

Internet subsidy scheme – policy, application and claim procedures

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1. Policy

The Internet subsidy scheme (the subsidy) is a Northern Territory (NT) Government initiative to assist NT households living in a remote locality with internet costs for the purpose of accessing distance education.

The Department of Education and Training (the department) is responsible for the administration of the subsidy. This includes assessing applications, processing claims and making payments to approved applicants.

NT Government distance education centre principals are responsible for informing families at the time of enrolment that the subsidy is available to eligible households and for providing data to the department to verify student enrolment and attendance.

1.1. Eligibility

Applicants and students must be residents of the NT and classed as living in a remote locality in accordance with categories 1 to 3 of [Determination 8 of 2015 Remote Locality Provisions](#).

The applicant's name must be the same name shown on the internet tax invoice and include the primary residential address. Refer to section 2.1.1 for options if the primary residential address is not shown on the tax invoice.

Students must be using household internet to access distance education.

Applicants must notify the department immediately of any changes to their circumstances, such as residential address, internet plan amount, enrolment situation or students' name.

1.1.1. Student eligibility

Students residing in the NT who are living in a remote locality and enrolled in an NT Government distance education centre are eligible for the subsidy.

Distance education students receiving any other form of financial assistance that supports internet connectivity and usage are not eligible to claim the subsidy. Students cannot be:

- dual enrolled at another government or non- government school with a Full-time Equivalent (FTE) greater than 0.2
- temporarily travelling intrastate, interstate or internationally
- residing interstate or overseas
- accessing distance education online from an alternative school, college, boarding facility or hostel
- receiving any other form of financial assistance that supports internet connectivity and usage, for example, the Australian Government's School Student Broadband Initiative.

1.1.2. Household eligibility

Households cannot claim the subsidy if internet costs are claimed as a business expense.

The department will not cover any additional charges to the contracted internet plan amount such as hardware or other services.

1.2. Enrolment requirements

Students must have an enrolment against one of the following NT Government distance education centres with a minimum FTE of 0.8, or 0.5 for preschool students:

- Alice Springs School of the Air
- Katherine School of the Air
- NT School of Distance Education.

Enrolment part way through a semester will be subject to a pro-rata payment.

1.3. Attendance requirements

Students must maintain a minimum 70% attendance rate.

Where a student has less than 70% attendance, the applicant must provide justification with supporting documents to be approved by the department for continued participation in the subsidy.

1.4. Subsidy conditions

Payment is subject to the 8 conditions outlined below:

1. applications must be submitted as an individual through GrantsNT and not as a business name or organisation
2. the subsidy will only be paid after approval of an application and on submission of a claim for payment through GrantsNT
3. applications received after the specified cut off dates will not be considered for a retrospective payment
4. student enrolment and attendance at a distance education centre must be verified by the distance education centre principal through a combination of centrally generated reports
5. per household, the payment will:
 - a. match the applicant's internet plan tax invoice of up to \$174 per month inclusive of Goods and Services Tax (GST)
 - b. not be greater than \$2,088 inclusive of GST, per calendar year.
6. where there is more than one household on a property, a separate application and tax invoice under each applicant and student name will be required
7. where a student is residing at more than one primary residence, for example in a custodial arrangement, a pro-rata payment may apply, and each parent will be required to:
 - a. submit a separate application through GrantsNT
 - b. meet all the conditions of the subsidy to be eligible.
8. in the case of a parent working across different remote locations within the NT, payment will be pro-rata based on eligibility and the applicant is required to provide supporting documents from their employer.

1.5. Privacy

The information collected in the application will only be used for the purpose for which it is being collected. All information will be treated confidentially, stored in a secure location, and destroyed in line with legislated retention and disposal schedules to ensure that privacy is maintained for everyone.

2. Application procedure

The internet subsidy scheme requires a formal application through GrantsNT, an eligibility assessment and, pending the outcome of the assessment, subsidy payment claims through GrantsNT.

GrantsNT is an online system for the NT Government, go to <https://grantsnt.nt.gov.au/>.

2.1. How to apply for the subsidy

For students enrolled in distance education in semester 1:

- submit the application through Grants NT by the end of semester 1 - before the last day of Term 2, each calendar year.

For students who are newly enrolled in distance education in semester 2:

- applicants should email StudentAssistance.DET@education.nt.gov.au and request an invitation to apply through GrantsNT
- submit the application through GrantsNT by the end of semester 2 - before the last day of Term 4, of that year.

Applications received after the specified cut off dates will not be considered.

