U.S. Department of Transportation

DOC NTIA Transit Benefit Integrity Awareness Training

Updated February 9, 2016

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Topics

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Program Overview

- **Transit Benefit Program:**
  - **Reduces air pollution**
  - **Reduces traffic congestion**
  - **Increases use of mass transit**
- **Studies show that congestion wastes:**
  - **3.7 billion hours of travel delays**
  - **$63 billion per year, nationally**
  - **$850 and $1,600 in lost time and fuel each year per commuter**
- **Tax-free subsidy for *actual* mass transit commuting costs**
  - **Up to the maximum statutory limit**

Background

- **Program History**
  - **1991 - Federal Transit Administration pilot program**
  - **1993 - Clean Air Initiatives Act**
  - **2000 - Federal Workforce Transportation Fringe Benefit**
  - **2005 - SAFETEA-LU**

Background

- **Eligibility**
  - **Participants must be salaried employees (i.e., full-time, part-time, temporaries, stay-in-school, etc.) who use qualified transit facilities or commuter highway vehicles on a monthly basis to commute to and from work, and who do not receive Federal parking and are not named on a worksite parking permit at any Federal agency**

Mass Public Transportation

- Rail
  - Subway
  - Commuter
  - Light
- Bus
  - Transit authority
  - Commuter
- Ferries
  - Pedestrian or bicycle

- Qualified vanpools
  - Commercial/private vehicle
  - At least 6 adults, excluding the driver

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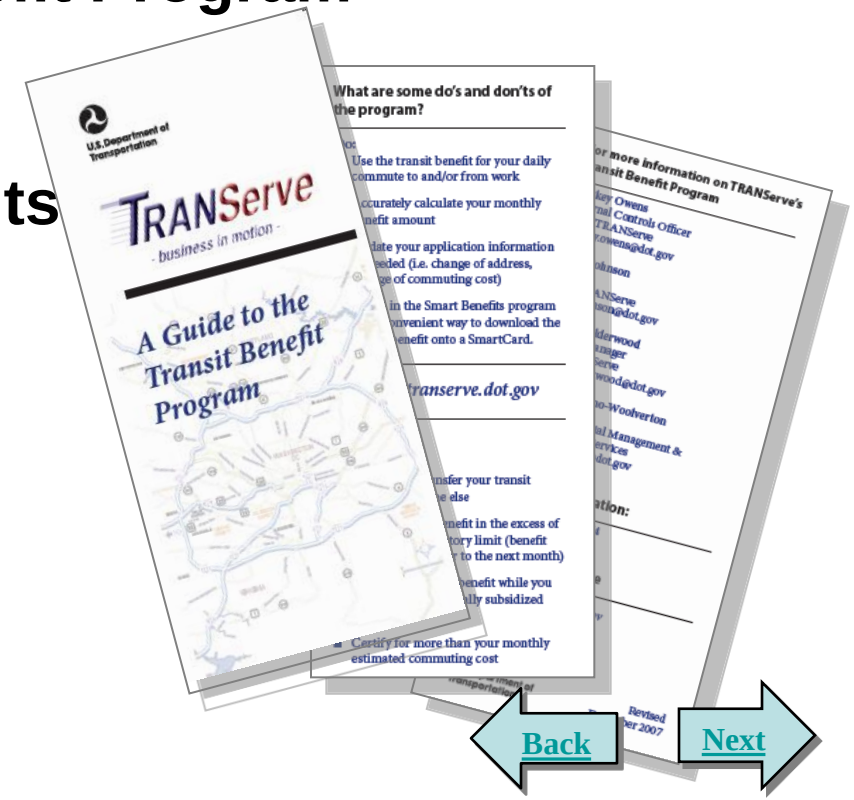
TRANServe's Role

- Service Provider to Federal Agencies
- Distributes the transit benefit to qualified employees
- Administers the Transit Benefit Program
- Establishes best practices
- Supports program participants



Employee Roles and Responsibilities

- Understand the scope and limitations of the Transit Benefit Program
- Do not sell, transfer the benefit, or make false claims
- Understand the penalties involved in misuse or false claims

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.

