

Students in Temporary Living Situations (STLS)

Information on Transportation Assistance

A student in a temporary living situation has the right to continue attending his/her school of origin, which is the school he/she attended when permanently housed or the school in which he/she was last enrolled. If parents, caregivers, or unaccompanied homeless youth choose to continue the student's education in the school of origin, the Board of Education of the City of Chicago will provide transportation to and from the school of origin, and all school-related activities, as long as the student is in a temporary living situation, or if the student becomes permanently housed, until the end of the academic year.

The Students in Temporary Living Situations Department provides prompt transportation assistance to eligible students either through public transportation fare cards or, in limited circumstances where a specific hardship is documented, yellow school bus. Eligible students receive CTA Ventra cards and adult caregivers of eligible students in grades PK-6 receive CTA Ventra cards to accompany the student to and from school. A parent is also eligible for transportation assistance to attend school related activities, such as, Report Card Pick-Up, Individualized Education Program (IEP) meetings or graduation if his/her child is in 7th to 12th grade or is a younger child who rides a yellow school bus.

Students who temporarily reside outside of Chicago due to homelessness and attend their CPS school of origin receive transportation assistance as do students experiencing homelessness who live in the City of Chicago but attend a school of origin outside of CPS.

Distribution of CTA Ventra Cards:

CTA Ventra cards will be distributed to eligible students and caregivers no less frequently than once a week. Schools may establish a schedule for distribution of CTA Ventra cards which should be shared with the parents/caregivers. School staff may choose to distribute Ventra cards to students and/or caregivers on a daily, rather than weekly, basis. Parents or caregivers may contact the STLS Department for assistance at (773) 553-2242 or STLSInformation@cps.edu if they experience challenges related to the distribution of CTA Ventra cards at the school.

Parents or adult caregivers of students in grades PK-6 and the students in grades 7-12 are required to sign for each CTA Ventra card received. Parents or caregivers of students in grades PK-6 must be present at both pick-up and drop-off times daily for their student in order to continue to receive adult transportation assistance. One adult per family may receive the CTA Ventra card if at least one child in the family is in 6th grade or younger. If the parent/caregiver is temporarily unable to accompany his/her child to and from school, accommodations will be made for an alternate adult to receive the adult CTA Ventra card. The parent/caregiver must provide the STLS Clark or Liaison in writing the name of the person to receive the CTA Ventra card on their behalf and the time period for the substitution.

Use of CTA Ventra Cards:

Transportation assistance is provided to students and caregivers for the educational purpose of transporting students to and from school and school activities. Additional Ventra cards will not be distributed to students or parents/caregivers who use CTA Ventra cards provided by the STLS Department during days of non-attendance. Parents or caregivers who do not accompany their student to and from school via public transportation on a daily basis may begin to receive single ride transportation cards only on the days that they accompany the student to and from school via public transportation.

Hardship Transportation - Yellow School Bus Transportation:

Students in grades PK-6 who are eligible for transportation and whose caregiver is unable to accompany them on public transportation due to a hardship may apply for yellow school bus service by submitting documentation or affidavit of their inability to transport the student. Examples of a "hardship" situation are:

- Parent/caregiver employment, job training, or education program
- Parent's/caregiver's mental and/or physical disability
- Children need to be transported to and from schools at different locations

- Rules of shelter or similar facility will not permit parent/caregiver to leave to transport children to and from school
- Court order, DCFS, or DCFS contract agent requires activities that do not enable parent/guardian to transport children to and from school
- Other good cause why parent/guardian cannot use public transportation to transport children to and from school

Parents or caregivers who are claiming hardship should submit a "Hardship Transportation Application" (LINK TO FORM) to the STLS Clerk or Liaison that includes the following:

- STLS Service Initiation form
- Hardship Application Form
- Documentation of hardship. See Hardship Application form for details on documentation.

As part of the application process, parents or caregivers should make sure the student's school has the current address and phone number entered to ensure the correct information is in the student's record. If approved, yellow bus service will be routed to and from the attendance area school for the address on record. While awaiting approval for hardship transportation, the parent/caregiver should be provided CTA Ventra cards.

The school's STLS Clerk or Liaison will immediately forward the complete hardship transportation application to the STLS Department for review. The STLS Department will respond to the school's STLS Clerk or Liaison within 2-3 days to confirm receipt. At that time, more information may be requested to support the application.

If the hardship transportation application is approved by the STLS Department, then the Chicago Public Schools' Transportation Department will assign a bus to the student. If after 10 school days yellow bus service has not begun, the parent/caregiver and/or STLS Clerk/Liaison should contact the STLS Department at (773) 553-2242 or STLSInformation@cps.edu.

If hardship transportation is denied, the parent or caregiver will receive written notification of the denial along with the basis for the denial. If the parent or caregiver disagrees with the denial, he/she may file for a Dispute Resolution. Upon request, the STLS Clerk or Liaison will be able to assist the parent or caregiver in completing the Dispute Resolution form.

Students with Disabilities' Transportation

Students who receive transportation via his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP) will continue to receive that service unchanged. Students who have transportation services in their IEP will not receive CTA Ventra cards from the STLS Department.

Other Transportation Offered to Students Who are Not Homeless

If students in a temporary living situation qualify for transportation through a magnet program, NCLB option program or other CPS school bus program, they will continue to receive this transportation service as long as they continue to meet the eligibility requirements for the program.