stored securely and transported in line with the Medication Management Policy and Procedure.

- When transporting participants with high support needs, staff must be trained in emergency response specific to the participant (e.g. epilepsy, behaviour support strategies, allergies). Training records must be current.
- A list of participants' emergency contacts, allergies, medical conditions, and communication methods must be available to staff on each trip, stored securely and accessed only as needed.

5.0 Related documents

- Attendance Checklist
- Employment Check Register
- Transport Assessment Form
- Human Resource Management Policy and Procedure
- Reportable Incident, Accident, and Emergency Policy and Procedure
- Complaints and Feedback Policy and Procedure
- Risk Management Policy and Procedure and
- Work Health and Safety Policy and Procedure
- Medication Management Policy and Procedure
- Infection Control and COVID-Safe Transport Protocols
- Participant Consent and Authorisation Form
- NDIS Worker Screening Policy and Procedure

6.0 References

- NDIS Act 2013
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators 2021
- NDIS (Complaints Management and Resolution) Rules 2018
- NDIS (Incident Management and Reportable Incidents) Rules 2018
- NDIS (Code of Conduct) Rules 2018
- NDIS (Practice Standards - Worker Screening) Rules 2018
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 (Commonwealth)
- National Road Rules – Australian Road Rules 2012