Employee Roles and Responsibilities

- **Not named on a worksite parking permit at any Federal agency, nor otherwise participate in a carpool**
- **Use transit benefit for home to work and work to home transportation, *only***
- **Ensure the amount of transit benefit received does not exceed actual monthly commuting cost using public transportation**
- **Responsible to update commuting costs upon changes to commuting method, work schedule, or address**

Employee Roles and Responsibilities

Once paper fare media is distributed, you are responsible for its safekeeping. Lost, stolen or damaged paper fare media will not be replaced.

- **Contact Metro via a sales office or online at www.wmata.com.**

To replace lost, stolen or damaged SmarTrip® cards. [Applies only in the National Capital Region (NCR)]

- **For lost, stolen or damaged TRANServe Cards, contact JP Morgan Chase at UCARD Center (https://ucard.chase.com)**

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Legal Implications

Employees who misuse the transit benefit are subject to appropriate administrative action including discipline and/or disqualification from future participation in the USCIS Transit Benefit Program. Disciplinary penalties could range from a letter of admonishment to removal from Federal Service, depending on the severity of the abuse.

TRANServe Website

TRANServe.dot.gov

Website Pages:

- Home
- Participants
- F.A.Q. (Frequently Asked Questions)
- Debit Card
- Resources
- Return of Excess Benefit
- Contact Us

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Enrollment Process

1. Log in to the TRANServe Electronic Transit Benefit Application System (https://transitapp.ost.dot.gov)
2. First time Users click the “Register” button to create a profile and get your temporary password.
3. Login using government email address and password
4. Click on “Home”, then “Transit Benefit Application System”
5. Choose what to do:
   - Request information
   - Withdraw from the program
   - Certify/Enroll

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Knowledge Check 1

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 1 - Answer

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.

The Federal Workforce Transportation Fringe Benefit Program under Executive Order 13150 was put in place to reduce air pollution and traffic congestion.

Knowledge Check 2

- **If I misuse my transit benefit, for example, selling my benefit or over estimating my need for the benefit, I could be removed from service to the federal government.**
  - ❑ **True**
  - ❑ **False**

Knowledge Check 2 - Answer

- **If I misuse my transit benefit, for example, selling my benefit or over estimating my need for the benefit, I could be removed from service to the federal government.**
  - ☑ **True**
  - ☐ **False**

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

Knowledge Check 3

TRANServe's Role is to:

- ❑ **A. Distribute the transit benefit to USCIS employees.**
- ❑ **B. Administer the Transit Benefit Program.**
- ❑ **C. Establish Best Practices.**
- ❑ **D. All of the above.**

Knowledge Check 3 - Answer

TRANServe's Role is to:

- ☐ A. Distribute transit benefits to USCIS employees.
- ☐ B. Administer the Transit Benefit Program.
- ☐ C. Establish Best Practices.
- ☑ **D. All of the above.**

TRANServe administers the Transit Benefit and establishes Best Practices for those Agencies serviced by DOT/TRANServe.

Knowledge Check 4

- **Carol plans on teleworking. The correct course of action based on this is:**
  - ❑ **A. Inform her supervisor.**
  - ❑ **B. Continue claiming the transit benefit without change.**
  - ❑ **C. Update her application on https://transerve.dot.gov .**

Knowledge Check 4 - Answer

- **Ben plans on teleworking. The correct course of action based on this is:**
  - ❑ A. Inform her supervisor.
  - ❑ B. Continue claiming her transit benefit without change.
  - ☑ **C. Update her application on https://transerve.dot.gov .**

You are responsible to update whenever commuting costs, commuting method, work schedule, or your home or work address changes.

Transit Benefit Certification

Certification Required

- **Anyone who enrolls in the Transit Benefit Program must certify that certain conditions are true.**

***Certify*:**

"To formally and legally attest a specific statement to be true"

Certification Statement

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.

- I certify that my parking fees are not included in the computation of the daily, weekly or monthly commuting costs for my transit benefit.

