

# Personal Transport Budgets

An information guide for parents

[Herefordshire.gov.uk](https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk)



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## INTRODUCTION

The Passenger Transport Team is responsible for assessing applications made by parents for Personal Transport Budget (PTB).

The Passenger Transport Team can be contacted at the following address:

PTB Applications  
Passenger Transport  
Herefordshire Council  
Plough Lane  
Hereford  
HR4 7EU

The phone number for our contact centre is 01432 260000. They will be in a position to answer general enquires and put you through to the Passenger Transport Team if more detailed information is required.

You can also email the Passenger Transport Team [schooltransport@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:schooltransport@herefordshire.gov.uk)

To find out if your child is eligible for a PTB, please complete the enclosed PTB application form. Please be aware that the Passenger Transport Team is unavailable to assess eligibility over the phone and applicants can only be assessed upon receipt of a valid application form.

# What is a Personal Transport Budget (PTB)?

A PTB is a payment designed to help you transport your child to and from school.

You can use the budget in any way you wish, to ensure your child attends school every day and is able to arrive on time and in a fit state to learn. For example, it can help towards covering the costs of running a family car or arranging with another member of the family or friends to assist with childcare enabling you to make the journey.

The payment is a fixed amount based on the proximity of your home to school, it bears no relationship to the cost of a taxi or contracted vehicle.

Rather than accessing shared school transport, using a PTB can be a good alternative for some families. The advantages of a PTB are:

- Freedom to make your own arrangements – to suit your family
- Control over how the money is spent
- Your child may be more secure and relaxed at school
- You can share the cost and save money by joining up with other parents
- You could use the money to help your child become more independent

## Who can be considered for a PTB?

Personal Transport Budgets are granted at the discretion of the Local Authority where it is cost effective for the authority to do so. There is no automatic right to receive a PTB, in place of alternative

transport assistance, which you may have been offered.

To be considered for a PTB children must be eligible for school transport assistance under the terms of Herefordshire Council's Home to School Transport Policy. This can be viewed at [www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport)

If your child is eligible for school transport assistance, the Local Authority will investigate whether there is any transport currently in place that your child could be placed onto at no additional cost or where the cost of providing your child with transport assistance would be less than providing you with a PTB.

If suitable transport is available, you will not be granted a PTB and your child will be allocated a seat on the most appropriate mode of transport.

Additionally, when deciding to offer a PTB, we would look at your child's attendance record at school. You may be refused a PTB if your child's attendance is currently below 90% (this means 38 half day sessions or 19 full days in a school year).

## How much would I receive?

The amount of money that is awarded is based on the distance between your home and the school your child attends. Many available maps and internet based measuring tools will give you an indication of the distance from your home to your child's school, but this is only an indication. The Council's own measuring software is used to determine this. For fairness and consistency, the same software is used for all applications.

In accordance with Herefordshire Council's Home to School Transport Policy, a parental contribution towards the cost of school transport assistance is required for students aged between 16

and 19. The annual contribution amount will be deducted from your child's PTB allowance.

There are distance bands that apply to PTB payments and different rates for SEN and Mainstream transport. To qualify for the SEN transport rates your child must have an EHCP.

### Mainstream Transport

Band	Distance to school	Annual PTB
1	Between 2 & 5 miles*	£875
2	Between 5 & 10 miles	£1,750
3	Over 10 miles	£2,500

### SEN Transport

Band	Distance to school	Annual PTB
1	Between 2 & 5 miles*	£1,750
2	Between 5 & 10 miles	£3,500
3	Between 10 & 15 miles	£5,000
4	Between 15 & 20 miles	£6,750
5	Between 20 & 25 miles	£8,500
5	Between 25 & 30 miles	£10,250
7	Between 30 & 35 miles	£12,000
8	Between 35 & 40 miles	£13,750

\*Payments for Hazardous Routes will be assessed on a case by case basis and may be paid at a lower rate

## How will I be paid?

The money we've agreed will be paid each month directly into a bank account that you nominate.

## How long will I receive a PTB for?

The PTB will be reviewed on a regular basis taking in to account your child's attendance records and alternative transport arrangements that may be

available. At least annually, the review will evaluate whether it remains cost effective for the PTB to be provided and new transport options may mean this is no longer the case.

