

Living Away From Home Allowance 2026

The Living Away from Home Allowance (LAFHA) provides financial assistance to eligible NSW families who must board their children away from home to access education.

Eligibility pre-conditions

Students must:

1. be living away from their usual NSW home address
2. have a primary carer who is a permanent resident of NSW
3. be enrolled at either a government secondary school (Years 7-12) or a non-government secondary school of preferred religion.*

**This provision allows students who live close to a state border to attend a school in an adjoining state NSW, QLD, SA, VIC, or the ACT.*

2026 entitlement

Living Away from Home Allowance is to the value of **\$2,580** Year 11 and 12 students who meet the geographically isolated criteria (2.1) may be eligible for an additional allowance of **\$593**.

The allowance is effective from the commencement of the year in which the application is received and is paid annually in two equal instalments.

Completed applications should be emailed to:

Rural and Distance Education

Email: rde@det.nsw.edu.au

Closing dates

Applications for 2026 will not be accepted after 30 September 2026.

1. For the full year payment, applications are due by 30 June 2026.
2. Any applications received after 30 June 2026 and on or before 30 September 2026 will receive the second semester payment only.

For assistance contact Rural and Distance Education (02) 6334 8070 or email rde@det.nsw.edu.au

Application important information

Please ensure that all relevant sections of the application are completed fully to avoid delays in processing payment. These sections include:

- Section 1 — Student information
- Section 2 — Parent(s) or carer(s) information
- Section 3 — Adjusted family income calculation
- Section 4 — Eligibility criteria (complete ONE only)
- Section 5 — Payment instructions
- Section 6 — Parent/carer declaration
- Section 7 — School principal certification

Changes in family circumstances

The Rural and Distance Education team in Bathurst must be notified within 14 days of any changes in family circumstances from those given in this application. **Failure to do this may result in the cancellation of the allowance.** Notification should be in writing to the address above or by email to rde@det.nsw.edu.au

Renewal of application

Unless family circumstances change, there is no need for the family to renew the application annually, unless specifically requested to do so by the Department of Education. **Family income will be reviewed when the student enters Year 9 and again in Year 11.**

Privacy statement

The personal information provided on this form, **Living Away From Home Allowance 2026** is being collected for the purpose of processing applications for the NSW Secondary Students Living Away from Home Allowance to support students required to board to attend an appropriate secondary school. It will be used by staff of the Department of Education for matters relating to the processing of applications. While the provision of this information is voluntary, if you do not provide all or any of this information it may limit the department's ability to give appropriate consideration to your application. This information will be stored securely. You may access or correct any personal information provided by contacting the Rural and Distance Education office.

Application

Section 1 - Student information

All applicants to complete these details.

Surname _____	Given names _____
Date of birth _____	School attended in 2025 _____
Home address _____	
State _____	Postcode _____
Postal address (if different from above) _____	
School the student will be attending in 2026:	
School name _____	
Address _____	
State _____	Postcode _____
Student's boarding address for 2026 if different from above:	
Address _____	
State _____	Postcode _____
Please indicate the school year the student is in for 2026: Year _____	
Name and address of the nearest government secondary school to the student's home address:	
Name of government school _____	
School address _____	Postcode _____
Distance by road directly from home address _____ km	

Section 2 - Parent(s) or carer(s) Information

All applicants to complete these details.

Surname (parent 1) _____	
Given name (s) _____	Title _____
Surname (parent 2/partner) _____	
Given name (s) _____	Title _____
Residential address _____ _____ State _____ Postcode _____	
Postal address (if different from above) _____ _____ State _____ Postcode _____	
Email address _____	
Home telephone number _____ Work telephone number _____	
What is the name of the local town/city that you most frequently visit to purchase household supplies? Town _____ Distance from your home to this town/city _____ km	
What is the name of the road (or roads) that you would normally use to access this town/city - Road _____	
Please provide your rural address number (RAN) if known _____	
Please provide a map showing your location e.g. a Google Map, which clearly indicates the distance in kilometres.	