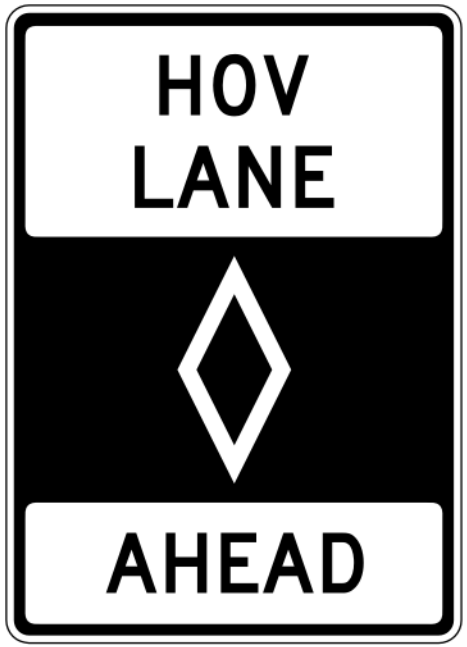
I Agree | I Do Not Agree

Certification

What did I just agree to?

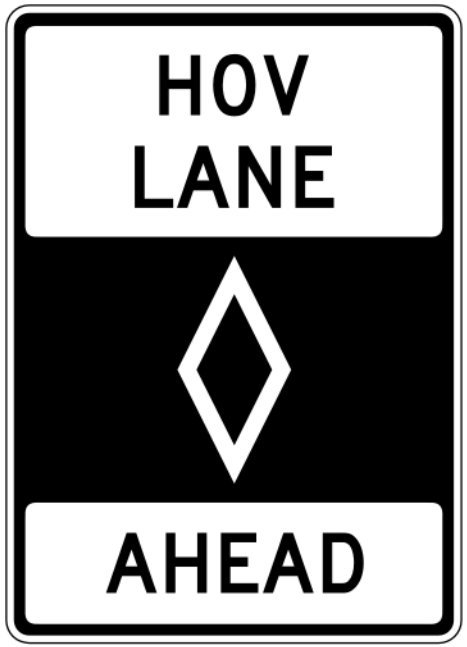
- I am employed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- I am eligible for a public transportation fare benefit
- I will only use the transit benefit for my daily commute between home and work
- I will not give, sell, or transfer my transit benefit to anyone else
- I will not use the Government-provided transit benefit in excess of the statutory limit
- I will not claim the transit benefit in excess of my actual monthly commuting expense
- I will not include parking fees in the calculation of my daily, weekly or monthly commuting cost.

Knowledge Check 5



- **Lynne joined a carpool after commuting by train for 5 years. She always received the maximum benefit per month for her commute. Now she sells her benefit since she believes the benefit belongs to her. Is this the correct course of action?**
  - ❑ **Yes**
  - ❑ **No**

Knowledge Check 5 - Answer



- **Lynne joined a carpool after commuting by train for 5 years. She always received the maximum benefit per month for her commute. Now she sells her benefit since she believes the benefit belongs to her. Is this the correct course of action?**

  - ☐ Yes
  - ☑ No

It is against the law to sell or give away your transit benefit.

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Knowledge Check 6

- **Ellery commutes from Virginia to get to work. His commuting costs are $284 per month. He is eligible to receive additional transit benefit since his commute is so costly.**
  - ❑ **True**
  - ❑ **False**

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Knowledge Check 6 - Answer

- **Ellery commutes from Virginia to get to work. His commuting costs are $284 per month. He is eligible to receive additional transit benefit since his commute is so costly.**

  - ☐ True
  - ☑ False

The federal government will provide employees up to the statutory limit for the cost of commuting by mass transportation. The employee must cover the additional amount, "out of pocket".

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Knowledge Check 7

- **Tina rides in a carpool. She is eligible to receive the transit benefit.**
  - ❑ **True**
  - ❑ **False**

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Knowledge Check 7 - Answer

- **Tina rides in a carpool. She is eligible to receive the transit benefit.**
  - ❑ True
  - ☑ **False**

The Federal Transit Benefit is for federal employees who choose to commute using mass transit in a commuter highway vehicle. This includes bus, rail, light rail or an authorized vanpool.

