

TUSS Guidelines on Staged and Group Travel Taxi Trips

Introduction

These guidelines provide clarification in relation to the subsidy payable for some Taxi Users Subsidy Scheme (TUSS) trips and is the result of an ongoing Department for Planning and Infrastructure (DPI) review of the TUSS.

It is important that you familiarise yourself with the information provided in this leaflet.

Staged Taxi Trips

Some TUSS members and taxi drivers are bypassing the \$25 maximum limit on the subsidy payable for each taxi trip through the TUSS. They are doing this by breaking a long taxi trip into two or more short ("staged") taxi trips while travelling in the same taxi and claiming a subsidy for each trip. Submitting TUSS vouchers for staged taxi trips is not permitted.

When claiming a subsidy the TUSS member must:

- Not break one long taxi trip into two or more shorter trips in order to bypass the \$25 subsidy limit per trip;
- Tell the taxi driver the final destination for the taxi trip;
- Use **one** TUSS voucher for the entire trip to the final destination.

If members do not comply with the above requirements then taxi drivers are advised that:

- You can refuse to accept the TUSS voucher;
- You can ask the TUSS member to pay the full cost of the trip. If the member refuses then you may refuse to drive them;
- You must state the reason why the TUSS voucher is being refused at the time that the TUSS voucher is offered to you.

Taxi drivers should contact Passenger Services (formerly the Taxi Unit) at the DPI if a TUSS member attempts to breach these guidelines.

TUSS members have also been advised to contact Passenger Services if a taxi driver suggests that TUSS vouchers be used for taxi trips that breach these guidelines.

Group Travel

This guideline only applies to situations where TUSS members travel as part of a group (two or more) of passengers on a regular basis or where the taxi trip is booked on behalf of members by a third party, e.g. a nursing home, day care facility, hospital unit or social organisation.

Some TUSS members and taxi drivers are using multiple TUSS vouchers for trips where the members are travelling together in a group. This is not permitted. From 1 October 2003 only a **single** TUSS voucher is to be used when group travel has been pre-arranged with the taxi driver.

- Group travel occurs when there is some pre-arrangement with the taxi driver for passengers to travel together from different points of origin to a common destination, from a common point of origin to common destination or from a common point of origin to different destinations;
- Pre-arrangement means that the taxi driver is told of the group travel arrangements before or at the time when the first passenger gets in the taxi;
- When group travel occurs the entire taxi trip should be treated as one trip. The TUSS member who is in the taxi for the entire trip should present their TUSS voucher book to the driver when getting into the taxi;
- The other TUSS members travelling in the taxi are **not** required to present their TUSS voucher books to the driver;
- The TUSS members are expected to come to an agreement on how the portion of the fare not covered by the TUSS voucher is to be paid to the driver.



Please note that Passenger Services **is not** introducing special rules for group travel for TUSS members, but **is** ensuring that they are charged on the same basis as other taxi users.

What happens when taxi travel breaches the guidelines for Staged Taxi Trips or Group Travel

The responsibility for ensuring that subsidy is only claimed for appropriate taxi trips is shared between TUSS members and taxi drivers.

Where taxi trips that breach the guidelines are identified and subsidy has been claimed, the TUSS member and driver involved will be asked to provide an explanation for these trips. TUSS vouchers that breach these guidelines may not be approved for payment.

Taxi drivers participating in the inappropriate use of TUSS vouchers may be required to submit their TUSS vouchers to Passenger Services for approval prior to payment being made.

The inappropriate use of TUSS vouchers may lead to prosecution.

TUSS members participating in inappropriate use of the TUSS may be removed from the Scheme.

Correct use of TUSS vouchers

Taxi drivers are reminded that:

- The TUSS member must show you their TUSS voucher book and membership card at the start of the trip;
- You may turn the taxi meter on when loading or unloading a wheelchair passenger;
- A TUSS subsidy voucher can only include up to 15 minutes waiting time. This includes loading and unloading time. Additional waiting time is to be paid by the passenger;
- There is a \$25 maximum limit on the subsidy payable for each taxi trip;
- The TUSS member must pay their portion of the fare for all taxi trips; and
- TUSS vouchers can only be used for payment of a taxi fare.

More information

If you would like further information about TUSS please contact us at:

TUSS Staging and Group Travel
DPI Passenger Services
GPO Box C102
PERTH WA 6839

Telephone: (08) 9216 8112
Facsimilie: (08) 9216 8116

TTY: If you are deaf or have a hearing or speech impairment please contact the National Relay Service on 133677 and quote telephone number (08) 9216 8112.

Or check out: www.dpi.wa.gov.au

