

TRANSIT PROGRAM

AWARENESS REVIEW



Presented By

TRANServe for NLRB

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Objectives

- Clarify Transit Program requirements
- Emphasize internal controls in place to minimize fraud and abuse
- Learn consequences of non-compliance
- Enhance understanding through real life scenarios
- Educate participants on their roles and responsibilities

Topics

- Program Overview
 - Background and Objectives
 - Role of TRANServe
 - Website Content
 - Legal Implications
- Understanding the Certification Statement
- Scenarios

Background

- 1993 - Federal Employees Clean Air Incentives Act
- 2000 - Executive Order 13150 Federal Workforce Transportation Fringe Benefit

Program Objectives

- Reduce Air Pollution
- Reduce Traffic Congestion



TRANServe's Role

Service Provider to:

- Distribute the Transit Benefit to Qualified Employees
- Administer the Transit Program for the NLRB
- Establish Best Practices

Program Resources

TRANServe.dot.gov

- Application & Recertification
- Expense & Verification Worksheet
- Awareness Review
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
- Best Practices & Internal Controls
- GAO/OIG Audits & Findings
- Fraud & Abuse Penalties

Legal Implications

- Participants who misuse transit subsidies are subject to appropriate administrative action including discipline and disqualification from the Transit Program
- Disciplinary penalties may range from a letter of admonishment to removal from Federal Service depending on the severity of the abuse

Knowledge Check

The Mass Transit Fringe Benefit Program's objective is to:

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

The Answer

The correct answer is **B**

Executive Order 13150, Federal Workforce Transportation, by William J. Clinton established the Federal Workforce Transportation Fringe Benefit Program to reduce Federal employees' contribution to traffic congestion and air pollution and to expand their community's alternatives.

Knowledge Check

TRUE or FALSE

If I misuse my transit benefit by selling it, sharing it, or overestimating my commuting cost, I could be removed from service to the Federal government.

Correct Answer

- ✓ The correct answer is **TRUE**

Disciplinary penalties could range from a letter of admonishment to removal from federal service depending on the severity of the abuse.

Knowledge Check

The role of TRANServe's Transit Benefit Program is:

- A. Administer the Transit Benefit Program for my Agency
- B. Establish Best Practices
- C. All of the above

Correct Answer

The answer is **C** - All of the above

The Secretary of Transportation established TRANServe to administer the Transit Benefit Program, to distribute the transit benefit, and to establish Best Practices around transit benefit programs.

Certification is Required

- Anyone who signs up for the transit benefit program through TRANServe must certify that certain conditions are true
- This program is a benefit, not an entitlement
- The following slides define certification and elaborate on these conditions

What Does Certification Mean?

“To formally and legally attest a specific statement to be true”



Certification Statement

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 am a civil service employee as defined by 5 U.S.C. Section 2105.
- ✓ 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 public transportation fare benefit, will use it for my daily commute to and from work by public transit, 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 monthly 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 any time 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.
- ✓ I certify that my parking fees are not included in the computation of the daily, weekly, or monthly commuting costs for my transit benefit.

I Agree

I Do Not Agree

Certification - Part I

“I certify that I am eligible for the transit benefit program and I am not named on a federally subsidized parking permit with any other federal agency.”

This means:

- *You do not have federally subsidized parking*
- *You are not listed on any federal parking pass*
- *You do not park your personally owned or leased vehicle at a government parking lot or garage*

Certification - Part II

“I certify that I am eligible for a public transportation fare benefit, will use it for my daily commute to and from work, and will not transfer it to anyone else.”

This means:

- *You are qualified to receive the transit benefit*
- *You use mass transportation to commute to and from work*
- *You will not give or sell your benefit to anyone*

Certification - Part III

“I certify that in any given month, I will not use the Government provided transit benefit in excess of the statutory limit.”

This means:

- *You will not use Government provided fare media in excess of your monthly estimated commuting cost*
- *After you use your monthly transit benefit, you agree to pay additional cost, out of pocket*

Certification - Part IV

“I certify that I will not claim the transit benefit in excess of my actual monthly commuting expense and that parking fees are not included in the computation of the daily, weekly, or monthly commuting costs.”

This means:

- *You will research and know the cost of your commute*
- *You will not falsify your monthly estimated commuting cost*
- *You will not include any parking fees when computing your daily, weekly, or monthly commuting costs*

Transit Benefit Application


After certification, employees must complete an electronic Transit Benefit Application including an expense worksheet in order to receive the transit. Following is an example -

TRANSIT BENEFIT APPLICATION WORKSHEET
All Transit Benefit Program Applicants are required to certify the "Total Monthly Expense" of their <u>Home to Work Mass Transit Commute</u> .
Parking fees are not eligible for the transit benefit and must not be included in "Total Monthly Expense".
Instructions: To calculate your "Total Monthly Expense"
<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Select your transportation method(s)b. Enter the following information in the "To Work" and "From Work" row(s) of each transportation method:<ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Name of Company for your method of transportation (Metro, BART, Subway)ii. Daily or Monthly Expenseiii. Number of days you routinely work in a monthc. If you purchase a Monthly pass, divide the price of the pass by 2, and enter the information in the Monthly Expense column.d. The Total Monthly Expense value automatically populates


Sample of Expense Worksheet


* indicates required field.

*Reason for Certification:

I have completed the required Transit Benefit Integrity training for my Agency 

*Select your transportation methods:

 Bus Rail Other Method Vanpool

Employment Type:  Work Status:

Always follow your Agency work schedule policy for specific guidance on the Days per Month entry.