Section 3 - Adjusted family income calculation

Adjusted family income is the combined taxable income from all sources in the 2024/2025 tax year, of each person who will contribute to the maintenance and upkeep of the student in 2026, less **\$2,181** for a dependent spouse and **\$1,608** for each dependent child (where applicable).

Your **taxable income** is the figure advised in the Notice of Assessment issued by the Australian Taxation Office.

To be eligible in 2026, the family's adjusted income for the 2024/2025 financial year must not exceed **\$84,456**.

Separated, divorced or single parents must disclose any maintenance or child support payments received from a spouse, former spouse or other parent of the student as well as any defacto/partnership incomes. These amounts must be included in the family income before any deductions are made.

Applications must have attached a copy of the 2024/2025 Notice/s of Assessment from the Australian Taxation Office and, if applicable - Centrelink statements.

Please complete the table below to calculate your adjusted family income.

Item	Example	Your calculation must be completed
Taxable income from all sources		
Person 1	\$49,981	\$
Person 2	\$22,018	\$
Other income including any additional payments, e.g. child support	\$457	\$
Total family taxable income	\$72,456	\$
Subtract deductions as applicable		
Dependent spouse (\$2,181)	N/A	\$
Dependent child/ren (No of children x \$1,608)	(4 children) \$6,432	\$
Total deductions	\$6,432	\$
Adjusted family income	\$66,024.00	\$

Please contact the Allowances Officer on telephone 02 6334 8070 for support or assistance.

Section 4 - Eligibility criteria

The application can only be made for ONE of the following 7 categories please choose: **Distance criteria**

Category 2.1 — Distance to the nearest government secondary school –

The distance between the student's home and nearest government secondary school is in excess of 48 kilometres by road each way or the travelling time required from the transport pick up point to the school exceeds 90 minutes each way.

Category 2.2 — Distance to a school of preferred religious denomination –

The distance between the student's home and nearest secondary school of preferred religion is in excess of 48 kilometres by road each way or the travelling time required from the transport pick up point to the school exceeds 90 minutes each way. This school must be of a specific religious denomination, not a non-denominational secondary school.

Category 2.3 — Distance from a government secondary school that offers agriculture at a senior level.

The student is attending a NSW government agricultural high school specifically to study agriculture through to the Higher School Certificate level. The student's home must be more than 48 kilometres from a government secondary school that consistently offers agriculture as a Higher School Certificate subject.

Other circumstances criteria

Category 3.1 — One-parent family –

The student is from a one-parent family and the parent is required to work and so cannot provide adequate supervision of the student before and after school hours.

Category 3.2 — Medical –

It is established that it is essential to the management of the student's medical condition that they live away from home.

Category 3.3 — Impassable roads –

It is very likely that the student will not have reasonable access to an appropriate government school or school of preferred religion on at least 20 days of the school year because of impassable roads (refers to public roads only).

Category 3.4 — Change of place of residence when the student is in Year 12 –

The parents change their place of residence when the student is in Year 12 and it is considered undesirable that the student change schools during the year.

Eligibility criteria

Complete the details in only **one** of the following eligibility categories.

Category 2.1 - Distance to nearest government school

The distance by road directly from my home to the nearest government school is more than 48km.

School name _____ Distance is _____ km

The normal time taken to travel from the transport pick up point to the nearest government school is more than 90 minutes. Time taken is _____ min

There is a bus service from my home to the school? Please indicate:

OR

Category 2.2 - Distance to a school of preferred religious denomination

Details of nearest secondary school of preferred religious denomination from your home.

Name of school _____

Religious denomination of this school _____

Address of school, including suburb or town

_____ State _____ Postcode _____

Distance from your home to this school is _____ km

OR

Category 2.3 - Distance to a school for the study of agriculture

Students must be attending a NSW government agricultural high school specifically because of an intention to study agriculture at a senior level. The student's residence must be more than 48 kilometres from a government secondary school that consistently offers agriculture as a Higher School Certificate subject. The Rural and Distance Education office will verify that appropriate courses in agriculture are not available at a local school before approving the allowance.

