



OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION

MONTHLY PARENT STIPEND PROGRAM DIVISION OF STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education offers a parent stipend program as an additional transportation option. The program will provide a monthly stipend to eligible parents/guardians who opt out of OSSE-DOT provided vehicle or bus service and self-transport their student to and from school daily. This also includes drop off and pick up for special services the student receives that are related to their education. Eligible families who are approved to participate will receive \$400 per month to support self-transportation of students.

Who is eligible for the monthly stipend program?

- Parents/guardians of special education students who are transportation eligible and whose LEA has submitted a transportation request form (TRF) can be enrolled in the program.

How much does the Monthly Parent Stipend Program provide for parent/guardian transportation costs?

- The Monthly Parent Stipend provides a flat \$400 per month to approved program participants.

Who can initiate a request for enrollment in the Monthly Parent Stipend program?

- Only the student's legal parent, guardian, custodian, or other primary caregiver on record at the student's school can submit a valid and proper request for enrollment.

When can a parent/guardian seek enrollment in the monthly stipend program?

- Participation in the monthly parent stipend program is voluntary and enrollment can be sought at any time during the open application period by completing the registration form located here: <https://data.osse.dc.gov/dot-parent-stipend/> on the OSSE-DOT website.

What are the requirements for participation?

- There must be a TRF on file for the student.
The student's school must have submitted a form to request transportation services for the student daily to and from school.
- The student must attend 70 percent of school instructional days each month.
- The parent must submit a W9 form.
- The parent must submit a Master Supplier Form.
- As an option, the parent/guardian may submit an automated clearinghouse (ACH) form to receive payment through direct deposit. **We strongly encourage direct deposit AND**

that parents/guardians submit **either** a voided check **or** a bank letter confirming the bank name, bank address, account name, account number, and bank routing number.

If a student does not currently utilize or receive bus services, does that mean the parent cannot participate in the program?

- The student's IEP must document the student is eligible to receive transportation services AND the student's school must have submitted a TRF to OSSE DOT to request services. If both of these requirements are not met, then the family does not qualify to participate in the program.

What if a student does not meet the 70 percent monthly attendance requirement?

- Students are subject to a monthly attendance performance review. This review will occur approximately 10 days after the end of each month to allow the school to enter the attendance information. If a student has missed more than 70 percent of instructional days in one month, a stipend will not be issued. Excused absences for medical or other authorized reasons do not count against the 70 percent requirement.

How do I fill out the Master Supplier Form?

- A link to a copy of the Master Supplier form is located on the application. The required fields are highlighted in yellow. Complete all the required fields. Enter your social security number in the "Tax ID" field. The "Supplier/Vendor/Ownership Type" is filled in for you.

How does a parent/guardian discontinue enrollment?

- Discontinuation can take place only after the application has been approved, and at any time after that. To discontinue program enrollment and revert back to transportation services provided by OSSE, the legal parents/guardians shall:
 - Select the "Discontinue" option in the application located in the student name section.
 - The parent/guardian will receive a system generated email message to confirm program discontinuation.
 - The parent/guardian must contact the student's school to request a new TRF be submitted to OSSE-DOT.
- Please note that reinstatement of OSSE school bus transportation service is not immediate and may take up to 10 calendar days to begin. As such, parents will have to continue to self-transport until OSSE service resumes.

If I discontinue program enrollment, how long before OSSE school bus transportation is reinstated?

- School bus transportation is initiated when your student's school submits a TRF to OSSE-DOT. Please contact your school before discontinuing enrollment. Reinstatement of OSSE school bus transportation service is not immediate and may take up to 10 calendar days to begin. As such, parents will have to continue to self-transport until OSSE service resumes.

Can I opt back into the program after having discontinued?

- No, participants who discontinue participation after the application has been approved will have to wait until the next school year to apply again.

If enrolled, what should parents/guardians do in the event of an emergency or last minute event when they are unable to transport their student to school?

- It is important to note that once parents/guardians opt into self-transportation, they assume all responsibility for getting their students to school and home each day. Program participants are allowed to opt in and out of program enrollment, however, reinstating OSSE school bus transportation is subject to the standard processing time of 10 calendar days once a TRF is received from the student's school.

Will families have to re-enroll in the program at the beginning of the following school year?

