

## **SSP Policy for Transportation of Participants and Their Children**

In order to promote family engagement and economic stability, SSP staff work to identify each family's goals related to how they will exit poverty. SSP resources should be used to support family engagement and activities, while promoting economic stability. This may include assistance with transportation. Examples of transportation assistance can be paying for fuel, public transportation, as well as under certain circumstances, providing transportation in state vehicles.

Transportation assistance using state vehicles should not be offered as a routine service to SSP families with transportation needs. It is neither a practical nor sustainable way to help SSP families achieve their own goals. **Instead, transportation decisions should be made to support hard choices made by participants where additional assistance is needed to attend essential activities in families' plans and where transportation can be safely and reasonably provided by SSP staff. Only after careful consideration of other options, are SSP staff and vehicles utilized.**

Districts/Branches are expected to create procedures to implement this policy that allows for systematic review of transportation activities. These decisions should support SSP Operating Principles of Family Engagement and Economic Stability, while balancing Integrity and Stewardship.

The following are possible guidelines to include in a local procedure for transporting SSP participants and their children:

- The transportation of SSP participants and their children should be considered on a case by case basis.
- When transporting participants and their children, please review home visit safety guidelines.
- Some examples for guidelines for acceptable choices to transport using state resources include but are not limited to:
  - When there is an urgent need to either get a participant to an appointment and there is no alternative means of transportation.
  - Other methods of transportation are not available yet the event is critical to the family's plan.
  - It has been determined that there is significant benefit to having the family coach/engagement specialist attend an event with the family and transportation allows for additional support before and after.
  - A family wants to attend an activity but is reluctant or fearful about their ability to follow through and would benefit from the support.

**Ultimately it is the Program Manager and/or Branch Operation Manager's decision on when a participant's transport is approved.**

**Example:**

Rachel was just hired at The Beanery Coffee House. She is very excited to begin, as she has been unable to work for many years. However, Rachel is also nervous as she will have to take the bus to and from daycare and work. She tells her family coach Monica, she is unfamiliar with the bus system since she has never had to rely on public transportation and may not be able to take the job for this reason.

Monica speaks with her Supervisor about Rachel's situation. Both agree that for Rachel to be successful, she will need additional support during her first week of employment. Rachel and Monica create a plan, mapping out the bus route together so this helps Rachel become familiar with the bus system in the future. Rachel chooses the bus stops closest to the daycare and her new job.

To further support Rachel, Monica plans to meet her in the morning at the bus stop and ride the bus with her to daycare and work for the first week. Monica also plans to meet Rachel in the afternoon when Rachel has finished her shift and is making her way home. Monica also helps Rachel plan for the inevitable missed bus issue by taking a later bus, helping her with adjustments to her route.