

L2P Learner Driver Mentor Program

L2P MENTOR HANDBOOK

L2P
LEARNER
DRIVER
MENTOR
PROGRAM

Introduction

Overview of the L2P program

The L2P program is a state wide initiative managed by Vic Roads. It is aimed at assisting young learner drivers who are facing significant barriers complete the 120 mandatory hours of on the road driving experience. These barriers may include lack of access to a vehicle or licenced driver, homelessness, social isolation and / or financial hardship.

L2P is a community based volunteer program designed to provide access to driving practice on public roads for learner drivers under the supervision of a fully licenced driver. The learner drivers are matched with a volunteer supervising driver (Mentor) from the community, who works with the learner so that they can achieve their goal of 120hrs.

The introduction of the 120 hours mandatory driving practice (which became effective July 1st 2008) was based on research which found that 120 hours of driving practice (undertaken in a number of different driving conditions) can significantly reduce the likelihood of crash involvement for young drivers.

Criteria for Learner Driver participants

The L2P program supports young people aged 16-20 years, who already have their Victorian learners permit and have been identified as facing significant barriers which prohibit them from obtaining their probationary driver's licence if they don't receive support from the community.

How the program works

Prior to matching a learner driver with a Mentor, they are provided with a minimum of 3 driving lessons with a professional driving instructor. These lessons focus on the basics of driving a car. Participants are required to demonstrate basic car control before beginning driving sessions with their volunteer supervisor/Mentor (Participants will have access to up to 7 lessons with a registered driving school throughout their time in the program to assess progress).

Participants will be matched to a volunteer Mentor who will guide their development as safe drivers.

Participants will, with the assistance of their Mentor and Junction Support Services, be provided with the opportunity to obtain on the road driving practice in a variety of travel conditions. This is an essential stage that provides participants with the opportunity to obtain their mandatory 120hrs of driving practice, as required by Vic Roads.

Role of a Mentor

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a relationship where a more experienced person helps a less experienced person to achieve their goals.

Most people have at one stage in their lives had at least one informal Mentor, or trusted role model, who provides them with support, encouragement and advice.

Mentoring can take various forms, from highly structured one-on-one to a group social focus, to work place or school based Mentoring. The main aim for a Mentoring program is to link generous community people to others who need a bit of support, friendship and your time.

The role of a Mentor is to

- Offer support, encouragement, optimism and hope
- Offer guidance, support and realistic advice as requested
- Help with goal setting, suggest possible courses of action, and support the young person in making choices.
- Help young people identify their strengths and promote self-esteem
- Be a sounding board for ideas and problems
- Help young people develop skills
- Offer a consistent, non-judgemental relationship
- Help the young person deal with a sense of alienation

An effective Mentor

- Is a good listener
- Is non-judgemental
- Is patient, tolerant and flexible
- Is reliable and consistent
- Respects others values, cultures and viewpoints
- Likes young people and cares about their future
- Shares their own knowledge and life skills
- Can develop and work towards shared goals with a young person
- Respects a young person's right to choice
- Seeks to understand a young person's struggles
- Empathises rather than sympathises
- Sees solutions rather than barriers
- Is committed and available for the duration of the program

Process of becoming an L2P Mentor

1. Complete the L2P volunteer application form and return to the L2P Program Coordinator.
2. The L2P Program Coordinator will contact you to arrange an interview that will help determine your suitability for the program and assist in the matching process as well as provide you with extra information about the program. Volunteers are to provide 2 personal referees.
3. L2P Program Coordinator to contact referees.
4. Satisfactory completion of a Police Check, Working with Children Check and Driver History Report.
5. Attend and participate in the Vic Roads L2P training sessions.
6. Upon successful completion of the training, the L2P Program Coordinator will contact you as soon as a suitable match has been found. You will be provided with some information on the Mentee and allowed time to decide whether you agree to the match or not. Once you have accepted a Mentee we will arrange an initial meeting.