- Yes. Enrollment will automatically terminate at the end of each school year. However, OSSE will send notice to program participants prior to the start of each school year to inform them of the open enrollment period. Parents/guardians can resubmit the application before the start of the new school year once the student's school placement has been determined.

Will the monthly stipend option be offered during the Extended School Year (ESY)?

- OSSE-DOT will send notice to parents prior to the start of ESY to advise of program continuation throughout the summer months.

How will applicants know if they've been approved?

- Applicants will receive written notice through email on the status of their application once it has been processed. The written notice shall provide clear instructions on the next steps and when self-transportation shall begin. This process may take up to 30 days.

How will payment be issued?

- OSSE DOT will issue monthly payments by check or direct deposit.
 - Parents who opt to receive payment in the form of a paper check will receive the payment through the US. Mail. When this option is selected, OSSE will use the information provided in the applicant's W-9 form to facilitate the issuance of a paper check. No further action is needed to receive a paper check.
 - Parents can also opt in to receive payment through a deposit made directly to a designated bank account. When this option is selected, the parent must complete an Automated Clearing House (ACH) form and submit **either** a voided check **or** a letter signed by the bank confirming the bank name, bank address, account name, account number, and bank routing number. Only U.S. banks are eligible for direct deposit payment. No foreign bank accounts are accepted. If the direct deposit forms are not submitted in the application, the default payment will be made via paper check. **This option is strongly encouraged to avoid US Mail delays.**

Why are parents/guardians required to submit a W-9 tax form?

- A W-9 is required to establish a payment record in the DC citywide payment system, which will enable OSSE to process the monthly payments. OSSE-DOT encourages parent/guardians to consult with their CPA for determining any tax implications of receiving the stipend.

Does an applicant have to provide their Social Security Number?

- Yes. The social security number is required to verify and link the application to the payment record. OSSE will follow all applicable laws and regulations regarding the use and protection of this information.

Can a legal parent/guardian or primary caregiver utilize the parent reimbursement program and the monthly stipend program at the same time?

- No. The parent/guardian cannot be enrolled in both programs simultaneously.

Can a parent/guardian receive more than one stipend if they have multiple eligible students in the household?

- Yes. The parent/guardian can opt to self-transport more than one student. Upon application approval, the parent will receive a stipend for each approved student.

If a parent/guardian has multiple children who use OSSE transportation services, can one student participate in the stipend program while the other student continues to utilize OSSE transportation services?

- Yes. The parent/guardian must enter the name of the student(s) they would like to self-transport in the application. If a parent would like a student to continue to utilize OSSE transportation services, they should **not** enter that student's name in the application.

Can an application for enrollment in the monthly stipend program be denied?

- Yes. An application can be denied if:
 - Any of the required forms contain false, incomplete, or inaccurate information
 - The required forms have been completed or submitted by someone other than the legal parent/guardian or primary caregiver on record at the student's school
 - The student did not meet transportation eligibility criteria
 - If the application is a duplicate entry
 - The program has reached the maximum number of participants

Can a participant's monthly stipend be denied by OSSE-DOT?

- Yes. Students are subject to a monthly attendance performance review. This review will occur approximately 10 days after the end of each month to allow the school to enter the attendance information. If a student has missed more than 70 percent of instructional days in one month, a stipend will not be issued. Excused absences do not count against the 70 percent requirement. A notice will be sent to the parent/guardian to advise.

When will parents receive the monthly stipends?

- The monthly stipend payments will be processed and issued in the month following the month of transportation. (e.g., the September stipend will be issued in October). The stipend will be issued after an attendance review has taken place approximately 10 days after the end of each month to allow the school to enter the attendance information. Payment can be expected no later than midway through the following month. Please note that payments directly deposited will arrive much faster than paper checks sent through the US Mail. OSSE-DOT cannot be responsible for delays caused by the US Mail delivery process. As such, we encourage parents to opt for direct deposit.

Why haven't I received my monthly stipend?

- There are many reasons a monthly stipend has not been received. The student may not have met the 70 percent attendance requirement thus the parent is not eligible to receive the stipend for that month. There may have been incorrect address or bank account information provided in your application. A paper check may have gotten lost in the US Mail delivery process. Other incidents can be researched by OSSE-DOT staff to determine the cause. Parents/guardians may email osse.stipendapp@dc.gov to inquire about payment.

Who do I contact if I have a question or an issue in submitting my application?

- All questions regarding the parent stipend program can be emailed to osse.stipendapp@dc.gov.