



Support at Home – transport billing guide

Getting your transport billing right under Support at Home means you get paid faster and avoid rejections. This guide shows you exactly what you can and can't charge for when it comes to transport and travel. Whether you're new to aged care or just need a refresher, these clear examples will help you bill correctly every time.

This guide is for you if you provide services under the Support at Home Program. Remember, these rules only apply to government-funded aged care services – your private clients may have different arrangements.

The Golden Rule: your travel to clients is never billable

Here's the most important rule for Support at Home transport billing: **you cannot charge for your own travel to get to a client's home or to move between different client locations.** This includes all the costs of you getting to and from work, and between appointments – like your travel time, petrol, vehicle wear and tear, tolls, and parking fees. The Government sees these as your business's overhead costs, a part of delivering your service, not something you bill directly to clients.

Instead, you need to include your travel time and costs within your service pricing structure. When you're setting your hourly rates for services like personal care, domestic assistance, or social support, make sure you factor in the time and resources you need to get to your clients. This way, you stay compliant and keep your business financially healthy.

What you can't charge for:

Driving from your home to a client's location, driving between multiple clients during your shift, your petrol and toll expenses, parking fees, your vehicle maintenance costs, and time spent commuting to start your shifts.

Overhead costs

Your travel expenses are business overheads, not services for clients

Pricing strategy

Build your travel costs into your hourly service rates

Compliance risk

Billing for your travel will result in bill rejection





Direct transport: when driving is your main job

Sometimes, your job is simply to get someone from point A to point B. This is called Direct Transport (SERV-0016), and it's a service you *can* bill for.

It's when your main responsibility is driving the person you support to a destination, without needing to provide ongoing help, guidance, or hands-on assistance once you get there. Think of it more like a dedicated taxi service, not like staying with them and helping out.



Medical Appointments

You're driving them to doctor's appointments, specialist visits, or tests where they'll go in by themselves.



Drop-Off Services

You're taking them to shops, markets, or community places where they'll do their own activities.



Waiting Time

You're waiting in the car or nearby while they attend their appointments or activities on their own.

Here's what you need to know under Support at Home for billing: You must charge for Direct Transport per trip, not by the kilometer.

While your fee for a trip can change based on how far you travel, you can't just bill a rate for every kilometer driven. Instead, set up different pricing levels based on typical distances for a full trip. For example, you might have one price for local trips (under 10km), another for regional trips (10-30km), and so on. But remember, each of these is billed as one complete trip unit.



How trip-based billing works: distance bands explained

Under Support at Home, transport is billed per trip using distance bands – NOT per hour or per kilometre. This is one of the most common reasons bills get rejected, so it's important to get it right.

How Distance Bands Work

You charge based on the total distance of the trip, using set price bands:

- 0-10km: \$[X amount]
- 11-20km: \$[Y amount]
- 21-30km: \$[Z amount]
- And so on...

Important: It's ONE charge per trip, not hourly rates or per-kilometre charges.

Real Examples



Correct

You drive Mrs. Chen 8km to her doctor's appointment. You bill the 0-10km band once as a \$/trip representation.



Wrong

Billing \$50 per hour for a 2-hour trip



Wrong

Billing \$2 per kilometre for a 25km journey



Correct

You take Mr. Patel 15km to the shops. You bill the 11-20km band once, even if the trip takes 45 minutes, and include it on your invoice as \$/trip.



Wrong

Billing multiple distance bands for one continuous trip



When transport is just part of another service you're providing

Sometimes, transport isn't a separate service you charge for; it's simply part of another service you're already providing for your client. This can be a bit confusing, but it's important to understand when you should or shouldn't bill for travel.

The main thing to remember is whether the transport is essential for your client to do the activity you're supporting them with. For instance, if you take your client out for morning tea and you're there to chat and provide social support, the ride there is just part of that social support service. Similarly, if you're helping your client with grocery shopping – selecting items and assisting them in the store – then driving them to and from the shop is included in that shopping assistance. You wouldn't charge for the transport separately in these cases.