Dos & Don'ts for L2P Mentors

- L2P Mentors and L2P Mentees are requested NOT to speak to the media or make public comment on behalf of Junction Support Services without permission from the L2P Program Coordinator.
- Do not lend money, or give/receive gifts (other than a congratulations card or box of chocolates at the end of the mentoring period).
- L2P Mentors are not to disclose personal details of their L2P Mentee e.g. not give the address or phone number of your Mentee to friends or acquaintances. L2P Mentors must limit the information they collect about their L2P Mentee. Please do not keep identifying details (names, addresses etc) on any written notes and limit the information written down that is directly relevant to your role as Mentor or share this information with others outside of the agency.
- If a friend or acquaintance is interested in meeting your L2P Mentee, make sure you approach the L2P Mentee first and ensure that they are comfortable with this to occur.
- L2P Mentors are expected to act responsibly and make sure safety is maintained at all times.
- If injured while volunteering for the L2P program, please contact the L2P Program Coordinator for an incident report.
- Maintain confidentiality: do not discuss L2P Mentee information outside of the program.
- Inform the L2P Program Coordinator of any problems or incidents that occur during the program with you, your Mentee or someone else.
- Treat others respectfully and with consideration.
- Be prepared to take responsibility for any traffic offences you incur while driving (behind the wheel) as a L2P Mentor such as parking tickets and speeding fines.

Dos & Don'ts for L2P Mentors (continued)

- As a L2P Mentor you are an ambassador for our program and a role model to a vulnerable young person. Therefore, we ask you to reframe from using drugs and alcohol when meeting with your Mentee.
- If, during the duration of your Mentoring relationship, you encounter issues that you are unable or unauthorized to handle, please contact the L2P Program Coordinator. Always discuss areas of concern with the Program Coordinator first. Do not take it upon yourself to refer outside assistance to the Mentee. It is best to have issues dealt with in a coordinated way, ensuring that the Mentee is fully informed of any action taken. It is also important to remember that you may not have access to all the necessary information to be able to make a good choice for the L2P Mentee – particularly if it is dealing with anything outside the role you are requested to perform (such actions may also upset the internal process for the agency).
- L2P Mentors are obligated to disclose any breach of the above to the L2P Program Coordinator.

Role of the L2P Coordinator

The role of the L2P Coordinator is to:

- Oversee the Mentor and Mentee screening and induction process
- Organise and oversee program training
- Provide Mentors with information of the organisations Policies and Procedures
- Match Mentees and Mentors together
- Coordinate access to the L2P cars
- Monitor the Mentor and Mentee progress in completing regular drives
- Provide Mentors and Mentees with ongoing support and assistance
- Organise professional driving lessons for Mentees as required
- Evaluate L2P Mentor/Mentee matches as appropriate
- Provide Mentors with the opportunity to take time out as needed or requested
- Provide written or verbal references regarding L2P Mentors involvement
- Collate information from participants to be used for statistics, data collection and evaluation purposes and feedback to you
- Maintain the confidentiality of Mentors. Your information will be kept in an individual file in a safe and secure place accessed only by Junction Support Services staff.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Does everyone have to do Mentor training?

Yes. The Mentor training gives everyone an opportunity to decide whether Mentoring is what they really want to do. The training also provides you with some valuable information on how to approach your role as a supervising driver, what your roles and responsibilities are and how to best work with the learner driver to get the most out of the experience. You will also be provided with some valuable resources which you will likely need to refer to throughout the program.

2. I used to be a professional driving instructor, do I still need to do the training?

Yes. Being a supervising driver is very different to being an instructor. It is important that you attend the training so you have a clear understanding of the distinction between the two roles.

3. How long does the training last?

The training is currently conducted over 2 weeknights and half a day on a weekend (usually over a 2 week period), depending on Vic Roads training availability.

4. What is covered in the training?

The training looks at the role of the supervising driver and explores the four stages of the learner driver period. The training will also look at how Mentors can best prepare for their driving sessions, particularly in the early stages of the learner driving period. Likewise, the training will look at developing positive relationships with young people, working with young people, as well as exploring communication and listening skills.

This training is delivered by trained Vic Roads staff and will cover the following topics:

- Novice driver crashes and safety
- Factors contributing to crashes
- The role of practice in skill acquisition and safer driving
- The importance of a graded or staged approach to the learner period
- The graded approach to the learner period recommended by Vic Roads
- Working with young people
- Issues concerning disadvantaged young people
- The coaching role
- Providing feedback as a supervising driver
- The program content, processes, and rules

5. What sort of time commitment do I need to make?

The training is 10 hours in total which is held over 3 sessions, depending on Vic Roads training availability. Once you have completed the training and are matched with a learner driver, you should allow approximately 1 to 2 hours per week; however the amount of time spent is an individual choice and can be negotiated between yourself and your Mentee.