2.1.1. Supporting documentation

The following supporting documentation is required with each application:

- a copy of the most recent household internet plan tax invoice that clearly states the contracted monthly internet plan amount and primary residential address
- if the primary residential address is not shown on the tax invoice, the following forms of evidence will be acceptable:
 - a current NT driver's licence which must cover the claim period
 - a utility or services account
 - a current lease or rental document
 - a screenshot from the Australian Electoral Commission's [check my enrolment](#) service.

2.1.2. Outcome of assessment

On completion of an assessment of student eligibility, the department's student assistance team will arrange a Notice of assessment outcome to be issued through GrantsNT.

2.2. How to claim a payment

The subsidy will be paid twice yearly.

Submit the claim through GrantsNT at the end of semester 1 - after the last day of Term 2, and at the end of semester 2 - after the last day of Term 4, in each calendar year.

The following supporting information must be submitted through GrantsNT:

- the most recent internet plan tax invoice
- a completed declaration form through GrantsNT confirming details remain unchanged.

Late enrolment is subject to a pro-rata payment based on the enrolment period.

Claims for payment outside of the prescribed semester periods will not be considered.

2.2.1. Confirmation of eligibility

On completion of an assessment of student eligibility including an enrolment and attendance data review, the subsidy will be paid into the bank account nominated by the applicant in GrantsNT.

2.3. Overpayment to recipient by the department

In the event of an overpayment, the department is required to recover the total amount overpaid and a tax invoice will be issued to recover the overpayment amount.

No further payments will be paid until all outstanding amounts have been recovered.

3. Concerns and appeals

Concerns and appeals relating to decisions made under the subsidy, may be lodged and addressed to:

Director Financial Services
Department of Education and Training
GPO Box 4821
Darwin NT 0801
Email: StudentAssistance.DET@education.nt.gov.au
Phone: 1800 019 157 toll free

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1. Applicants

The applicant is responsible for:

- complying with this policy and procedure
- applying for the subsidy
- providing supporting documentation
- submitting claims for payment
- notifying the department immediately of any changes to their circumstances.

4.2. Department of Education and Training's student assistance team

The student assistance team is responsible for:

- implementing this policy and procedure
- providing accurate advice to applicants and distance education centres
- acknowledging receipt of applications through GrantsNT
- assessing all applications received in a fair, transparent and consistent manner in accordance with this policy and procedure
- verifying student enrolment and attendance
- verifying that the household is classed as remote
- notifying applicants of the outcome of assessment
- ensuring payment is made for all approved claims
- holding a current NT Working with Children Card.

4.3. Distance education centre principals

Principals are responsible for:

- informing families about the subsidy
- maintaining accurate and up to date validated enrolment and attendance data
- verifying student attendance at the appropriate times
- disclosing to the department any information that is contradictory to applicants' claims which may conflict with conditions of the subsidy and is not readily available centrally to the department.

5. Definitions

Term	Definition
Applicant	Any other person who has parental responsibility for students, including a person who is regarded as a parent of the child under Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander customary law or tradition.
Distance education centre	An NT Government school that is established as a distance education centre under the <i>Education Act 2015</i> and includes Katherine School of the Air, Alice Springs School of the Air the Northern Territory School of Distance Education.
Dual registration	A student is enrolled in 2 or more schools to accommodate specific circumstances such as students with needs that cannot be met by their main school alone, for example, students attending an additional school or distance education centre to access a particular service or curriculum area which is unavailable in their main school.
Eligible household	A household where students reside and meet all conditions of the subsidy to which they are making an application.
Enrolment	The process by which a student officially registers at an NT Government school, or a distance education centre.
GrantsNT	A NT Government online electronic grant management system used to apply for the subsidy.
Parent	A child's father, mother or any other person who has parental responsibility for the child, including a person who is regarded as a parent of the child under Aboriginal customary law or Aboriginal tradition. A person standing in place of the parent of a child on a temporary basis is not a parent of the child.
Remote locality	As defined by localities in categories 1 to 3 DET of pursuant to the <i>Public Sector Employment and Management Act 1993</i> .
Resident of the NT	A person who resides in the Northern Territory as their primary place of residence.
Semester	Two consecutive terms in the same half of the year, that is, Terms 1 and 2 make up semester 1, and Terms 3 and 4 make up semester 2.
Student	A child enrolled and attending an approved distance education centre.

6. Related legislation and policy

Education Act 2015 - <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/Legislation/EDUCATION-ACT-2015>

Education Regulations - <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/Legislation/EDUCATION-REGULATIONS-2015>

Information privacy policy - <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/conduct>

Determination 8 of 2015 Remote Locality Provisions - https://ocpe.nt.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0013/381010/det-2015-08-remote-locality-provisions.pdf

Acronyms	Full form
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent
GST	Goods and Services Tax
NT	Northern Territory

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