Name of closest government secondary school _____

Distance from your home to that school _____ km

OR

Category 3.1- other circumstances (one-parent family)

Applications under this category will be considered where it is established that the student's sole carer is required to work and so cannot provide adequate supervision of the student before and after school hours.

To support your application, a Statutory Declaration is to be attached, signed by the sole carer, setting out:

a: why supervision cannot be arranged

b: that the carer is not in any current relationship.

A Statutory Declaration is attached (Yes/No): _____

Category 3.2 - other circumstances (medical condition)

It must be essential to the management of the student's medical condition that he or she lives away from home. Please attach a letter or certificate from a relevant medical specialist stating that this is the case, and the period of time that the student will need to be away from home.

Medical documentation is attached (Yes/No): _____

OR

Category 3.3 - other circumstances (impassable roads)

The student does not have reasonable access to an appropriate government school or preferred denominational school at least 20 days of the school year because of impassable roads. (Refers to public roads only.)

Applications must be supported by documented evidence (e.g., from the local council).

Please give brief particulars of the road concerned and how you are affected by it

Evidence is attached (Yes/No): _____

OR

Category 3.4 - other circumstances (change of place of residence)

It is a condition of the allowance that the department is advised of any change in the family's place of residence during any school year. Applications under this category will be considered only where the student is in Year 12 and the student's parents or carers have changed their place of residence to a location that is more than 48km from the student's current school or the student's travelling time to the current school would exceed 90 minutes each way.

To support your application, please supply the following information.

Family's residential address before the relocation <hr/>
Family's new residential address <hr/>
Date of the relocation _____
Name of student's current school <hr/>
Distance from the family's new location to the student's school _____ km

Section 5 - Payment instructions

Please nominate where the payment is to be directed (A or B). Please write clearly and ensure ALL details are completed to enable prompt payment.

A) To the parent/carer- by direct deposit

<p>A1: Direct deposit to bank</p> <p>Account name _____</p> <p>BSB ____/____ Account number _____</p> <p>Name of bank/building society/credit union _____</p> <p>Branch name (town/city) _____</p> <p>Signed _____</p> <p>(Account holder)</p>

B) To the school/hostel

<p>Title (e.g. Secretary, Bursar)</p> <p>_____</p> <p>School or hostel name</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Address</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Town or suburb _____ State _____ Postcode _____</p> <p>Contact telephone numbers Day _____ Evening _____</p> <p>I AUTHORISE PAYMENT AS NOMINATED ABOVE (parent/carer to sign)</p> <p>Parent/carer signature _____ Date _____</p>
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Section 6 - Parent/carer declaration

This section must be signed by the parents or carers

1. I/We am/are responsible for the student's education fees and boarding fees
2. I/We am/are responsible for the full support of the student
3. I/We will inform the Rural & Distance Education office (RDE@det.nsw.edu.au) or mail to (PO Box 717, Bathurst 2795) within 14 days of changes to any of the information given on this application during the period for which the scholarship is approved. In particular, the office must be notified of any of the following:
 - a. the family taxable income exceeds the means tested amount
 - b. the student transfers to another school
 - c. the parents' place of residence changes
 - d. the parent in a one-parent family remarries or re-partners
 - e. a student in Year 11 or 12 who previously received the allowance based on criteria other than the isolation factor is eligible to claim the additional allowance for students who are geographically isolated.
4. The information on this application is true and accurate in all respects.

Other dependent children – please insert details of dependent children.

Surname	Given name	Date of birth	School attending in 2026 (if applicable)	Receiving LAFHA in 2026
				Yes, No or NA
				Yes, No or NA
				Yes, No or NA

Parent/carer (1)

Name _____

Signature _____

Parent/carer (2)

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Section 7 - School principal certification

Please obtain the principal's certification of the school your child is attending in 2026 and attach it to your application before you send it in.

Principal's certification

I certify the student named below has enrolled and is attending this school in 2026 for a course of study leading to the Higher School Certificate.

Student's full name _____

in Year (for 2026) _____

of (student's home address) _____

State _____ Postcode _____

Principal's name (please print) _____

Principal's signature _____

School name _____

Date _____