



Integrity Training: NCUA Transit Subsidy Benefit Program

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Background and Objectives

- The Agency, under Executive Order No. 13150, Federal Workforce Transportation, and the Federal Employees Clean Air Incentives Act of 1993 (5 U.S.C. 7905), provides a non-taxable transit subsidy to qualified employees to encourage employees to use public transportation when commuting to and from work.
- The subsidy will be approximately equal to but not exceeding the employee's commuting cost, including parking fees, not to exceed the maximum level allowed by law (26 U.S.C. 132 (f)(2)) (Executive Order 13150).

Collaboration with DOT's TRANServe Division

- The Agency is under an interagency agreement (Agreement) with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to administer the transit subsidy benefit program.
- The agreement is three prong (regulatory compliance; monitoring and controls; and, recordation, accounting and reporting) to ensure proper administration. DOT executes the following tasks under the Agreement:
 - process transit subsidy benefit applications and provide needed support to program participants,
 - disburse the transit subsidy and maintain a records of disbursements, and
 - provide administrative reports to the Agency.



Eligibility

- **Employees Eligible for the Transit Subsidy Benefit** - The transit subsidy program is offered to non-field employees. Employees who met the following criterion are deemed qualified employees that are eligible for the subsidy benefit.
 - Use mass transportation to commute to and/or from work.
 - Does not receive mass transportation benefits from other sources.
 - Does not participate, directly or indirectly, in the Agency's parking program and/or have a parking permit, reserved or unreserved.
- **Eligible Transportation** - The transit subsidy may only be used toward the cost to commute via public transportation or vanpool. Parking expenses incurred at the commuter lot to use public transportation or vanpool are eligible.
 - **Public Transportation** – transportation provided in a mass transit vehicle or commuter highway vehicle, including: Rail (subway, commuter, light), and Bus (transit authority, commuter).
 - **Qualified Vanpool** –highway vehicle that seats at least six adults and one driver. At least 80% of total mileage is used to transport the riders to and from work. The number of riders must be at least 50% of the adult seating capability, not including the driver.

Enrollment Procedures and Resources

- Employees may find enrollment procedures and additional resources on NCUA Central under **OFCO**, **Travel** or TRANServe.dot.gov. Once you arrive at the landing page, navigate to the **Participants** site, then select **NCUA** to obtain specific Agency program information.

The screenshot displays the TRANServe website interface. At the top left is the U.S. Department of Transportation logo with the text "Business in motion". At the top right is the United States Department of Transportation logo and a search bar with a "Go" button. Below the header is a navigation menu with tabs for HOME, DEBIT CARD, RETURN OF EXCESS TRANSIT BENEFIT, RESOURCES, PARTICIPANTS, CONTACT US, and F.A.Q. The main content area features a "News" section with a background image of a transit station. Below the news section is a "DOT News Flash" titled "On furlough? What transit benefit adjustments are required?". The text explains that transit benefit participants using the TRANServe Debit Card do not need to take any action during furloughs. It also mentions that in the National Capital Region, TRANServe recommends federal employees use a separate SmarTrip card or paper fare card during furlough days. A link to a Federal Register notice is provided. To the right of the news flash is a "DOT Parking/Transit Office" section with contact information, including normal hours (Monday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.) and a date (Monday October 28, 2013). Below this is a link to "Mobile Commuter Store Bus at DOT HQ on Thursdays!". At the bottom right is a "Recent Bulletins" section with a list of links to various notices and updates.

Fare Media and Benefit Distribution

TRANServe will electronically distribute the benefit to program participants via fare media on a monthly basis.

SmarTrip Card

- A SmarTrip card will be offered for Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority mass transit commuters in the Central Office and Region II.
- Upon initial enrollment, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority mass transit commuters will be eligible to receive full reimbursement for the purchase of a SmarTrip card to be registered under the TRANServe Program.
- Funded on the 1st day of the benefit month.

TRANServe Debit Card

- Participants outside of the Central Office and Region II, or commute using a method where SmarTrip fare media is not accepted, will be offered a TRANServe debit card.
- Funded on the 10th of the preceding benefit month to allow participants to enough time to procure commute passes to the next month.

Lost, Stolen or Damaged Fare Media

- Once fare media is distributed, you are responsible for its safekeeping. Lost, stolen or damaged fare media will not be replaced.
- Lost, stolen or damaged SmarTrip® cards may be replaced. Employees may contact Metro via a sales office or online at www.wmata.com.
- For lost, stolen or damaged Debit Cards, contact JP Morgan Chase at UCARD Center (<https://ucard.chase.com>).

Employee Responsibilities

- Meet the program eligibility requirements.
- Complete this integrity awareness training before enrolling in the program or completing the annual certification.
- Enroll in the program and apply for the transit subsidy benefit through the Agency's web application.
- Register his or her SmarTrip Card, if applicable.
- Ensure proper use of the benefit. The subsidy can only be used for the commute between the participant's residence and work location. As such, it must not be sold or transferred to another individual.
- Ensure the benefit requested and received is the proper amount. The amount of transit subsidy must not exceed the participant's actual commuting cost by public transportation.