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Knowledge Check 8

- **Michael rides mass transit and parks in the lot near the station. He includes his parking fees when he calculates his monthly commuting expense. He is right to do this.**
  - ❑ **True**
  - ❑ **False**

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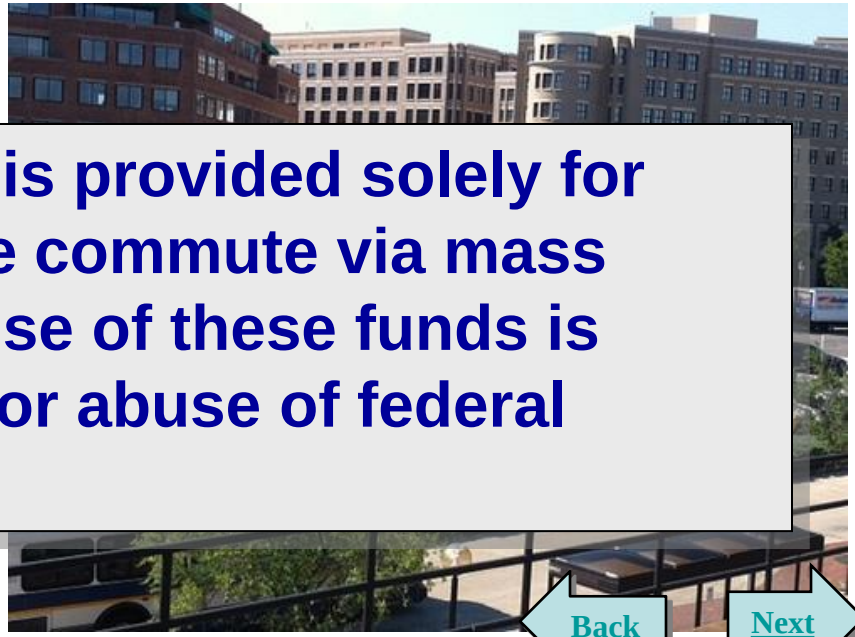
Knowledge Check 8 - Answer

- **Michael rides mass transit and parks in the lot near the station. He includes his parking fees when he calculates his monthly commuting expense. He is right to do this.**

  - ☐ True
  - ☑ **False**



The Federal Transit Benefit is provided solely for your home-to-work-to-home commute via mass transportation. Any other use of these funds is actionable as fraud, waste, or abuse of federal funds.

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Knowledge Check 9

- **Melanie has come to an agreement with HR and her supervisor to work in the office 3 days and telework 2 days each week, indefinitely. She currently receives $25 per week in transit benefit. The correct course of action based on her schedule change is to:**

  - ❑ **A. Thank her supervisors' for his/her understanding.**
  - ❑ **B. Continue claiming her transit benefit without change.**
  - ❑ **C. Update her transit benefit to $15 per week or $60 per month.**

Knowledge Check 9 - Answer

- **Melanie has come to an agreement with HR and her supervisor to work in the office 3 days and telework 2 days each week, indefinitely. She currently receives $25 per week in transit benefit. The correct course of action based on her schedule change is to:**
  - ❑ A. Thank her supervisors' for his/her understanding.
  - ❑ B. Continue claiming her transit benefit without change.
  - ☑ **C. Update her transit benefit to $15 per week or $60 per month.**

You must change your benefit amount whenever your routine commuting expense changes.

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Knowledge Check 10

- **Wendy is going to an off-site meeting. She uses mass transportation to and from the meeting, and decides to use her transit benefit, since she has "extra" this month. This is the correct action.**

  - ❑ **True**
  - ❑ **False**

Knowledge Check 10 - Answer

- **Wendy is going to an off-site meeting. She uses mass transportation to and from the meeting, and decides to use her transit benefit, since she has "extra" this month. This is the correct action.**

  - ☐ True
  - ☑ **False**

Travel to an off-site meeting or training class is an office expense. The Transit Benefit is provided solely for your home-to-work-to-home commute via mass transportation.

Congratulations!

You have successfully completed

TRANSIT BENEFIT PROGRAM

INTEGRITY AWARENESS

TRAINING

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