

For: FAS Employees

Transit Promotion Program (TPP)

Approved by: Administrator



1 Overview

A

Background

In the interest of relieving traffic congestion, reducing air pollution, and expanding commuting alternatives for employees, Article 49 of the agreement between FAS and American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Local 3976, and Article 37 of the agreement between FAS and the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA), implements TPP which provides tax-free benefits/incentives to employees to encourage using mass transit, vanpools, or carpools.

B

Purpose

This notice informs FAS employees that TPP is implemented as follows.

- The Executive Order covering Federal Workforce Transportation, dated April 21, 2000, instructing Federal agencies to provide up to \$65 per month in transit passes (Metrocheck) to their employees in the National Capital Region, is implemented June 1, 2000.
- Effective June 4, 2000, employees **outside** the National Capital Region are eligible to receive pre-tax transit and parking benefits.
- Eligibility for the program has been expanded to all employees using mass transit, vanpools, or carpools for commuting to and from the worksite.
- Pre-tax transit and parking benefits have been added to the program, effective pay period 12, June 4, 2000.

Continued on the next page

Disposal Date	Distribution
May 1, 2001	All FAS employees

Notice AS-2008

1 Overview (Continued)

B

Purpose (Continued)

- All eligible employees wishing to enroll or to continue their current enrollment in TPP must submit FFAS-13 to their Transit Program Area Representative.
 - There is no change in transit benefits for Foreign Service secretaries, according to Article 37.2 of the AFSA contract.
 - The Transit Coordinator and the appropriate units of Departmental Administration will routinely share information about participation in TPP.
 - A training session will be held to explain the revised program.
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C

Responsible Official

The Chief, Performance Management, Benefits, and Awards Branch, HRD, is responsible for implementation and operation of FFAS mission area transit promotion programs.

2 TPP Guidelines

A

Definition of Employees

Employees are individuals that:

- receive salary checks from FAS
- are employees as defined in 5 U.S.C. 2105.

This includes permanent and temporary Civil Service and Foreign Service employees.

B

Guidelines for Transit Benefits

FAS has established the following guidelines in support of TPP.

- All employees **in** the National Capital Region are eligible to participate in Metrocheck and pre-tax transit and parking benefits.
 - All employees **outside** the National Capital Region are eligible to participate in pre-tax transit and parking benefits.
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2 TPP Guidelines (Continued)

B
**Guidelines for
Transit Benefits
(Continued)**

- All parties agree that to be eligible for 1 or more of these transit benefits, employees must, as a normal method of commuting, use a mass transportation system, commuter highway vehicle, carpool, and/or vanpool that is a member of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Federal Metrocheck Program, or a similar arrangement at other geographic locations.
 - Recertification is required any time commuting arrangements change, such as driving alone to the workplace, being on temporary duty at another workplace, or being on leave for more than 2 weeks.
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C
**Transit
Allowances**

FAS has established, for those employees eligible to participate, the following allowances:

- \$65 per month for Metrocheck for employees in the National Capital Region, or the actual cost, if less
 - pre-tax set aside up to \$65 per month from each eligible employee's gross income before the employee's taxes are computed for employees outside the National Capital Region, or the actual cost, if less, for the transit benefit
 - pre-tax set aside up to \$175 per month from each eligible employee's gross income before the employee's taxes are computed, or the actual cost, if less, computed on the basis of 20 workdays per month, for the parking benefit
 - \$30 per month, or the actual cost, if less, for Foreign Service secretaries stationed overseas.
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D
**Computing
Parking Benefits**

The amount of the deduction for the parking benefit is determined by the amount paid to park a vehicle at a remote location from which the commute is continued to the workplace by public transportation, mass transit, carpool, or vanpool. This does **not** include parking at or near the residence but does include 2 or more person carpools parking at a remote location or near the workplace.

- The amount of deduction is determined by computing how much money is spent on parking related to the commute to and from work in a typical month.
- Taxes will not be deducted from that amount of pay.

Example: Computation shows eligible for a parking benefit at the rate of \$100 per month, meaning that taxes will not be deducted from that part (\$100) of the salary.

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3 Action

A

Employee Action

All current and prospective participants in TPP shall:

- complete FFAS-13 (Exhibit 1)
- submit it to their respective Program Area Transit Representative who will consolidate and forward to the FAS Transit Coordinator for further processing.

Notes: Obtain FFAS-13 from the u:\wpforms directory.

The revised Metrocheck Program is effective June 1, 2000. Pre-tax transit and parking benefits will begin June 4, 2000 (pay period 12), or the next pay period after an approved FFAS-13 is received by HRD. All pre-tax benefits requested must be converted from a "per month" to a "per pay period" basis. Neither Metrocheck nor the pre-tax transit and parking benefits may be retroactive.

B

**Transit and
Parking Benefits
Contacts**

Direct any questions about TPP to 1 of the following contacts.

