



Community Bus Service Access Policy

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Endorsement:	General Manager Community Services, 5 May 2021 Policy Review Panel - 12 May 2021
Authorisation	Council - 7 June 2021
Review date	31 May 2023
Responsible officer:	Community Care Manager
Policy owner	Social Connections Team leader

1. Purpose

This policy sets out the principles for the delivery of Council's Community Bus Service and provides eligibility criteria for community groups and not for profit organisations to become a registered Community Bus Service user.

2. Scope

This policy applies to Council Officers and approved community groups and not for profit organisations who are accessing Council's Community Bus Service.

3. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Community Bus Service	A fleet of buses that can be accessed by Council Officers and eligible community groups and not for profit organisations.
Approved Bus User	Community groups and not for profit organisations whose application to become a community bus user has been approved.

4. Policy

4.1 Policy Statement

Council provides access to a fleet of buses to support Council and eligible community groups and not for profit organisations to deliver a range of programs and services across the municipality. The service aims to provide a low cost and flexible transport option.

The service is delivered by the Community Care service unit within the requirements of the Bus Safety Act and Council policy and procedures.

4.2 Registration Status

The Bus Safety Act requires anyone wishing to operate a non-commercial bus service in Victoria to obtain registration status. For the purposes of registration, a non-commercial bus service includes:

- Community and private bus service
- Non-commercial courtesy bus service
- Hire and drive bus service

The delivery of Council's Community Bus Service is aligned with the category of 'community and private bus service'. This category provides carriage of passengers by a bus where seating positions cater for 10 or more adults (including the driver), for or in connection with, the following activity types:

- Religious
- Educational
- Health
- Welfare
- Philanthropic
- Sporting
- Social

As a registered organisation, the Bus Safety Act requires Council to meet specific safety obligations. These obligations require Council to eliminate or reduce risks to safety so far as is reasonably practicable. It should be noted safety obligations also apply regardless of whether a bus is borrowed, owned, rented or leased.

4.3 Eligibility Criteria

Community groups and organisation are required to submit an application for consideration against an eligibility criteria, prior to becoming an approved bus user. To be successful applicants must:

- operate on a voluntary basis and be of a non-commercial nature,
- have at least 80% of its membership base residing in the City of Melton,
- have current public liability insurance,
- attend activities of a recreational, welfare based or educational nature excluding activities that involve mid or end of year club celebrations and functions.
- hold a Certificate of Registration with Transport Safety Victoria (TSV)

Council may receive requests that fall outside this criteria but are deemed to provide benefit to the community. On these occasions the General Manager, Community Services has the authority to approve requests for access to the community buses and coaster bus at their discretion.

4.4 Hire Fees

Community Bus Service fees are determined in line with Council's budgetary process and provide a fixed rate to all community groups regardless of status.

5. Responsibility/Accountability

5.1	Community Transport Supervisor Lead the delivery of Councils Community Bus Service ensuring the service meets community expectations and is delivered in line with Council policy, procedure and legislative requirements.
5.2	Social Connections Team Leader Ensure compliance with this policy ensuring appropriate resourcing, support and training is provided to enable its successful implementation.

6. References and links to legislation and other documents

Name	Location
Bus Safety Act 2009 (Vic)	transportsafety.vic.gov.au
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)	worksafe.vic.gov.au
Community Bus Service Access Procedure	Policy Intranet and Ci Anywhere
Community Bus Service User Guide	Policy Intranet and Ci Anywhere
Community Bus Service Application/Renewal Form	Policy Intranet and Ci Anywhere
Application for Bus Use Form	Policy Intranet and Ci Anywhere
Community Bus Drivers Checklist	Policy Intranet and Ci Anywhere