Employee Responsibilities

- Ensure adjustments are made to transit subsidy amounts when warranted; for example: changes to commuting costs, commute route, work schedule, etc. Participants are also required to ensure that all other data is current, including but not limited to participant contact information, manager information, or home/work address, etc.
- In the event of separation from the Agency or program exit, he or she is required to return unused or excess funds.
- Withdraw from the program if on extended leave for 30 days or greater or if on a temporary duty assignment where the subsidy is not needed.
- Not be assigned an Agency-provided parking permit or participating in a carpool.

Legal Implications

- It is a violation of law to provide false or fraudulent information to obtain the transit benefit, to transfer, or to sell the transit benefit.
- Employees who misuse transit subsidies will be subject to appropriate administrative action including discipline and disqualification for future transit benefits.
- Disciplinary penalties could range from a letter of admonishment to removal from Federal service depending on the severity of the abuse.

It is a violation of law to provide false or fraudulent information to obtain the transit benefit, to transfer, or to sell the transit benefit.

Certification Required

- Employees who enroll in the transit subsidy program must make a certification at initial enrollment and is required to recertify on an annual basis to continue in the program.
- You must formally and legally attest and certify that the specific statements are true.

WARNING !

This certification concerns a matter within the jurisdiction of an agency of the United States. Making a false, fictitious, or fraudulent certification may constitute criminal violations punishable under Title 18, United States Code, Section 1001, by imprisonment up to five years and fines up to \$10,000 for each offense, and/or agency disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal.

- I certify that I am employed by the U.S. Federal Government.
- I certify that I am not named on a federally subsidized parking permit with any other federal agency.
- I certify that I am eligible for a public transportation fare benefit, will use it for my daily commute to and from work by public transit or vanpool, and will not give, sell, or transfer it to anyone else.
- I certify that in any given month, I will not use the Government-provided transit benefit in excess of the statutory limit. If my commuting costs per month on public transit exceed the month statutory limit, then I will supplement those additional costs with my own funds rather than use a Government-provided transit benefit designated for use in a future month.
- I certify that I will not claim the transit benefit in excess of my actual monthly commuting expense. If at anytime during a given month I am out of work due to sickness, vacation or any other reason, on official travel, or use a private vehicle for commuting, I will claim less and adjust the amount of my transit benefit the following month if appropriate.

Knowledge Check I

The Transit Benefit Program objective is to:

- A. Increase compensation of federal employees per month.**
- B. Provide incentive to federal employees to use public transportation to reduce air pollution and traffic congestion.**
- C. Reward the employees for their hard work.**

Knowledge Check II

_____ is considered misuse of my transit benefit.

- A. Selling my benefit
- B. Allowing my child to use the benefit
- C. Intentionally overestimating my benefit
- D. All of the above

Knowledge Check III

George recently revised his schedule and will only commute to the office 4 days per week. George must:

- A. submit an updated application**
- B. continue to claim the transit subsidy without change**
- C. change his commute estimate at the next annual certification period**

Knowledge Check IV

Seth travels from southern Virginia; it costs him \$325 every month.

Which of the below statements are true?

- A. He is eligible to receive additional benefit, beyond the statutory limitation because his commute is expensive.**
- B. He is only eligible to receive the maximum subsidy, irrespective his commute cost.**
- C. He may claim the additional commute cost incurred above the maximum subsidy for reimbursement in his next expense report.**

Knowledge Check V

Charlene uses mass transit to commute to the office. She parks near the lot near the station. Charlene included her parking fee in her monthly transit benefit computation. This is within Agency policy.

- A. True

- B. False

Knowledge Check VI

Michael uses mass transit to commute to an off-site meeting and decided to use his transit benefit to and from the meeting. This is within Agency policy.

- A. True**

- B. False**

Knowledge Check Answer Key

- I. **B.** The Federal Workplace Transportation Fringe Benefit Program under Executive Order 13150 allows for a transit subsidy incentive to Federal employees to use public transportation to reduce air pollution and traffic congestion.
- II. **D.** All of the above are considered misuse. Depending on the severity of the misuse, disciplinary penalties could range from a letter of admonishment to removal from Federal service.
- III. **A.** Employees must submit a revised application if there are any changes to the commuting methods, work schedule, change of address, cost of commute.
- IV. **B.** Employees will only receive up to the maximum subsidy for mass transit commuting cost. No additional compensation is authorized. The employee is required to cover the additional amount exceeding the benefit maximum.
- V. **True.** The Agency transit benefit program includes parking fees at or near mass transit commuter lots.
- VI. **False.** The Transit benefit is only for expenses incurred to commute to and from to work.

Certificate of Completion

Congratulations!

You have successfully completed
TRANSIT BENEFIT INTEGRITY TRAINING