Individual Social Support (SERV-0010)

Social activities between you and your client, such as taking your client out for morning tea at a local café

Accompanied Activities (SERV-0011)

Support to attend appointments, events, or activities where you provide assistance during the appointment or event

Cultural Support (SERV-0012)

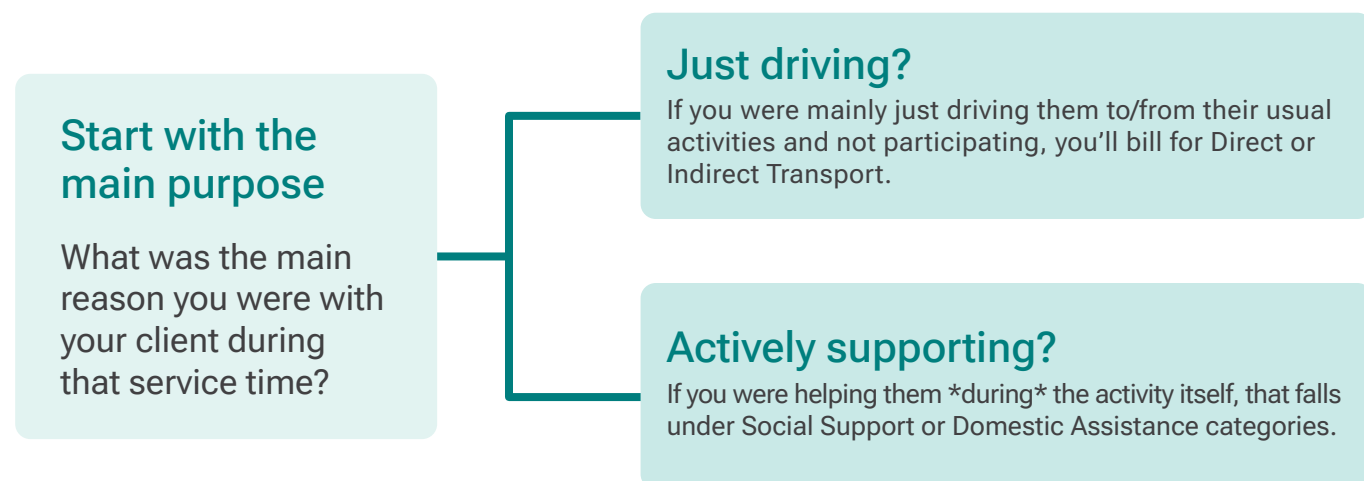
Support engaging in cultural activities including assistance attending cultural and community events for diverse populations

If you mention transport or travel on your bill, but you're not charging extra for it – it's just part of the overall service description and included in your hourly rate – **that's perfectly fine** and shows you're billing correctly. It simply means the travel was embedded in the main service.



Quick guide: How to bill for travel with your clients

Ever wonder what happens after you send in an invoice again? Knowing the ropes can definitely ease some stress! Think of it this way: when you resubmit, it's like we're seeing it for the very first time. We'll check everything from start to finish, just like a brand new bill.



Bill for travel (transport) if:

- Your main job was driving them.
- You didn't do much hands-on help during the actual activity.
- Your client went into their appointment or activity by themselves.
- You waited in the car or a waiting area.
- It was just a drop-off and pick-up service.

Travel is part of the service (embedded) if:

- You were actively involved in the activity with your client.
- You offered emotional or practical support.
- You helped them make decisions or find their way around.
- You chatted with them and were social during the outing.
- You helped them with shopping or at their appointment.

If you're ever unsure when you're writing up your notes, try to think about it from your client's point of view: Were you actively helping them *during* the activity, or just getting them *to* the activity? This simple distinction will help you correctly classify your service and make sure you bill accurately for the care you provide.



Medical appointments and shopping: Practical scenarios

Scenario: Picking up your client after an appointment

Let's say you pick up your client after their specialist appointment and simply drive them home.

How to bill it: This falls under **Direct Transport (SERV-0016)**. You're billing for the ride itself. The reason is that you weren't actively involved or providing support during their appointment, just getting them from one place to another.

Why it matters for Support at Home: Transport services have their own funding categories. Billing this correctly ensures your client's travel needs are covered without impacting their budget for hands-on assistance, and it keeps your service records clear and compliant.

Scenario: Waiting for your client at the pharmacy

You drive your client to the pharmacy, and while they go inside to collect their medication, you wait in the car or a waiting area.

How to bill it: This is also billed as **Direct Transport (SERV-0016)**. Your primary role here was getting them to the pharmacy. Even though you waited, you weren't helping them *with* the pharmacy tasks.

Why it matters for Support at Home: Similar to doctor appointments, this is seen as a travel-focused service. It's crucial to distinguish it from active support inside the pharmacy to ensure proper allocation of funds designated for transport versus direct personal assistance.

Scenario: Helping your client inside the pharmacy

You take your client to the pharmacy, and instead of waiting outside, you go in with them and actively help them get their prescription filled, perhaps by speaking with the pharmacist or finding items.