If your child's attendance at school is not sufficient to continue paying you a PTB or where there is more cost effective transport in place, the PTB may be withdrawn. If this should happen, you will be given 28 days notice.

Your PTB will cease if at anytime your child becomes no longer eligible for school transport assistance under the terms of Herefordshire Council's Home to School Transport Policy.

## Will the amount I get paid change?

The PTB amount may be reviewed, adjusted, suspended or terminated if:

- Your child's attendance falls below 90%
- Your child regularly arrives late at school in the mornings
- Your child arrives at school in an unfit state to learn
- The travel arrangements that have been put in place for your child using the PTB are deemed to be unsuitable or unsafe
- Your child accesses short – break stays away from the family home
- There is a change to national legislation and / or the council's policies
- You have more than one child, e.g. sibling, half-sibling or step-sibling or other member of the same household each receiving a PTB and attending the same school or another school nearby
- Your child enters post 16 education as you may be required to make a financial contribution as per the Home to School Transport Policy

- Your circumstances, such as home address or child's school change.

## My circumstances have changed, what should I do?

You must email or write to the Passenger Transport Team, to notify of any change of circumstances that may affect your eligibility to transport assistance and/or your PTB payment, for example:

- If you move address or change school or school site
- Change of timetable that affects your child's school hours
- Long term absences (5 consecutive school days or more)

If you fail to notify the council of any change to your circumstances, which the council later decides would have had the effect of reducing or ending your child's entitlement to payments then the council may terminate your PTB payments and will seek to recover any monies that you should not have received for the period in which you failed to notify.

If you are unsure about whether a change of circumstances will affect the PTB payments, you are advised to discuss this with the Passenger Transport Team.

Any transport arrangements, until your child has been reassessed, will be the parent's responsibility to arrange.

## What can I use a PTB for?

You must always spend the payment, or allow the payment to be spent, in a way that ensures your child's attendance at school.

You can use the PTB in any way you wish to do this, for example:

- You or someone in your family can drive your child to and from school
- You can arrange with a friend or relative to cycle with or walk your child to school.
- You can car share with other parents where their children are going to the same school as your child.
- You could provide a relative or friend with a bus pass in order to take your child to and from school.
- You could pay for a bus pass on a vehicle that the school organises to take children to and from their school.
- You could pay for childcare for a younger child in order for you to take your child to school.

If you use the PTB to employ someone yourself, then you will be responsible for complying with relevant rules regarding Tax and National Insurance, Employment Law, Insurance, Health and Safety or any other relevant rules or legislation in force at that time.

The council always recommends that you have a check carried out by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) on anyone that you are thinking of employing.

If you use the PTB to enter into contracts with organisations (e.g. after school clubs) or individuals: you are responsible for complying with the terms and conditions of those contracts, e.g. payment arrangements, notice of cancellation, etc.

The council advises you to seek your own independent legal advice as to the terms of the agreement that you may be entering into and any obligations that are placed on you.

You cannot use your payment:

- To buy or utilise a space on school transport services from Herefordshire Council



- For any purpose that does not enable you to get your child to or from school
- For any activity that is illegal, unlawful or unsafe
- For other purposes that may bring the council into disrepute

Although you have control of the payments, the money can be reclaimed by the council if it is not used in accordance with this guidance.

If you are granted a PTB, you may wish to discuss this with your child's school as they may be in a position to put you in touch with other parents who also receive a PTB. You could look into working collectively to ensure the best use of the PTB for all of the children and families. You must spend the money in a way that ensures your child can get to school.

## My PTB application has been refused can I appeal?

Yes. If you have been refused a PTB because the cost of the PTB is more than the cost to the Local Authority of transporting your child, you can appeal.

Details of how to appeal can be found at [www.Herefordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.Herefordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport)

Any appeal will be considered and a decision made within twenty working days. If your appeal is not successful you will have the right to make a second stage appeal to an independent school transport appeal panel.

## Frequently asked questions:

### **Q. Will the payments be taxed?**

A. The budget is a payment made in relation to the child not the parent and so

should not affect your tax situation. If you have concerns that it may impact on your tax situation, you will need to seek your own advice from a tax expert in relation to your personal circumstances.

### **Q. If I have two/or more children with EHC plans, all of whom are eligible for transport assistance, can I claim a PTB for each child?**

A. You can claim for each child, but whilst the first child would receive 100% of the PTB, the second child would only be entitled to 50% of the PTB. Any additional children would not qualify for a PTB.