Defined work schedule examples:
 If you work a Basic schedule of 8-hours per day, the average amount of 20 Days can be entered into the Days per Month column
 If you work a Flex Schedule of 9-hours per day, the average amount of 18 Days can be entered into the Days per Month column
 If you work a Compressed schedule of 10-hour days, the average amount of 16 Days can be entered into the Days per Month column
 If you telecommute or work part time, enter the number of days you actually commute to/from work.

Method of Transportation		Daily Expense	Days per Month	Monthly Expense
Bus to Work	Name of Company <input type="text" value="SEPTA"/>	\$ <input type="text" value="2.43"/>	<input type="text" value="8"/>	\$ <input type="text" value="19.44"/>
Bus from Work	Name of Company <input type="text" value="SEPTA"/>	\$ <input type="text" value="2.76"/>	<input type="text" value="8"/>	\$ <input type="text" value="22.08"/>
Other Bus to Work	Name of Company <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Other Bus from Work	Name of Company <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Rail to Work	Name of Company <input type="text" value="PATCO"/>	\$ <input type="text" value="2.60"/>	<input type="text" value="8"/>	\$ <input type="text" value="20.80"/>
Rail from Work	Name of Company <input type="text" value="PATCO"/>	\$ <input type="text" value="2.60"/>	<input type="text" value="8"/>	\$ <input type="text" value="20.80"/>
Every Transit Benefit Program Participant is responsible to adjust the amount of their transit benefit each month to reflect the actual cost of their home to work commute.		Total Monthly Expense: <input type="text" value="83.11"/>		

Knowledge Check

After riding the train for five years, Sharon just joined a carpool. She receives the maximum monthly transit benefit for her commute. She has decided to sell her benefit at a 10% discount to her best friend since she believes the benefit belongs to her. Is this the correct course of action for Sharon?

YES or NO?

The Answer

The correct answer is **NO**

- It is against the law to sell or give away your transit benefit
- Unused transit benefit must be returned to your Agency

Knowledge Check

TRUE or FALSE

Max travels from Delaware to another state for work. His commuting costs are \$364 per month. He is qualified to receive additional transit benefit since his commute is so costly.

The Answer

The correct answer is **FALSE**

The Federal government will provide employees up to the maximum benefit amount for mass transportation commuting costs. The employee must cover the additional amount “out of pocket”.

SCENARIO 1

I have a change in my commuting costs

What do I do ?

Scenario 1

I have a change in commuting costs

You must update your application whenever you have a change to your usual costs, address, name, or office.

- Go to TRANServe.dot.gov and click the “Participants” Page
- Click NLRB Transit Benefit Application System
- Log in using your government email address
- Choose “Certify/Enroll”
- Read and Click “I Agree”, if appropriate
- Enter “Reason for Certification”
- Complete and Submit the Application Worksheet and the Transit Benefit Application
- You will receive email notifications throughout the approval process

SCENARIO 2

I ride in a carpool

Do I qualify for the
Transit Benefit?

Scenario 2

I ride in a carpool

No

A carpool does not meet the definition of mass transportation and its riders are not eligible to receive the transit benefit.

SCENARIO 3

*I ride mass transit and park
in the lot near the station*

Can I use my transit benefit to pay
for parking in the commuter lot?

Scenario 3

*I ride mass transit and park
in the lot near the station*

No

Indirect costs, such as gas, mileage, or parking cannot be included as part of the estimated commuting cost.

SCENARIO 4

I plan to telework

Do I need to change my benefit amount?

Scenario 4

I plan to telework

Yes

If your commuting costs change when your work schedule changes, you must update your application

- Go to TRANServe.dot.gov and click the “Participants” Page
- Click NLRB Transit Benefit Application System
- Log in using your government email address
- Choose “Certify/Enroll”
- Read and Click “I Agree”, if appropriate
- Enter “Reason for Certification”
- Complete and Submit the Application Worksheet and the Transit Benefit Application

Knowledge Check

Matthew is leaving NLRB to work for another federal agency. He believes the correct way to handle his remaining transit benefit is to:

- A. Give the remaining amount to his brother
- B. Sell the remaining transit benefit to a co-worker
- C. Inform the Transit Program Coordinator on his transfer

The Answer

The correct answer is **C**

The transit benefit is not transferable. **It must not be sold.**

Knowledge Check

TRUE or FALSE

Kay will be on maternity leave beginning April 28, 2016. She plans to return to work on September 1, 2016. The correct way to change her transit benefit is to notify her supervisor.

The Answer

The correct answer is **FALSE**.

When you are out on extended leave or an absence of 30 days or more, you must **Withdraw** from the program and re-enroll when you return. To withdraw follow the steps below:

- Go to TRANServe.dot.gov and click the “Participants” Page
- Click NLRB Transit Benefit Application System
- Log in using your government email address
- Choose “Withdrawal”
- Read and Click “I Agree”, if appropriate
- You will receive email notifications throughout the withdrawal process

CONGRATULATIONS

(Insert Name)

Has successfully completed
TRANSIT PROGRAM
AWARENESS REVIEW

To receive credit for completing this training:

- 1. Certify to that fact on the Electronic Transit Benefit Application**
- 2. Keep a copy of this certificate for your records**

Questions?

Email the Transit Program Coordinator at transit@nlrb.gov