How to bill it: This is billed as **Social Support – Accompanied Activities (SERV-0011)**. You're providing direct support that goes beyond just driving them there; you're assisting them during the activity itself.

Why it matters for Support at Home: This kind of active assistance taps into a different part of your client's support budget. Getting this right means your client receives the full benefit of personal support, and it accurately reflects the hands-on care you provided, which is distinct from purely transport services.



Shopping and errands: practical scenarios

Scenario: Helping your client grocery shop

You drive your client to the supermarket, go in with them, help them choose items, and then carry the groceries to the car and into their home.

How to bill it: This should be billed as **Domestic Assistance – Shopping (SERV-0003)**. The travel is part of the service, but the main support is helping them with their shopping tasks.

Why it matters for Support at Home: This covers the practical, in-person assistance your client needs to manage daily tasks. Billing it under Domestic Assistance ensures their funds are used for the support they receive for everyday activities like shopping.

Scenario: Just dropping your client off at the markets

You drive your client to the local markets, drop them off so they can do their shopping independently, and then either wait for them or come back later to pick them up

How to bill it: This is **Direct Transport (SERV-0016)**. You're providing the ride, but no actual assistance with the shopping itself.

Why it matters for Support at Home: This clearly distinguishes between enabling independent activity through transport and providing direct assistance. It ensures funds are allocated accurately – for the ride to facilitate independence, rather than hands-on support.

Scenario: Picking up a prescription for your client

You go to the chemist to pick up your client's prescription for them, without them accompanying you.

How to bill it: This is considered **Domestic Assistance – Shopping (SERV-0003)**. It's similar to picking up groceries; you're completing an essential errand for them.

Why it matters for Support at Home: Picking up prescriptions is a key part of supporting a client's health management. Billing it under Domestic Assistance ensures this vital task is covered as an everyday living support, even if your client isn't present during the errand.



Social participation and community activities: When is it transport, and when is it support?

Deciding how to bill for social and community activities can sometimes be tricky. That's because these activities often involve both driving your client somewhere and spending time with them. The main thing to remember is this: How much are you involved in the activity?

If you just drive your client to a place and leave, that's pure transportation. But if you stay and join in with your client during the activity, then you're providing social support, and the transport is just part of that service

Practical examples:

Just giving a ride (Direct Transport – SERV-0016): Imagine you drive your client to a community center event and then leave them there, coming back later to pick them up. You're simply providing the ride. This is billed as **Direct Transport (SERV-0016)** because your role was only to get them there; you didn't stay and participate in the activity with them. It's about getting them from one place to another.

Joining in (Accompanied Activities – SERV-0011):

Let's say you take your client to a morning tea at their club, and you stay, enjoy coffee with the group, and chat with everyone. The drive is part of it, but your main role was helping your client connect socially and participate. This is billed as Accompanied Activities (SERV-0011) because your support goes beyond just transport – you're actively engaging with them during the activity

Assess your engagement

Did you stay and participate with your client?

Identify your support

What kind of help did you give during the activity?

Document everything

Describe your social or participation support in detail.



Your simple guide to transport billing under Support at Home

Explain why you're there

Always clearly note the main reason for each service.

Was it just to drive someone, or were you joining them for an activity?

Include travel in your rates

When you set your service rates, make sure they cover travel time and costs.

That way, you won't need to add separate travel charges if the service being supplied is not 'Direct Transport

Help your team understand

Ensure everyone – from support workers to billing staff – knows the transport rules, can tell different service types apart, and documents everything clearly.

Bill per trip, not hourly

Always charge for direct and indirect transport per trip, not by the hour or per kilometer. Your rates should reflect different distance ranges.

Figure out the main purpose

Ask yourself: What's the main point of this trip? Is it purely transport, or is it part of a social or household service?

What not to charge for

Never bill for your team's commute, travel between different clients, petrol, tolls, parking, or the time they spend traveling to start their shift.

Check your billing often

Regularly review your billing to spot any issues early. This helps you provide targeted training before you submit bills.

Getting transport billing right under Support at Home means understanding the rules and the thinking behind them. When you're unsure, just ask yourself: "What was the primary service I was there to provide?" If it was simply "getting them from A to B," then bill it as transport. But if you were there for participation, accompaniment, or helping out during an activity, then you should bill it as the appropriate support service, with travel costs already built into your rate. Clear notes, consistently applying these ideas, and regular team training will help you succeed and keep your services running smoothly.