



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

DIVISION OF STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

MONTHLY PARENT STIPEND

PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education is launching a new program to provide a monthly payment to eligible parents or guardians that choose to opt out of OSSE-DOT provided vehicle or bus and self-transport their student to and from school. 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 in the program 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 have an active transportation request form (TRF) submitted by their local education agency (LEA) 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 \$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 (parent/guardian) can submit a request for enrollment. Requests submitted by other individuals will not be valid.

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

- Participation in the monthly parent stipend program is completely voluntary and enrollment can be sought at any time by completing the registration form located here (insert link) on the OSSE-DOT [website](#).

How does a parent/guardian discontinue enrollment?

- To discontinue program enrollment, legal parents/guardians shall select 'Discontinue' in the Parent Stipend Application at any time to end their participation in the program.
- Requests to discontinue are processed once they are received, however, the reinstatement of OSSE school bus transportation are not immediate. Legal parents/guardians will receive a confirmation notice that the request has been processed.

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

- The initial step required for parents to opt back into a bus route begins with the parent contacting the LEA special education coordinator and requesting a new transportation request form (TRF) to be submitted by the LEA to OSSE-DOT.
- Once the TRF is received by OSSE, it may take up to 10 additional calendar days to restart OSSE-provided transportation.
- Parent/Guardian will need to continue to self-transport their student until OSSE-DOT provided transportation can begin.

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 days once a TRF is received from the LEA.

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.
- OSSE will send program participants a notification at the end of each school year to verify if they will participate in the stipend program the following year. If so, parents/guardians will resubmit a request form 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?

- No. The monthly stipend program is only available during the traditional school year.

How will applicants know if they've been approved?

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

How will payment be issued?

- OSSE DOT can issue the \$400 monthly payments via check or direct deposit.
- Parents that 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 applicants W9 form to facilitate the issuance of a paper check. No further action is needed. Parents can also opt 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 account name, account number, and bank routing number.
- Only US banks are eligible for Direct Deposit Payment. No foreign bank accounts are accepted. If no voided check or a bank letter is attached, the default payment will be made via paper check.

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 system, which will enable OSSE to process the \$400 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.

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

- For issues with receiving your payment or completing any of the required forms, please email osse.financedot@dc.gov.

Can a legal parent/guardian or primary caregiver utilize Parent Reimbursement 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 on the household?

- No.
- A parent/guardian can opt to self-transport more than one student, however, only one stipend is allowable per household even if there are multiple eligible students.

Can a request for enrollment in the monthly stipend program be denied?

- Yes, an application for enrollment can be denied if:
 - Any of the required forms contain false, incomplete, or inaccurate information;
 - If the forms have been completed or submitted by anyone other than the legal parent/guardian or primary caregiver;
 - The student did not meet transportation eligibility criteria;
 - The student missed more than 30 percent of instructional days for the month; or
 - The application was a duplicate entry.

Can a participant's enrollment in the monthly parent stipend program be terminated by OSSE DOT?

- Yes, the students of the program participants are subject to a monthly attendance review. Students must attain an attendance rate of 70 percent or above for all instructional days in the school month. If a student has missed more than 30 percent of instructional days for the month, program enrollment will be reviewed for termination, and notice will be sent to the parent/guardian and the LEA.
- All notices provided will have an effective date that program termination will occur and will provide families with an opportunity to seek reinstatement of OSSE school bus transportation.
- Participation in the stipend program is voluntary and does not impact a student's eligibility for special education transportation services as determined by the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. Parents/guardians can opt back into OSSE DOT-provided transportation at any time, by contacting the local education agency's (LEA's) IEP team. The initial step required for parents to opt back into a bus route begins with the parent contacting the LEA special education coordinator and requesting a new transportation request form (TRF) to be submitted by the LEA to OSSE-DOT. Once TRF is received by OSSE, it may take up to 10 additional calendar days to restart OSSE-provided transportation.
- Parent/Guardian will need to continue to self-transport their student until OSSE-DOT provided transportation can begin.

Will everyone who applies for the Parent Stipend Program be accepted?

- No, applying does not guarantee acceptance in the program.
- To participate in this program, your child must have an active transportation request form submitted by his or her LEA team this school year and currently be utilizing OSSE-DOT transportation services.
- In addition, OSSE-DOT may limit participation based on funding availability or operational efficiency reasons.