### **Q. Both myself and my child are happy with the current contractor and driver that transport my child to and from school. If I applied for the PTB, could my child continue to travel on the same vehicle?**

A. No. By applying for the PTB, you will be responsible for making your own arrangements for transporting your child to and from school. Whilst you could use your PTB to make your own personal arrangements with the taxi contractor to take your child to and from school, your child would not be able to travel on the vehicle that the council has arranged.

### **Q. Do I need to collect any receipts for petrol or show how the PTB is being spent?**

A. No. Once the payments are made to you, you can use them any way you wish to in order for your child to get to and from school every day.

### **Q. I am a foster carer for a child that receives transport, can I apply for a PTB?**

A. If your foster child is in the care of Herefordshire Council and meets the criteria to receive free home to school transport, then you can apply for a PTB. You should discuss this with your Social Worker before applying. If your foster child is in the care of another Local Authority you will not be eligible to receive a PTB but may be eligible for a PTB from the other authority.

**Q. Would I receive a PTB if my child attends two schools?**

A. No. Transport assistance is only provided to one school. If you apply for a PTB, this will only be assessed to the school that your child is on roll at.

**Q. If I apply and am granted a PTB but find that at a later date it doesn't work with my child or my circumstances change, can I change back to the previous transport arrangement?**

A. Yes. You must give us at least one calendar months' notice (maybe longer at peak periods) to stop the PTB payments and to allow the council the opportunity to rearrange transport for your child. Please be aware, that this may not necessarily be the same taxi company or fleet driver that your child previously had as no guarantee can be given that the arrangements will stay the same.

**Q. Will the council arrange short term transport cover for the occasions that I am unable to transport my child to school, for example if I am unwell?**

A. No. The council will not provide any cover transport arrangements and it will be your parental responsibility to ensure your child's attendance at school. You are advised to have a contingency plan in place using your PTB if for any reason you are unable to get your child to school yourself or by your chosen method.

**Q. What happens if my child is ill?**

A. Your child's attendance record will be reviewed and the payments for any days that they are absent will be deducted.

If your child's attendance drops below an acceptable level without reason, you will be at risk of having your PTB withdrawn.

## How do I apply?

You should complete the enclosed application form and return to the Passenger Transport Team by email [schooltransport@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:schooltransport@herefordshire.gov.uk) or by post to:

PTB Applications  
Passenger Transport  
Herefordshire Council  
Plough Lane  
Hereford  
HR4 7EU

Applications can be made by:

- the parent, guardian or carer
- the service user themselves if they are over 18 years old.
- a nominated person acting on behalf of the applicant if agreed by the applicant and that nominated person has capacity.

## General information

When your application has been assessed, you will be informed of the decision in writing by email/letter.

Your PTB will be reviewed on a regular basis and if you have not previously advised the team of a change of address or change of school for your child, the PTB may be withdrawn. When your child's PTB is reviewed, the team review their attendance records to ensure that the level of attendance is satisfactory in order to continue your PTB.



## Application for a Personal Transport Budget (PTB)

**Please return to:**

PTB Applications, Passenger Transport Team, Hereford Council, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0LE or  
[schooltransport@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:schooltransport@herefordshire.gov.uk)

Please ensure you have fully read Personal Transport Budgets an information guide for parents before completing the application form.

Pupils First Name	Surname	Male/Female
Home Address		Date of Birth
		Tel No.
		Year Group
Postcode	Date from which a PTB is requested	
Email address (THIS WILL BE USED FOR COMMUNICATION WHEREVER PRACTICAL)		Date from which a PTB is requested
Name of School		
If the application is because of change of address please state previous address and date of move:		
Please provide any further information that might be useful and relevant to your application.		
Does the pupil have siblings attending the same school? (please circle) Yes/No If yes, please give their names (please note individual applications will be necessary)		
Name		
Name		
I confirm that I have read the conditions stated overleaf and I certify that the information stated above is correct. I agree to abide by the conditions and terms relating to Personal Transport Budgets.		
GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations 2018). I give my consent to the information on the form being passed to or shared within Herefordshire Council for the purpose of organising a Personal Transport Budget.		
We will not be able to process your application if you do not agree.		
Signature of Parent/Guardian.....		Date.....

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