6. What sort of support is available when I become a Mentor?

You will have the support of the Program Coordinator. The Program Coordinator will organise regular opportunities to debrief and express concerns. Likewise, there will be opportunities to meet with other Mentors involved in the program, allowing you to share your experiences and gain feedback.

7. Do I have to provide my personal details to my Mentee?

This is a personal choice. Most Mentors do end up swapping contact details with their Mentee but you should wait until you feel ready to do this.

9. Can I use my own vehicle for driving sessions with the learner driver?

No. You may only use the vehicles provided for the program, which are covered by Junction Support Services Insurance Policy, in the event of an accident.

Vehicle Operational Procedures

General Information

- The two L2P designated vehicles are both manual; however, an automatic can be made available.
- Comprehensive Vehicle Insurance is provided by Junction Support Services.
- Depending on the location of the drive, the L2P Mentor and Mentee will either meet at Junction Support Services Wodonga Office (for those undertaking the Wodonga program) or at pre-designated location for participants from the Shires of Towong and Indigo; i.e. Beechworth, Tallangatta or Rutherglen etc.
- Refuelling of the car should occur before the gauge is below ½ tank. If after your driving session you notice the fuel gauge is at or below ½ tank, please refuel the car or in exceptional circumstances contact the L2P Program Coordinator.
- Upon completion of the driving session the vehicle shall be returned to either Junction Support Services office (for Wodonga participants) or at a mutually agreed location and the keys handed to the Program Coordinator or staff member at the reception desk where appropriate.

Vehicle Operational Procedures (Continued)

- The Mentor must complete the vehicle logbook for each driving session recording; the date, odometer reading at start and finish, total kilometres travelled, the starting and finishing times, Mentor's and Learner Driver's name.
- The vehicle is for the sole purpose of the L2P program and is not for personal use.
- Mentors are never to use their personal vehicle for the purposes of this program, as they will not be covered by our insurance policy.
- Where appropriate the Mentor and Mentee will meet at Junction Support Services Wodonga Office at the designated time (unless alternative arrangements have been made in conjunction with the Program Coordinator).
- The Mentor and the Mentee will complete a basic vehicle inspection prior to each drive. This will benefit the Learner Driver by providing experience in car maintenance and safety checks.
- The Mentor must ensure that the Mentee produce their Learner Permit before each session (it is a requirement by law that learner permits are carried whilst driving).
- The Mentee must also show their license to the Mentor to fulfil their requirement to carry their license at all times whilst driving or supervising a Learner Driver.
- Driving sessions can be terminated by the Mentor if weather/road conditions are unsafe or the Mentee is not following instructions or driving in a safe manner.
- Mentors can cancel the driving session if they believe the Mentee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Vehicle Booking Procedures:

- To ensure effective management of the use of the vehicle, all bookings are to be arranged in consultation with the L2P Program Coordinator.
- Bookings can be made in person or via phone, text or email.
- It is preferred that 24 hours notice be given prior to a cancellation of a booking.

Accident Reporting Procedures:

In the event of an accident, please:

- Ensure that any injured person is immediately attended to and that medical attention, if necessary, is arranged.
- **DO NOT ADMIT LIABILITY.** All insurance companies require you not to admit liability at any time.
- Call the Police (if there is any injury to either party or either party requests police attendance) and advise them of the accident.

Accident Reporting Procedures (Continued):

- Note all the details of the people and vehicles involved in the accident, including all details of independent witnesses. The following details are some suggestions as to the information you should supply and record:
 - Makes of vehicles involved in the accident
 - All registration numbers
 - All drivers involved names and addresses collected
 - All licence numbers
 - Contact telephone numbers (home and work)
 - Owner names (if different to the drivers)
 - You should provide your own name with Junction Support Services as the address
 - Insurance company names and policy numbers
 - Names of any witnesses
 - Addresses and telephone numbers of any witnesses

This information must be reported via the L2P Coordinator who will then forward the information to Fleet Management. You will need to complete a Vehicle Accident Form.

Breakdown Procedure

Each vehicle is covered by a breakdown service. There is a sticker on the lower left hand side of the windscreen with the relevant phone number to call.

Body Damage

Any damage to the vehicle should be reported to the L2P Coordinator who will in turn forward the information to Fleet Management. This includes any scratches and scrapes which have broken the paint work.

Loss of personal items

The loss of personal property from a Junction Support Services vehicle is not covered by our insurance, and is the responsibility of the Mentor. Please ensure that your own insurance covers items of a significant value for this