

Waltham Forest SEND Service, Wood Street Health Centre, 6 Linford Road, London, E17 3LA

## **Important Update: Travel Assistance Application Process Moving Online**

Date: Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2024

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Dear Parents, Carers, and Professionals,

We hope this message finds you well.

We are writing to inform you of an important update regarding our travel assistance application process.

Starting from 1st September 2024, we will no longer accept paper forms for travel assistance applications. Instead, all applications will need to be completed and submitted through our new online platform which will be online from Monday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2024.

### **Why are we making this change?**

**Efficiency:** The online system will streamline the application process, reducing processing times and ensuring faster responses.

**Accuracy:** Digital submissions minimise errors and ensure that all necessary information is provided before submission.

**Environmental Impact:** Moving to an online platform helps us reduce paper usage, contributing to our sustainability commitments as a Local Authority.

**Responding to Feedback:** We have listened to parents and carers who have requested a more modern and accessible system. Our new online platform allows applicants to easily track the status of their application at each stage of the assessment process, view submitted documents, and access all communication related to their application in one convenient place.

We appreciate your cooperation and understanding as we implement these enhancements to streamline and modernise our application process. Kindly refer to the next page for further information.

Sincerely,

**Assistance with Travel Team - SEND Service**  
**London Borough of Waltham Forest**

## **Accessing our Online Application Form**

Our online application form to apply for assistance with travel, will be accessible through our Local Offer page. Please click the link below to access our application form.

[https://portal.walthamforest.gov.uk/service/Travel\\_Assistance\\_Application](https://portal.walthamforest.gov.uk/service/Travel_Assistance_Application)

## **Submission Protocol**

All necessary information, including supporting documents, must be submitted only through the online application form.

Paper submissions, including those sent to the Assistance with Travel mailbox, will no longer be accepted from September 1st, 2024.

Any applications received via alternative means will be automatically rejected after this date and you will be redirected to our online portal to apply.

## **Assessment of your Application Form**

Application forms submitted will be assessed within 20 working days. Within this period, there is no requirement to contact the assistance with travel team.

Any communication that we need to send to the parent/carer during this period (eg. request for further information) will be sent via the email address linked to their registered online account.

## **Time to Complete the Form**

The online application form must be completed in one session, as it cannot be saved to continue at a later stage. Therefore, please allocate at least 30-40 minutes to complete the form.

Parents/carers should ensure they have read our home to school transport policy before applying for assistance with travel so that they know which documents they must upload with their application.

## **Reference Number**

Upon submission of an application through the online system, a unique reference number will be generated. This reference number is essential for accessing case-related information and should be kept in a safe place.

## **Application Status**

To check the status of an application form, parents/carers must log in to the online portal, where they will be provided with real-time updates and be able to track the stage of their application along with the outcome.

## **Request for Additional Information**

Should further documentation be required, communication from the team will be sent to the email address the parent/carer provided to register for an online account. The email sent will have instructions on how to action the request(s).

Any information you must submit will need to be done via our online application portal (from the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 2024). Parents/carers will receive a link to this section on our portal, within their email.

If you need to contact the assistance with travel team for further clarification, please ensure you have your application reference number as we will require this to assist you. You can find this reference number in your email requesting for information or on the portal.

### **Rejected Applications**

In the event of a rejected application form, the parent/carer will need to submit a new application form to reapply. Reasons for the rejection will be sent to the email address provided at the point of completing the online form and assessment will be subject to a further 20 working days.

### **Renewals and Appeals Process**

At present, our renewals and appeals processes will continue to be assessed offline.

If an application form is rejected, the parent/carer can submit an appeal form to the assistance with travel team via email at [assistancewithtravel@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:assistancewithtravel@walthamforest.gov.uk) or in-person at our office: Wood Street Health Centre, 6 Linford Rd, E17 3LA.

### **Accessibility and Support**

We understand that this change may present challenges, particularly for parents and carers of children and young people with SEND, as well as for those who may themselves have SEND or be vulnerable. We are committed to making this transition as smooth as possible for everyone.

Our online platform has been designed with accessibility in mind, ensuring it is user-friendly and easy to navigate.

We have included features such as adjustable text sizes, screen reader compatibility, and clear instructions throughout the application form.

### **Support Available:**

If you need assistance with the online application process, please reach out to one of the following resources:

- **SENDIASS:** Contact SENDIASS at [sendiasswalthamf@centre404.org.uk](mailto:sendiasswalthamf@centre404.org.uk) or call 074 9428 0073 for support.

- **Child's Professional:** Speak to a professional working with your child to see if they can assist you.

- **Family Support Team:** If your school has a Family Support team, they may be able to help.

- **Early Help Voluntary Support Hub:** Visit during the specified times for in-person assistance:

- **Tuesdays:** Leyton Family Hub, 215 Queens Road, E17 8PJ, 09:45am - 11:15am
- **Wednesdays:** Chingford Family Hub, 5 Oaks Grove, E4 6EY, 09:45am - 11:15am
- **Thursdays:** Walthamstow Family Hub, 313 Billet Road, E17 5PX, 09:45am - 11:15am
- **Fridays:** Leytonstone Family Hub, 2-8 Cathall Road, E11 4LF, 09:45am - 11:15am

**Contact Information**

For any questions or assistance, please contact us at:

**Phone:** 07435998424

**Email:** [assistancewithtravel@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:assistancewithtravel@walthamforest.gov.uk)

**Office Address:** Wood Street Health Centre, 6 Linford Rd, London E17 3LA