Contact	Telephone Number
Gloria Abbott, FAS Transit Coordinator	202-720-7457
Juliet McBride, HRD	202-418-9029
Charles Soisson, HRD	202-418-9000

Completing FFAS-13, Metropolitan Transit Promotion Program Application

REPRODUCE LOCALLY. Include form number and date on all reproductions

FFAS-13 (05-09-00) METROPOLITAN TRANSIT PROMOTION PROGRAM APPLICATION (See Reverse for Privacy Act)	U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services		
	1. Agency <input type="checkbox"/> FSA <input type="checkbox"/> RMA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAS		
2. Pay Period <p style="text-align: center;">12</p>			

The Metropolitan Transit Promotion Program is open to all FSA and RMA Headquarters employees located in the Washington Metropolitan Area, and all FAS employees. If at any time during your participation in the program, you no longer meet eligibility requirements, you must notify your Metrochek Coordinator listed below. If your mode of transportation changes, you must complete another application and submit it to your Metrochek Coordinator. The maximum Metrochek benefit per eligible employee will be \$25.00 per month for FSA and RMA, and \$65.00 per month for FAS employees, in the National Capital Region, or the amount that is equal to the actual cost, if less.

PART A - EMPLOYEE INFORMATION

3. Name and Home Address of Employee Jay Kay Transit 123 Main Street Anytown, USA 12345		4. Social Security Number 123-45-6789	5. Badge No. 123
		6. Room Number 6073-S	7. Mail Stop 0581
8. Office/Division/Branch COTS	9. Grade 12	10. Telephone Number (Area Code) (202) 666-5555	11. Fax Number (Area Code) (202) 666-7777

PART B - GENERAL INFORMATION

12. Are you named on a worksite parking permit with USDA or any other Federal agency. (Please Check) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			
13. How do you commute to work? (Check all that apply)		14. Please indicate below how many trips taken per average week.	
		MORNING	EVENING
<input type="checkbox"/> Carpool			
<input type="checkbox"/> Vanpool 2/ - Please provide name of Vanpool Company →			
<input type="checkbox"/> Commuter Bus 2/			
<input type="checkbox"/> Commuter Train 2/			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Metrorail		5	5
<input type="checkbox"/> Metrobus			
<input type="checkbox"/> Other →			
15. What is your current Total Monthly Fare Cost (Do not include parking fees in calculating fare). \$ 130.00		16. What is your Monthly Parking Cost? \$ 45.00	
17. Name and Location of Parking Facility SHADY GROVE		18. Which Commuter Station do you depart from? SHADY GROVE	

PART C - BENEFITS REQUESTED

19. Metrochek (Per month) \$ 65.00	20. Tax Free Transit Benefit (Per Pay Period) 3/ \$ 0	21. Tax Free Parking Benefit (Per Pay Period) 3/ \$ 20.77
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PART D - EMPLOYEE CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that I am employed by The Department of Agriculture, Farm Service Agency, Risk Management Agency or Foreign Agricultural Service and am not named on a worksite carpool parking permit with USDA or any other federal agency. I will use this benefit for my regular daily commute to and/or from work, and will not transfer it to anyone else. In addition, I certify that the monthly transit benefit I am receiving does not exceed my average monthly commuting cost (based on a 20 day month commute). This certification concerns a matter within the jurisdiction of an agency of the United States and making false, fictitious, or fraudulent certification may render the maker subject to criminal prosecution under Title 18, United States Code, Section 1001, civil penalty action providing for administrative recoveries of up to \$5,000 per violation, and/or agency disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

22. Employee Signature <i>s/ Jay Kay Transit</i>	Date 05-22-00	PLEASE RETURN YOUR APPLICATION TO: ATTENTION MTTP COORDINATOR South Building - Stop 0564 Park Office Center - Stop 0581 L Street - Stop 0590 Program Area Representative (FAS employees only)
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PART E - AGENCY USE ONLY

23. Signature of Approving Official <i>John Doe</i>	Date 05-23-00
24. Type of Action (See reverse) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Start <input type="checkbox"/> Stop <input type="checkbox"/> Change	25. Application Status <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Disapproved (See reverse)

1/ If you are named on a worksite carpool parking permit with USDA or any other federal agency you cannot participate in this program.
 2/ This commuting method must be a member of the WMATA.
 3/ Tax free transit and parking benefits must be converted from per month to per pay period basis by multiplying the monthly amount by 12 and then dividing that amount by 26. For example, the computation for an employee eligible for \$40.00 per month tax free transit benefit would be: (\$40.00 X 12 = \$480.00 - 26 = \$18.46). \$18.46 is the amount for block 20. A similar computation is done in block 21 to convert the parking benefit from a per month to per pay period basis.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Completing FFAS-13, Metropolitan Transit Promotion Program Application (Continued)

FFAS-13 (05-09-00) Reverse

26. Reason for Stop or Change

27. Reason for Disapproval

NOTE: *This information is solicited under authority of Public Law 103-172 and 105-178. Furnishing the information on this form is voluntary, but failure to do so may result in disapproval of your request for a public transit fare benefit. The purpose of this information is to facilitate timely processing of your request, to ensure your eligibility, and to prevent misuse of the funds involved. This information will be matched with lists at other Federal agencies to ensure that you are not listed as a carpool participant or a holder of any other form of worksite carpool parking permit with USDA or any other Federal agency.*