

VICTORIAN PATIENT TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE SCHEME



The Victorian Patient Transport Assistance Scheme (VPTAS) subsidises travel and accommodation costs incurred by rural Victorians. A patient and an approved patient escort, who have no option but to travel more than 100 kilometers one way or an average of 500 kilometers a week for one or more weeks to receive approved medical specialist services or specialist dental treatment can be eligible.

VPTAS Process

People who wish to receive VPTAS assistance need to take the following steps:

1. Check eligibility
2. Find out what assistance is available
3. Find out who can be an approved patient escort
4. Fill in the VPTAS claim form
5. Have the VPTAS claim form completed by an approved medical specialist
6. Send the VPTAS form and required receipts to the VPTAS office

Eligibility for VPTAS

The VPTAS guidelines provide details on eligibility and ineligibility. In summary, to be eligible for VPTAS patients must:

- Be a Victorian resident
- Live in a Department of Health & Human Services designated Rural Health Region
- Be receiving specialist medical treatment from a medical practitioner registered with Medicare Australia and recognised as a specialist
- Need to travel more than 100 kilometers one way or an average of 500 kilometers a week for one or more weeks.

Pay the first \$100 each treatment year

People receiving VPTAS assistance pay the first \$100 each treatment year for their travel and accommodation, except for primary card holders of a Pensioner Concession Card or Health Care Card. After the initial payment VPTAS covers all travel and accommodation costs for the remainder of the treatment year. A treatment year starts from the date of the first appointment with a specialist.

Assistance

Travel

People who are eligible for travel support will receive:

- 21 cents per kilometer for private car use
- full economy-class fare reimbursements for public transport
- air travel reimbursement - only if the journey exceeds 350 kilometers one way for a commercial flight
- taxi travel reimbursement - only to or from the nearest public transport when there are no other transport options

Accommodation

Applicants may be able to receive accommodation assistance up to a maximum of \$45.00 per night (\$49.50 including GST). May be available to the applicant and their approved patient escort.

Approved Escort

When a patient is eligible for VPTAS, an approved patient escort is responsible for the patient's transport and accommodation needs during treatment. Only one escort per patient is eligible for assistance unless the patient is under the age of 18 years.

Fill in the Claim Form

Download claim form from

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-services/rural-health/vptas-how-to-apply>

It is also available from many doctors' clinics, rural and metropolitan hospitals and rural health regional offices.

Further Information:

VPTAS guidelines provide full VPTAS details. It is available for download in 11 different community languages from the Health Translations website:

[http://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcht.nsf/PresentDetail?Open&s=Victorian_Patient_Transport_Assistance_Scheme_Guidelines_\(2015\)](http://www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcht.nsf/PresentDetail?Open&s=Victorian_Patient_Transport_Assistance_Scheme_Guidelines_(2015))